IMAGINING AN AFRICAN COMMUNITY: AFRICAN WOMEN IN WESTERN SYDNEY AND THE POLITICS OF SHARING

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the sharing practices of women from different African backgrounds living in western Sydney. It takes as its starting point that sharing; the sharing of material resources, support, friendship and space can re-politicise functionalist explanations of migrant solidarity and social capital. How, what, where and with whom we share reveals a critical intersection between formal and informal support for migrant and refugee communities. I foreground the alternative imaginaries of community, social space, labour and belonging that African women share, in order to provide a more nuanced empirical and theoretical account of the lived experience of migrant resettlement under competitive forms of service delivery. The ground-up perspective of everyday multiculturalism is combined with feminist theories of political economy and citizenship, to help trace the struggles that women face 'entering the public' as they expand their informal practices of sharing to organise community events with public funds and within public spaces. Multi-sited and participatory ethnographic research was conducted in Sydney between 2012–2015 and 30 semi-structured interviews with service providers and community members were also recorded during that time. Faced with restricted funds and competing systems of value, accountability and risk, key community leaders speak to being caught between the sphere of unpaid work in informal community spaces and paid work with resettlement services. The women who broker between these spaces are forced to enact an 'unruly mobility' to imagine and practice an African community on their own terms. Their mobility is unruly in that it draws on and contests, multiple norms of behaviour and action and creates a corresponding bricolage of public and private resources. The continued struggle to share social and material resources with one another allows African women in Sydney to reconfigure the boundaries, spaces and terms upon which they enter and move through the nation. Their community work troubles the distinctions between the informal and formal, unpaid and paid, public and private and generates new knowledge regarding how competitive forms of service provision influence collective processes of identification and belonging.

Statement of Candidate

I certify that the work in this thesis entitled 'Imagining An African Community: African Women in Western Sydney and the Politics of Sharing' has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University.

I also certify that this thesis is an original piece of research and it has been written by me. Any help and assistance I have received in my research work and the preparation of this thesis have been appropriately acknowledged.

In addition, I certify the Macquarie University Human Ethics Committee approved this research project [5201200839].

Signed

Claire Farrugia

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Chapter One

Introduction

More than Just a Shop

Nestled inside a 1980s-style arcade in the western suburbs of Sydney is the African Village Market. The Market was established in 2011 as a means through which African women in Sydney could sell their own products, provide African goods which were otherwise difficult to get and foster a sense of community in the area. The Market holds a particular resonance for Sydney's Kenyan community but acts as a meeting place for other African communities. The Market is just one part of a larger dream of an African cultural hub in the multicultural centre of Parramatta. The women who organise The Market imagine this hub as including African restaurants, shops that sell local and imported produce and a medical centre that would cater for the needs of different African communities. The hub would act as a site of collective recognition for the African community in Sydney and would attract otherwise isolated pockets of Sydney's African communities. As Mary, one of organisers said, it would be "what Chinatown is for the Chinese" and what the suburb of "Cabramatta is for the Vietnamese", a place to share African culture and "a way for us Africans to identify ourselves!" These grand imaginings of the African community in Sydney did not neatly align with the reality of The Market. A small shop hidden inside the aged, non-descript arcade that had its heyday long before the multimillion dollar Westfield was built down the road. Yet long afternoons spent drinking coffee and rearranging the shop gave energy to something far more visible and wider reaching than the façade suggested.

In 2013 I began volunteering at the Market as part of this study. At separate points in my conversations with women, this vision would intervene. Not only could people come and practice English, but people from the local unemployment service could gain work experience and elderly refugees could engage in some of the tactile crafts in which they were skilled. This was a vision of an inclusive collective space, but intertwined with a sense of potential work and a sense of being at home. Sitting at the back of the shop, Mary would look outside and mimic the gestures she uses to welcome everyone into the shop, "anyone

could come, not just Africans, and people would *never* stop sharing!" She laughed at the ambition, grandeur and improbability of such a vision.

Yet the visions and practices of community that we hold are central to how we define who we are and where we belong. Social affinities, attachments and solidarities shape the conditions with which we view the social world and our role within it. They help to provide meaning and orient our action. We are not only social beings, we are material ones, situated and embodied in particular places. The places we move through and the spaces we inhabit are inseparable from social boundaries. It is for this reason, that spaces such as The Market figure as key sites for ethnographic analysis and description in this thesis. These sites are more than physical boundaries, they are a social product and produced, reproduced and transformed through the practices of individuals and collectives (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 26). The key practice that I am concerned with, is the practice of sharing. I suggest that sharing is an everyday act of invitation, engagement and exchange that can open the possibility for flexible relationships to form across class, ethnicity, language and other important markers of difference. It is when we share with others, that we include them in our everyday visions and movements through the world. I approach social exchanges such as sharing as situated and relational. What we can share and who we share with, tells us about how we are positioned in relation to others and our collective positioning in relation to wider structures of support. I suggest that micro, everyday acts of sharing can sensitise us to much larger struggles over social and material resources and the question of who is included in the nation and under what terms.

Drawing on interview material, ethnographic observation and participatory observation, this study focuses on the lived experiences and first-hand accounts of how women from different African communities imagine and actualise an African community. It will trace everyday practices of sharing as women move through their home, community and work lives to try and share resources with one another. I am not just concerned with who inhabits or moves through a given place, but the struggles over meaning and processes of inclusion and exclusion that form African community social spaces. These spaces play a particular role for migrants. Migration unsettles our sense of belonging, place and community (Fortier, 2000). The locations where migrant, ethnic and culturally and linguistically diverse communities share space are not merely backdrops for social life. They are products of the discursive, affective and spatial regulations that communities face as they move through the local and institutionally significant public spaces of the nation (Noble & Poynting, 2010). They may be

small, like The Market, but they are not insignificant. They are politicised spaces, where collective attachments form through a search for security, inclusion and belonging.

The key focus on this thesis is the institutional barriers that women face trying to organise as a collective with public funds and in public spaces. I use sharing as a way to focus on the critical intersection between the cultural scripts of support that migrants hold, the material social and spatial practices that they collectively engage in and the institutional mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion that influence the access migrants have to social and material resources. At this critical juncture, the everyday, invisible and emergent practices of sharing among migrants, can be at tension with the policies and structures of multicultural Australia (Williams, 1977). These tensions routinely manifest in the everyday lives of women as they try to run community events and access community spaces. They can be observed at the intersection between informal relationships of sharing and the formal provision of welfare. At this intersection, struggles for recognition and redistribution manifest within and beyond the borders of the nation.

The struggle that African women engage in to be recognised and belong in public institutions of support is an overarching theme of this study. The starting place of theories of recognition is the single interaction between "you" and "me" and is pre-institutional in essence (Deranty & Renault, 2007, p. 99). However, theories of recognition also leave room to understand that recognition, redistribution and experiences of disrespect are "institutionally anchored in the historically established recognition order" (Nancy Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 137). This thesis has taken as its starting point that race and racial differences speak to a set of historical relations that continue to inform the provision of welfare for culturally diverse groups today. Australia is a nation founded on the dispossession of Aboriginal land and the historic exclusion of those who were ethnically, culturally or racially different. This raises pertinent questions regarding what kinds of difference are recognised in the public, when and under what terms. Migrant groups have been racialised differently, under varying circumstances and according to different signifiers of their *difference*, throughout Australian history (Brah, 1991). In regards to African communities, varied histories of migration and settlement have been popularly erased in Australia, subsumed into one essentialised sense of an *African* (Udo-Ekpo, 1999). Important experiential differences exist between groups of African migrants and refugees and commonplace assumptions about identity markers such as country of origin, nationality, ethnicity and language fail to capture the intricacies of lived experience across African communities in Australia and across women from African

backgrounds in western Sydney.[1] This thesis will contribute to the already existing research on African communities in Australia by providing a situated and gendered account of the processes through which African women mobilise community (Abdelkerim & Grace, 2012; Cassity & Gow, 2006; Hatoss & Huijser, 2010; Ndhlovu, 2014; Nunn, 2010; Phillips, 2011; Turner & Fozdar, 2010; Zwangobani, 2008). In the following section, I provide a brief discussion of the relationship between visibility and invisibility to introduce some of the key tensions of this thesis. I suggest we move from the more visible portrayals of African communities in Australia to the invisible forms of community work that are often overlooked. I suggest that the popularity of social capital is one reason for this gap. After situating my key research questions and the literature I use to develop a framework of sharing, I turn to look at sharing as a sensitising concept that corresponds with principles of feminist research methodologies. I conclude this chapter with an outline of the discussion to follow.[2]

Turning Towards the Invisible

Four years prior to the establishment of the African Village Market, the presence of the African community was brought into the spotlight for the broader Australian public. In a now much-cited 2007 incident, the then Immigration Minister, Minister Kevin Andrews, was asked about the murder of a young Sudanese man, Liep Gony. The murder had taken place the week prior. Despite the fact Gony's attackers were of non-Sudanese background, Andrews responded with an accusation that Sudanese communities do not seem to be settling and adjusting into life in Australia (Black, 2007). He suggested that the previously announced decision to decrease the humanitarian intake from Africa was the result of Sudanese communities that were not able to integrate. Referring to information he had

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[1] A brief note on the choice of terms. I use migrant as a short hand to refer to those who have come through voluntary channels of migration and those who have come as humanitarian refugees. I acknowledge that settlement issues are compounded for refugees and have tried to draw this out through individual stories. While many of these women feel a sense of being Australian, their identity as African women resonates strongly. 'African women' refers to a heterogeneous group of women with distinct backgrounds. I have chosen to refer to them as migrant women or African women to reflect their self-identification. The processes these women face organising in the public is faced by other ethnic or culturally and linguistically diverse communities and at times I have included these broader terms to make more substantial claims.

[2] Sections of this thesis appear in C. Farrugia (2014). Practising Solidarity: Sharing Across Difference. In S. Boyd & M. Walter (Eds.), Cultural Difference and Social Solidarity: Solidarities and Social Function (pp. 112–135). Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

received from professionals working in the area of settlement services, he lamented, "I am concerned that we don't create problems down the track for this group of people and for Australian society generally" (Andrews, 2007).

Seven years later, I sat in a food court after work and received a different perspective of the policy report that instigated the press conference and subsequent media engagement. Aasiya, a Somali service provider, recalled a moment in the weeks prior where one of her colleagues expressed regret for having given Andrews a policy report. "What report did you give him?" she asked her colleague. He replied, "Oh we said to him that Africans need a lot more support". She sighed, looking through the remaining coffee she held in her hands, "So they were just looking for funding to try and support this group and the minister just took the report and read it as they weren't fitting in ..." Our discussion was one of many that made clear to me that questions of access and support are also intricately connected to experiences of visibility and invisibility. Newly arrived migrants often experience profound feelings of invisibility. Migration and resettlement in a new country involves feeling out of place, disoriented and without knowledge of where to begin forging new relationships (Milner & Khawaja, 2010; Ogunsiji, Wilkes, Jackson, & Peters, 2012). This is particularly the case when the number of fellow migrants are small in number, socially and spatially dispersed upon settlement and without established links to services. In these cases, service providers can only begin to access and engage communities if they can be seen.

What does it mean to be seen without being exposed as visible? For newly arrived migrants, feeling invisible upon initial arrival sits unnervingly side by side the feeling of being exposed as a problem. This exposure is embodied through the everyday racism that can be experienced when moving through public and institutional spaces (Essed, 1991). It is also the result of a dominant discourse that focuses attention on problematic migrants, rather than problematising the structural constraints imposed upon them (Yuval-Davis, 1997b). In Australia, popular and political discourse frequently makes a link between migration and security/insecurity. In particular, refugees are seen as a perceived threat to borders and to the internal cohesion within the nation's borders (Geddes, 2003, p. 151). Media representations focus on issues of violence, settlement challenges and, as Nunn (2010, p. 184) argued in relation to the media coverage of Gony's death, position refugees as "strangers to Australian society, inherently incompatible with the 'Australian way of life'". This positioning is all the more powerful for a black community in a country founded on the institutionalisation of whiteness.

From the point of colonisation, racial difference in Australia has created a constant, if unspoken, distortion of vision in regards to blackness. This distortion results in the hyper visibility of black communities but it is also responsible for rendering them invisible. They are rendered invisible through the denial of the everyday and institutional racism that they face (Collins, 1991, p. 94). The naturalisation of race has occurred historically through sorting mechanisms, institutional and embodied, that "trigger the reception of human difference" (Amin, 2013a, p. 93). The tension between visibility/invisibility speaks to how African communities are racialised as a collective in Australia. I suggest in this thesis that processes of racialisation influence the types of access communities have to social services and the subsequent creation of alternative spaces and relations of support. However, the visions of community that drive these spaces are not just the result of the terms on which migrants are excluded, but on the less visible terms on which they are included.

The settlement service infrastructure in Australia points to the ways in which communities are included, rather than excluded from the nation. Australian multiculturalism has its roots in the provision of post-settlement welfare for refugees and migrants in Australia. Despite the many challenges that multiculturalism has faced, many elements of the service infrastructure remain (Koleth, 2010, p. 2). As part of this infrastructure, migrant and culturally diverse communities are encouraged to participate in community engagement, development and capacity building programs. They are discursively mobilised through calls for a "celebratory multiculturalism" (Ho, 2009). References to racism or difference are sidelined or removed in favour of positive references to an inclusive and productive diversity. An emphasis on "community harmony" and "national unity" sits side by side with an assumption that "common experiences create shared histories and shape shared futures" (Department of Social Services, 2014). The participation and volunteering of migrant communities is a key part shaping the shared histories and futures of multicultural Australia. Similarly, diverse communities are seen as having a valuable role in contributing to the "Australian Government's goal of developing a multicultural Australia in which *everyone* [emphasis added] benefits from the diversity in our society" (Ferguson, 2009). In the rhetoric of multicultural participation, a diverse society is a harmonious and productive one. A migration and settlement policy that maximises the economic gains of migration while minimising the so-called social costs, is the cornerstone of this society (Walsh, 2011).

Celebratory and productive multiculturalism includes a reinvigorated role for community organisations and the participation of civil society more broadly. It is migrant women that

play a key role in the provision of support within and across their communities. Collectively, women often shoulder the burden of shifting the constellations of visibility/invisibility for their families and communities. They forge and make visible new relationships of support, while dealing with the emotional and material consequences of being invisible or marginalised (Singh, 2016). Women disproportionately hold the burden of the social reproduction[3] of their families and their communities. Yet, institutionally, the collective work that migrant and refugee women do to provide for their communities is strikingly invisible. In Australia, ethnic community organisations and lobbies have traditionally revolved around the work of male community leaders and left little room for the care and support work that migrant women partake in (Vasta, 1993). This gap is reflected in much of the literature on ethnic community organisations (Jupp, 1984; Tabar, Noble, & Poynting, 2003). Similarly, the unpaid work that they do for community organisations has been the subject of little research and the paid work that they do for settlement services has also gone under the radar in the extensive literature on migration and settlement. This lack of research has created a gap in how we understand the settlement process and in particular, the role of the invisible and the intangible: the work that is involved with building connectedness, trust and comfort among newly arrived communities.

This thesis aims to fill this gap by looking at the ways that African women in western Sydney form collectives through the tangible and intangible labour of sharing. It goes without saying, that social capital has become a key framework that academics and policy makers use to explain the substance and function of social ties between, and within, migrant and host communities (Pardy & Lee, 2011). However, I have chosen sharing rather than social capital, as a framework for this thesis. One reason for this choice, is that social capital contributes to the gap in knowledge regarding migrant women's practices of support. Social capital has historically been used to focus on the non-economic resources which form relations of inequality and structure class positions in society (Bourdieu, 1985). However, an overwhelming amount of the literature and policy application of social capital adopts a rationalist and economistic framework that originated with the work of Robert Putnam (2000) and James Coleman (1988). From within this functionalist framework, social

[3] I use the term *social reproduction* in a broad sense to refer to the primarily material social practices that sustain people on a daily and generational basis and involve provisioning for the health, wellbeing and sustaining of communities and ultimately, their labour power. However, social reproduction can also be understood to include the imparting of cultural practices, identities and social values (Kershaw, 2010, p. 399).

relationships are seen as something to be measured, accounted for and quantified. As such, social capital readily aligns with the introduction of metrics that can help translate social activities and relationships into inputs, outputs, indicators and measurements (Spies-Butcher, 2009). The popular application of *capital* as the main unit of analysis to account for, and measure, social relationships inhibits our understanding of the affective, embodied and gendered work that women do for their communities (Arneil, 2006). In order to try and measure and quantify social relationships, they need to be approached as a possession, rather than a process. Approaching relationships as an already existing possession leaves little room for the intangible labour of connectedness, comfort and community that create new relationships.

This thesis refocuses attention onto the often-intangible practices and processes that can create a sense of community. Crucially, the women who figure in this study are from a range of ethnic, language and religious backgrounds. Their identity as *African women*, and the group cleavages this identity is meant to create, are never fixed. They are interpreted and reinterpreted through everyday practices. The social processes whereby different women become collectives are rendered invisible if we assume clear group boundaries based on observable markers of difference. In this vein, the dichotomy of bonding and bridging capital is a key way that migration scholars have tried to capture the inward and outward orientation of migrant social relationships (Ryan, 2011). Bonding capital is interpreted as tight knit, inward looking, and important for "getting by" and bridging capital as outward looking connections, which are interpreted as important for "getting ahead" (Putnam, 2000, p. 23). However, the bonding/bridging dichotomy restricts the vocabulary we have to describe everyday acts of sociality and solidarity that transgress the assumed boundaries of a collective. This thesis will aim to shed light on some of these transgressions.

In place of social capital, I suggest that everyday practices of sharing can help sensitise us to the role that the intangible and invisible play in how to imagine and practice community. To do this we cannot focus on one location or one form of group membership. Women move between home, community and work lives often simultaneously to forge relationships and create community social spaces. Their movement and their practices of support cross the boundaries between individual and collective and cannot be captured using metrics that try and measure the content of social relationships. However, mapping the fluidity of this movement will create a more nuanced understanding of how communities form across differences and in relation to the mobilisation of resources. Displacing capital as the main

unit of analysis will open the possibility of viewing social bonds, ties, relationships and practices in the social and material realities of everyday life. In doing so, the discussion will redirect focus onto the forms of settlement support that sit between the visible/invisible, formal/informal and paid/unpaid. I aim to trouble these dichotomies to shed light on how an African community is imagined in relation to the struggle that women face organising with public funds and in public spaces.

Research Focus

This thesis situates everyday experience as a focus for political economic processes, without directly imposing an analysis of the structural on the everyday. It is through observing changing practices and spaces, that I aim to capture some of the institutional processes that influence the formation and social dynamics of African women's community spaces. I bring together a range of theoretical perspectives on social space, exchange and the economy to focus both on the everyday and the institutional structures of social, political and economic power (Conlon, 2007). Firstly, I draw on the work of urban geographers to suggest that the social spaces we occupy are the product of social and spatial orderings that contribute to the exclusion and/or inclusion of migrant women (Valentine, 2007). The concept of relational space will be drawn on to interpret the relationships of sharing between women and more abstractly, the spaces that they occupy in relation to the Australian nation and public (Amin & Thrift, 2002; Giritli-Nygren & Schmauch, 2012; Massey, 2005). A framework of relational space suggests that social spaces are composed of elements of both public and private. While I approach public/private as permeable, I also refer to the public as a shorthand for a set of institutions, spaces and norms that are structured around certain kinds of understandings and practices which prioritise some cultural values and behaviours over others (see Iris Marion Young, 1990). Feminist geographers in particular, have drawn attention to the fact that how we share space is highly gendered and raced (McDowell, 1993; Valentine, 2007; Women and Geography Study Group, 1997). Feminist and anti-racist critiques have helped to pave the way to understand how processes of gendering and racialisation are embodied and our movements through space are lived through emotions (Ahmed, 2000). Emotions matter in how we understand community social spaces and the sharing that takes place within them (Davidson & Milligan, 2004, p. 424). Whether in overtly expressed emotions or inexpressible affects, the meaning women bring to sharing space tells us a great deal about where they are positioned in relation to others.

I combine theories of social space with anthropological and sociological theories of exchange to provide a situated and located account of community social spaces. I adopt a material, practice based approach in order to move beyond theories of exchange that focus primarily on instrumental and/or functionalist accounts of giving and receiving (Durkheim, 1997/1893; Parsons, 1971; Price, 1975). A practice approach helps to ground social interactions in the realities of everyday life. Accordingly, cultural scripts and norms of behaviour and action are created and recreated through everyday social practices (Swidler, 2001). A broadly materialist approach helps to capture culture as a relational process, what "particular people have done in particular times and places and under particular constraints and limitations" (Couldry, 2000, p. 11). The question of what anchors the social practice of sharing is a question that threads through the following chapters and one that I suggest cannot be answered using functionalist approaches to exchange. However, anthropological theories of gift giving and reciprocity have paved the way to a more nuanced understanding of exchange as a practice of solidarity. Theories on gift giving draw attention to a third process or *spirit* that ties the giver and receiver (Mauss, 1989) and gifts are seen as powerful instigators of social ties and obligations (Komter, 1996, 2005). The anthropological focus on the small-scale tangible and intangible power of exchange, complements the sociological understanding of sharing as a process of scaled distribution (Kennedy, 2016; Polanyi, 1971; Price, 1975). I will build on the literature on gift giving and reciprocity to go beyond intent and expectation of return and to focus on how different dimensions of power influence our access to the social and material resources necessary to give and to receive. Most importantly, sharing entails a possibility of an extension of ownership that allows us to question the rationalist calculations that have preoccupied study of social exchange across both anthropology and sociology.

Sharing is a way to capture political economic processes in the mundane, everyday practices of individuals and collectives. It is from the vantage point of bottom up, that I heed the calls to bring together insights from micro- and macro-level studies on institutions. These calls have come from a range of different theoretical perspectives. Of particular importance, are the calls from those writing on new institutionalism, (Ahmed, 2012; Delbridge & Edwards, 2013; Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012), everyday multiculturalism, (Ho, 2011; Noble & Poynting, 2010; Wise & Velayutham, 2009) and the political economy of "actually existing" neoliberalism (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, p. 349; Cahill, 2007; Larner, Fannin, MacLeavy, & Wang, 2013; Newman, 2010). Extending a practice approach to the institutional level is also guided by the work of feminist political economists. These

economists extend traditional notions of economy and economic participation and help to rethink the conventional binaries of paid/unpaid and formal/informal economies (Collins, Neysmith, Porter, & Reitsma-Street, 2009; Himmelweit, 1995). The literature that focuses on the paid and unpaid labour of 'women's work' helps to draw out the tensions that are apparent when interpersonal acts of sharing become forms of community work on a larger scale (Himmelweit, 1995). In drawing together insights from urban geography, theories of exchange, institutionalism and feminist political economy I provide an insight into how women's identities and belongings are embedded in and produced by the reproductive work that they do to imagine and practice community (Gedalof, 2003).

I situate this study in the context of a changing relationship between community reproductive work and state-funded delivery of services. Internationally, a significant amount of scholarship is focused on the nexus between migration, welfare provision, community organisations and neoliberal policy agendas. In the United Kingdom and United States in particular, critical welfare scholars have argued that under neoliberalism, a transfer of responsibility from the public provisioning of support onto the market and community has seen an outsourcing of some of the state's basic integrative functions (Cooper, 2013; Cope, 2001; Cope & Gilbert, 2001; Newman, 2010, 2013; Singh, 2016; Trudeau, 2008, 2012). In Australia, the provision of services for migrants and refugees does not follow a strict market model and programs remain closely tied to state funding bodies (Meagher & Goodwin, 2015). However, these programs are subject to an increasingly competitive environment. It is not clear how this environment impacts on migrant women as they move through informal/formal and public/private provision of support in both paid and unpaid positions. By privileging the voices and experiences of women themselves, I will provide evidence of how the informal relationships, economies and spaces of sharing that women partake in interact with and are shaped by the public delivery of services.

Secondly, given the decrease in funding for ethno-specific activities, a push to mainstream services and an increase in metrics that aim to measure, account and economise the provision of support, how do institutional relationships with the state-funded services shape the material and discursive conditions under which informal networks of support operate? How do structural antagonisms figure in the everyday work, community and home lives of women and what meaning do they bring to these antagonisms?

Lastly, through approaching space as a social process, I will assess what role social spaces of sharing play in enabling women to resist the social and discursive relations that position them. Under what conditions and in what spaces are they able to shape processes of belonging for themselves and their communities and with what effects? Beyond this question, I will provide evidence for what it means to have a dedicated space for community as a site of sharing.

These questions have been developed iteratively throughout the research process and in conversation with emerging themes. In answering these questions, I trace how sharing changes over time between African women in western Sydney and in relation to their institutional involvement. This thesis focus provides an insight into the shifting burden of support from the state to the level of community. Here the struggle women have over resources and self-definition simultaneously shapes social imaginings of the collective at a variety of scales. It is the intangible and tangible aspects of sharing with one another that allow women to actualise an alternative imaginary of community, an imaginary that is not easily containable in official discourses on migrant belonging in Australia.

Why Sharing? Elements and Ethics of a Feminist Research Methodology

The starting point for the use of sharing in this thesis was a disjuncture. The disjuncture I experienced was between my own lived experience and movements through the world and the concepts and theoretical schemas that I was given to explain the world. My academic background in history and politics gave me the tools to understand the complex intersections between capitalism and race relations, nationalism and imagined communities. This disciplinary background, together with my movements through activist circles, provided me with a set of strong theories to explain the social, economic and political basis of power relations under late capitalism. However, I was left without a language to articulate the diverse ways that we confront these relations of power in our everyday lives and interpersonal relationships. I could see the nation constructed as an imagined community, but it did not neatly align with the everyday ways we imagine our own relationships and movements through the world (Anderson, 1991/1983). Gibson-Graham (2006, p. 4) argue that strong theory affords the pleasures of recognition, of capture, of intellectually subduing that one last thing but offers "no relief or exit to a place beyond". I chose sharing as a framework for this thesis not because I disagree with the application of strong theory, but

because I saw the potential for sharing to help articulate the nuances of intangible aspects of connectedness, comfort and shared social space that have implications for how we understand migrant women's experiences. These aspects figure strongly in our social worlds but are difficult to recognise, capture and subdue through the research or writing process.

Observing how migrant women share with one another helped to sensitise me to three interrelated factors. It allowed me to recognise the multiple ways that we imagine identity, solidarity and belonging in our everyday life, to trace how this imagining is enacted through material practices and to assess how these material practices influence our existing social relationships. In this respect, sharing can sensitise us to the social dynamics of community. Sensitising concepts lack the specificity of categories of social attributes and clear definitions but instead give "a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances" (Blumer, 1954, p. 7). How we share, who we share with, what and where we share can help to provide a general sense of reference for how we imagine ourselves in relation to a collective as well as our access to social and material resources. Sharing helps to glimpse the nuanced and intangible ways that people experience structural tensions in the everyday lives and how they make meaning of these tensions. It is a located, situated and material practice that is often a taken for granted part of our everyday interactions with others. Therefore, on a very basic level, sharing links feelings of belonging and community to social justice and social change.

When I initially started meeting many of the women who figure in this study it very quickly became apparent that the notion of sharing resonated. It resonated as a term that women used and as an observable practice of pooling social, emotional and material resources. In particular, the sharing of information about life in Australia and stories of migration was a widely spread, informal, knowledge generating strategy. This facet of sharing aligned with a reflexive and critical research practice. Here we can see the sharing of stories not just as a personal act but as a political one. Stories help us to situate where we are located in relation to others, to understand our histories and develop a critique of relations of power. Including how those relations manifest in the research process. It was through the research process itself and through thinking about my own experiences of sharing and belonging, that the relationship between sharing and critical and feminist research practices became more obvious.

Firstly, it is important to note that the relationship between sharing and belonging resonated strongly with my own experience growing up in an Irish/Maltese family in South-West Sydney. In between Sydney streets, rural Donegal and the familiar but incomprehensible bickering of my Maltese grandparents, I saw how sharing — the sharing of food, friendship, space and support — was indicative of a longing for, and an effort to create home. Inhabiting multiple worlds simultaneously does not always come easily and belonging involves practice. I observed this practice many times. On the 26th of January, the day officially named "Australia Day" but increasingly known as "Invasion Day" or the "Official Day of Mourning" my Maltese nanna celebrates her own arrival in Australia. She is clad in a uniform of dark blue and red, Australian flags over her t-shirt and plastic blue and white earrings that sit uneasily next to her Maltese gold. At the family gatherings, my cousins affectionately refer to as the "wog-bash". We laugh about this. We do not speak Maltese or know much about our family's pre-migration histories of colonialism and war, nor the debates about the 'blackness' of Maltese (that saw them on the edge, but not excluded, from white Australia). We didn't know that the local pubs we visit in the inner west of Sydney, are the same places where our Maltese family members had their heads bashed together for speaking their language. Where our pa, after retaliating to a violent racist attack, was hidden from the police by the pub owners. We were never told how it was that our grandparents and our parents, violently and diligently, learnt how to be "Australian". And neither did they readily have the words to tell us.

Or perhaps we didn't have the means to listen. Lloyd (2009, p. 429) suggests that, "the historiographic question of 'why weren't we told?' might be better recast as an ethical one of 'why weren't they able to listen?'". There are many ways that stories of racism and not belonging are silenced in Australia. I draw briefly on my family's story to suggest that research can also be part of collectivising the sharing and receiving of stories, particularly those that are otherwise marginalised. Histories of racism, exclusion and loss always gradually, disruptively, unravel and this makes the listening to these stories all the more important.[4] Sharing stories through the research process also has political implications.

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[4] Storytelling has a particular resonance in the African context where telling stories is an effort in decolonisation, helping to reclaim local histories, cultures and oral traditions. As M. G. Vassanji reflects in *The In-Between World of Vikram Lall*, sharing stories is about healing, reconnection and the transformative power of shared experience and as such his character holds "an increasing conviction of its truth, that if more of us told our stories to each other, where I come from, we would be a far happier and less nervous people" (cited in Wane, Kempf, & Simmons, 2011, p. 71).

Dialogues among a range of different groups, each with their own distinctive set of experiences and specialised thought embedded in those experiences, create the possibility for new versions of truth (Collins, 1991, p. 42).

Feminist research principles encourage researchers to listen to the accounts of women and regard them as primary and constitutive of their everyday world (Young & Miranne, 2000, p. 3). Knowledge is therefore, partly autobiographical and gained by talking and by listening, it is every day, but it is deeply political. To connect different experiences and understandings to change is a political act. Most importantly, dialogues across communities can help unpack historical processes. Race and gender can be critiqued not as biological categories but as processes of racialisation and gendering that are historically and geographically specific. However, what is clear and becomes clearer throughout the research process, is that a critique of the ontological basis of categories, does not mean that the categories themselves disappear (Ahmed, 2012, p. 182). Race, ethnicity and gender matter. They matter in the research process and they matter to whose stories are told and allowed to unfold. My own background, in particular being an outsider to African communities, significantly shaped the nature of the relationships I built throughout the research process and the limits imposed on those relationships. To recognise the implications of our position as researchers, we need to critically reflect on how our social, material and embodied differences impact on the possibility for meaningful dialogue. However, reflexivity is also a practice made easier for those with the time, space and resources to critically reflect. Reflexivity can lead to a more nuanced understanding of the strengths and limitations of the given research but it is important to note that it is not transformative in and of itself.

There are many ways that ethical issues and inequalities in power became apparent to me during the research process. Tasked with the aim of translating, representing and interpreting the everyday experiences of others, research is fraught with power and ambiguity. Not only did I have significantly different life experiences from some women I worked with, English was often a second language for these women. The gaps between myself, as researcher, and women as, the researched, produced silences, gaps and omissions that were intensified without shared language. While English was common as a 'lingua franca' at many of the larger African events, a lack of funding for interpreters impacted on my access to newly arrived, less educated or more isolated women. As a result, ethnographic participatory observation became a crucial way to capture the cultural images, practices and performances that took place outside verbal dialogue. The aim of capturing these practices was not to

exoticise or essentialise cultural differences. Instead, the research process was designed to appreciate the social and spatial dynamics of collective experience and move away from the constraints of individual voice. These constraints were obvious from the moment of initial analysis, when the transcripts of women who had a good grasp of English spoke far louder than those that did not. As a result of this distortion, I tried to put the social rather than individual dynamics of language and voice front and centre of the study, attending to the institutional pressures that shape how and why woman are pressured into representing themselves and their communities in particular ways. Foregrounding collective experience was a way to work towards an account that all of the women who figure in this study, recognise as meaningful to their existence. It also allowed me to reflect on my own role as a researcher without indulging in, or shying away from, working with those who have experiences that I do not share or who are deemed to be different because of social markers of race, ethnicity or culture.

This leads me to the second reason why I chose sharing as a key research practice. The necessity of practicing sharing became apparent throughout the research process itself. As an outsider to African communities, sharing became an important way to situate my solidarity, build trust and create spaces for those otherwise silenced, to feel comfortable and invited to speak (Couldry, 2009). A key part of creating a space of comfort, was to work towards building the kind of relationships that are important in and of themselves, not only in relation to research findings. However, the research process can directly impede the building of sustainable and equitable relationships. Research helps to expose inequality in power, but the time and labour required to overcome these inequalities is limited by the pressures of the writing and/or funding process. Nevertheless, critically engaged ethnography begins with an ethical responsibility to address processes of unfairness or injustice within a particular lived domain (Madison, 2012, p. 5). Inspired by critical ethnography and action-research principles of reciprocal inquiry, I raised the idea of this study with women prior to undertaking it and suggested the possibility of using the findings in the form of community exhibitions, collective publications or other appropriate formats. It was quickly apparent that sometimes we offer to share what we think someone might want, rather than what they do want. A commitment to the community events that were already in play and engagement in everyday acts of reciprocity (such as helping women with homework or interpreting forms) and friendship, were more meaningful and necessary ways to contribute in the incessantly busy lives that these women lead. In addition, bimonthly participation in an African worker's

network, culminated in the drafting of a good practice guide for service providers working with African communities in Sydney.

Breaking down boundaries between researcher and researched allows for a "reflexive and continuous, an ongoing, embodied process of reflection" (Couldry, 2009, pp. 579–580). Similarly, this approach has blurred the lines of an ethnography that reports from the "outside", as an "outsider", on the "cultural Other" (Alexander, 2003, p. 108). But ethical research also involves the creation of boundaries. Consequently, the decision was made to refrain from including some data in the study and from interviewing women who I did not feel thoroughly understood that I was a researcher as well as volunteer in community events. In rearticulating the experiences of individual and collective narratives I also chose to disassociate certain women from anecdotes and to not directly cite my interviews and field notes in order to preserve anonymity for what is a relatively small collective of women. Further, I have attempted to address the asymmetry inherent in the act of sharing someone else's story by engaging women and settlement staff in follow-up conversations about the direction of the research. For some women, I have sat and read excerpts of writing that pertain to their stories. At the end of 2017, I will work with the African Workers Network and African Women's Group in Sydney to present the findings at a one day conference proposed by the network.

It is through ethnography that I was able to bring to life these various elements of a feminist research methodology. Ethnography privileges an "engaged, contextually rich and nuanced type of qualitative social research, in which fine grained daily interactions constitute the lifeblood of the data produced" (Falzon, 2009, p. 2). Ethnography enabled me to delve into the social world of the women in this study. I began by observing the forms in which women gather in particular locales in western Sydney[5] and then progressed to higher levels of analysis according to the emergent subject matter. The research became multi-sited and multi-scalar in the sense that it followed "people, connections, associations and relationships

[5] Western Sydney was chosen specifically for its socio-economic and cultural diversity. The Aboriginal people of Western Sydney have been a consistent presence with the Dharug/Dharuk linguistic groups and the Gandangara in the south-west of Western Sydney populating land that was subsequently colonised. According to Population ID census blog (Glen, 2015), Greater Western Sydney contains around 9% of Australia's population and 44% of Sydney's population. Western Sydney is highly diverse, with 38% of the population speaking a language other than English at home. Suburbs such as Cabramatta, Bankstown, Canley Vale have over 80% of their population speaking a language other than English and some of the highest non-English speaking rates in Australia besides remote Aboriginal communities.

across space" (Falzon, 2009, pp. 1–2). At times these connections led outside western Sydney and to social relations and forms of social organisation that generated differences in experience at multiple scales (Smith, 2005, p. 62). Ethnography allowed me to follow these multiple threads and bring together insights from the micro-everyday practices of individuals, the meso-organisation of collectives and my insights on macro-institutional structures. I could put into practice a more nuanced understanding that, "individual's experiences are socially organised, and as such, the research begins by examining the individuals' experiences but then proceeds to explore how the broader social relations have shaped them" (Perry, Judith Lynam, & Anderson, 2006, p. 177). The next section will provide a brief description of methods.

Methods

Research for this study was conducted at different intervals from 2012 to 2016. As part of my field work I conducted ethnographic participatory research as a participant and volunteer at the African Village Market in Parramatta for one-two days a week for an eight-month period and at the African Women's Dinner Dance in Granville and Canley Vale, the Intercultural Exchange in the Hunter Valley, International Women's Day events in Parramatta and at selected times, the African Worker's Network meetings which were held in either Blacktown, Parramatta or Granville. Many of these events were run by the African Women's incorporaddition, I attended rotating credit schemes in a collection of homes in western Sydney, information sessions held by service providers and local councils located in Liverpool, Blacktown, Parramatta and Lakemba and informal barbeques and picnics held throughout western Sydney. I recorded field notes by hand or phone and selectively took photographs (all unattributed photos are my own). I also draw on the data from two focus groups I ran with service providers working with African communities for the African Worker's Network and for which I gained ethics approval.

The ethnographic study was complemented by interviews with thirty women, twenty-seven of which were recorded and transcribed. Participants came from Zimbabwe, Ghana, North and South Sudan, Rwanda, South Africa, Ethiopia, Kenya, Congo, Somalia, Sierra Leon and also included five non-African service providers working with African communities in Sydney. Interviews and conversations were conducted in English. Interviews were in depth, semi-structured and ranged from half an hour to two and a half hours in length. Interviewing was not a tool to produce an account of the truth of women's experience but provided a context

to explore how women ascribe meaning to their lives in lieu of the events and spaces that they were or were not, participants in (McMichael & Manderson, 2004). Throughout the thesis, interview material has been documented word for word and reproduced here as spoken, and interviewees have been given pseudonyms unless they requested otherwise. Access to participants was gained through involvement in events and through the snowball technique, "the process of accumulation as each located subject suggests other subjects" (Rubin & Babbie, 2009, p. 149). Because of the make-up of the spaces I was working in, no white Africans figured in this study. Emerging data also provided the basis for further interviews where sampling was purposive and iterative. The selection of respondents is not representative and reflects my intent to reflect the complexity of the participants' different entanglements and commitments to community.

Outline of the Current Work

This thesis begins with a historical discussion on sharing, contextualising the relationship between migrant women and the welfare state and then progressing to the bulk of the empirical work in Chapters Three–Seven. The empirical chapters begin by drawing on the reflections of initial arrival that were provided in interviews and conversations. I then combine ethnographic observation, participation and interview data to explore the community spaces that evolve. The progression of the narrative is roughly chronological in that it reflects the way that women provided an account of their lives after arriving in Australia. As a composite of different stories, the narrative provides a fluid mapping of the conditions that influence how and to what extent a community "emerges".[6] In these chapters I aim to provide the reader with an insight into the emergent properties of African women's groups by looking at the different ways that community is imagined and practiced in key social spaces and in the visions of key community organisers.

Chapter Two begins by drawing on the etymology of sharing to suggest that sharing can provide an alternative, counterhegemonic discourse on economies and communities.

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[6] In official policy rhetoric, a new and emerging community refers to those that have new arrivals, which are small in number or have significantly increased numbers within a five-year period, tend not to have community infrastructure and organisations and comprise of individuals who are unfamiliar with government services. It is a term that is often used in relation to place based allocation of resources for new arrivals that have a shared national identity, regional identity or ethnicity (Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia, 2010)

Alternative discourses entail a recognition of complex histories of capitalism and colonialism. Such histories are erased in contemporary discussions that treat migrants as a problem or alternatively, focus disproportionately on "active citizenship", "harmony" or "social cohesion". By surveying the nexus between social service provision and multiculturalism in Australia, I will suggest that these histories are also embedded within the public spaces we move through and are institutionalised in the public provision of the services we access. The gendered and racialised ways that migrant women have been included/excluded from the nation forms the basis of their social, political and economic organisation. The chapter concludes with a brief typology of sharing that can be used as a guide for Chapters Three–Seven. The typology maps the shifting social and spatial dimensions of sharing as a practice that spans the interpersonal domain of exchange, the collective and the institutional.

Chapter Three moves to discuss my fieldwork directly. It will begin with memories of initial arrival. These memories overwhelmingly portray a sense of being "out of place" and spatially marginalised. Particularly for those of refugee background, everyday experiences of disorientation are compounded by precarious housing situations and a "vacuum" in support between services and newly arrived communities. Without the social relationships to anchor a sense of being in place, women experience a sense of invisibility. Despite having fundamentally different resettlement experiences, those of refugee, skilled and student backgrounds experience being racialised in similar ways while moving through public spaces. In this chapter I will suggest that uninhibited movement through, and belonging in space is fundamental to our sense of trust, comfort, and wellbeing. The experiences of non-belonging explored in this chapter lay the foundation for the collective affinities that form across differences. These experiences also contribute to the emotional intensity of *feeling at home*. This chapter concludes with a caveat to "the community", communities are always sites of exclusion as well as inclusion.

Chapter Four traces initial movement towards support. The literature on critical geographies of home (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Brickell, 2012), sets the scene for approaching home as an imaginative space of emotion and belonging. The meaning women attribute to feeling at home, is intensified as a consequence of the non-belonging experienced on initial arrival. Sharing with one another is a way that they form alternative, sometimes transitory spaces of welcome. Unsettling the dynamics of host and guest, they actualise new places to create a sense of belonging. Here sharing is replete with place and performance, where the sensorial

and embodied aspect of sharing space, helps solidarities form across conflict and difference. Together, Chapters Two and Three draw attention to the emotional work that is attached to engaging newly arrived communities and creating inviting community spaces. Chapters Five–Seven look at what happens to the value of this emotional work as community events expand to include more participants and enter more public spaces.

Chapter Five traces this expansion by capturing the moments when women are confronted with the rules and regulations of local councils and state-funded and non-profit organisations. Based primarily on ethnographic observation, it will focus on the micro, ordinary moments when women discover "institutional walls" (Ahmed, 2012). New rules, roles and responsibilities create walls to the participation of migrant and culturally diverse women. While drawing on the metaphor of "walls" helps to bring to life the lived experience of institutions, I am primarily interested in capturing how institutions become instituted over time through processes, not through solid organisational walls. Complex forms of accountability shift how and when women can share with one another. In this chapter I will argue that institutional involvement influences how diverse communities are imagined and practiced in often subtle and invisible ways.

Key community organisers are at the forefront of this shift, brokering between organisations and their communities. Chapter Six looks at the experience of these brokers, arguing that as sharing becomes institutionalised as a form of community work, already existing differences comes to the fore. The boundaries between formal and informal institutions are difficult to discern. Rather than simplify the points of messiness, I focus on what we can learn from observing changing practices of sharing and how they correspond to institutional imperatives of managing difference and economic efficiency. An increasingly moralised approach to community is adopted which coalesces with discourses of individual responsibility and active citizenship. However, this chapter will argue that the collective remains a key site where the burden of state risk and responsibility is transferred and pooled. I argue that the way that "community" is moralised as a site of change and empowerment speaks to the upward mobility of brokers. This chapter locates changing visions of the African community in the materiality of competitive funding and the limited access to social and material resources that this system entails.

Chapter Seven delves more fully into these tensions, providing a broader structural overview of where the labour of sharing sits in relation to an increasingly marketised welfare state. In

this chapter I explore where the voices and experiences of these women sit in relation to the mainstreaming and streamlining of women's and migrant's specialist services. I suggest that how women negotiate structural antagonism in their everyday lives provides an insight into the complex intersections between home, community and work. Evidence of the shift of public risk, responsibility and accountability from the state to the community can be found in their everyday practices, homes and community spaces. The emotional labour of community work is essential to the inclusion of African communities in the provision of services, as outlined in Chapters Three and Four. However, their labour is symbolically recognised but materially, women are denied stable funding and employment. The conclusion argues that despite institutional pressures, women find their own creative strategies to continue sharing, displaying an *unruly mobility* (Gupta, 2006; Swanton, 2014; Qian, 2015) to struggle for autonomy and self-definition. I suggest that movement through welfare institutions simultaneously creates the conditions for misrecognition and a struggle for recognition. Mapping the subtle manifestations of this struggle for women of African background in western Sydney will provide an insight into the complex relationships between migrant community groups and the institutions of multicultural Australia.

Chapter Two

Sharing on the Margins: Race, Gender and Social Support

At one point, not too far into my fieldwork, I accompanied Fathia, a Northern Sudanese friend to Blacktown, a forty-five to fifty-minute train ride outside the centre of Sydney. We arrived at a stand-alone garage that was attached to a small fibro house, flanked by the busy Western Sydney train line. The garage was converted into a hair and beauty shop and attended by two of the women's nieces visiting from Western Australia. It was here that Fathia had her hair cut and braided me, three other women (and occasionally her husband) drunk tea, ate popcorn and watched. One woman meticulously started to prepare the afternoon coffee. The roasting of green coffee beans over hot coals and the accruing smell of sugar, cardamon and coffee, put my one-minute tea brewing ritual to shame. The careful preparation and offering up of this coffee contrasted to the speed of the conversation, the sporadic switching from Arabic to English. These were shifts that spoke of happenings in Sudan and Sydney; changes of friends and changes in government. While one woman talked about how she had shared money so that a friend could go and visit Sudan for a funeral, another talked about pooling money for cheap land outside Khartoum. All of this was disrupted by a longer conversation on the opportunities and constraints of setting up home childcare in your house and how Centrelink, the national social security provider, would be involved in the process.

Nothing out of the ordinary took place on that afternoon in Blacktown. However, I draw on this anecdote because it provides an insight into sharing as an everyday practice where friendship, ideas, resources and support are offered and received. The afternoon's conversations also provide a hint of the larger questions that arise when looking at sharing between women, the location and its role in the provision of social support; whether through childcare, work, access to money or information regarding services available. Migrant women's sharing practices are shaped by the access they have to social and material resources. These resources are not necessarily territorially bound and can include transnational practices of exchange, something they subtly hinted at during that afternoon.

However, national scale social welfare arrangements influence how they navigate between work, community and home and all within the four walls of the fibro garage. How and where women choose to care for their communities, can hint at the position migrants and refugees occupy in the nation. Policy-oriented approaches to resettlement and the migration-care nexus involve some significant ambivalences regarding how social, spatial and material inequalities shape women's access to support and their movement through spaces considered more or less public or private. In this chapter I will argue that sharing can sensitise us to how access to social and material resources shape the communities we build. Sharing speaks to more enduring tensions regarding social relations of support in advanced capitalism. The nature of these formal and informal social relations, can only be understood if we take into account the historical struggles over race, multiculturalism and welfare.

In this chapter, I argue that understanding the social world of migrant women today cannot be done without acknowledging how histories of capitalism and colonialism have shaped the discursive and material relations that position them today. I will suggest that the etymology of sharing can sensitise us to the social collectives in which we are embedded. In Australia, the basic conditions for participation in these collectives is the responsibility of the state. The provision of social services is a key way that participation and inclusion in the state is ensured for all citizens. To this end, I will briefly survey the nexus between social service provision and multiculturalism in Australia to contextualise the current involvement of migrant women in the community sector. The aim here is to provide a more nuanced view of socio-political continuity and change and in doing so, reveal the impact of an "actually existing neoliberalism" (Brenner & Theodore, 2002).

I will conclude this chapter with a brief typology of sharing practices that can be used as a guide to the different forms of sharing that can be observed in Chapters Three–Seven. A typology of the sharing practices can help to balance out the predominantly top down approaches to migrant women and institutional involvement. However, social practices of sharing do not neatly align with theoretical insights into exchange. I argue that sharing can help sensitise us to the intersections between the formal provision of social support and informal networks of support, resulting in a more nuanced understanding of migrant women's solidarity and belonging.

The Etymology of Sharing

The etymology of the word sharing provides a lens to conceptualise the social dynamics of identity, community and belonging. Sharing is related to the old English term, *scearu* which referred to a division, part, shaving or cutting (Merriam-Webster, 2017). *Scearu* was associated with the point where a whole of something begins to divide or where the trunk of a body begins to separate, as in the groin. Conceptualising sharing in relation to the body indicates that it is not only an act of division, but the point where we divide, is also the point where two parts meet a whole. *Scearu* does not help us reflect on the intent behind the division, the altruistic or instrumental reasons why the division takes place, but allows us to conceptualise sharing in relation to a collective social body. What we can learn from this definition of sharing is that it not only refers to the decision to provide others access to something you possess, but the means through which you can jointly possess. By dividing and sharing part of the 'whole', their access is fundamentally tied to your own access, and the nature of your access is changed as a result. If we use this image of a social body, sharing is not an isolated act of dividing or transferring, but an everyday practice that recognises the possibility of joint ownership and is reflective of our belonging in relation to a larger collective body. This collective body is not just composed of interdependent parts that allow it to function cohesively. I want to move beyond functionalism to suggest that how we relate to each other is integrally tied to histories of exclusion. Of particular importance for this study, is the role that race has historically played to exclude some from being considered part of the collective body. I want to briefly draw on the etymology of sharing to argue that a rounded discussion on migration, multiculturalism and welfare requires attention to the continued legacy of colonial histories of exclusion.

In the late sixteenth century, the meaning of the verb 'to share' went from a notion of apportioning out to others or enjoying or suffering something with others, to being used in relation to the capital of a joint stock company. The sixteenth century witnessed a complex reorganisation of power around three interrelated and inseparable factors: colonialism, capitalism and Eurocentrism (Hames-Garcia, 2008; Quijano, 2000). As physical territories were forcefully carved up, segmented and fenced, new borders of ownership went hand in hand with a new understanding of who belongs and where. Race emerges here as a social classification of the world's population; a classification that presupposes the existence of biological differences and a hierarchy of value among superior and inferior groups. According to Anibal Quijano's (2000) account of the origins of race, the creation of racial

hierarchies enabled new social and economic relations, at the same time as these relations created race. Changes to the relationship between land and value were part of the first stages in a capitalist development that would emphasise the ownership of an individual share, rather than collective ownership. Race played a key role in legitimating and naturalising the inequalities generated by early capitalism and its emphasis on the accumulation of profit. What is particularly pertinent for contemporary understanding of the relationship between race and capitalism, is the way that race justified an unequal division of labour, a division that remains structurally linked and reinforced today (Quijano, 2000, p. 536).

In Australia, complex histories of race and colonialism are erased by a popular and political discourse that focuses on equality, fair go and the productive benefits of diversity (Hage, 1998, 2003; Ho, 2009; Jupp, 2002; Vasta & Castles, 1996). In this context, making links between the past and the present remains important. Race remains linked to the division of opportunities, labour, participation and strongly relates to who is included in the national imaginary. In Australia, the national imaginary has a long legacy of being bound up with the effort to create an explicitly white society. Migrants, particularly those who are visibly different, come to epitomise a contradiction between the reality of multiculturalism and the persistent "imaginary that each society exists as a homeland with its own people" (Amin, 2013a, p. 1). This imaginary was linked to the efforts to create an explicitly white society (Lake & Reynolds, 2008). However, racism is no longer solely biological and cultural forms of racism have emerged where the use of ethnicity and religion emerges to justify systems of superiority and inferiority (Balibar, 1991). Without reducing the complexity of the present to that of the past, my aim here is to situate race as a set of ideas and institutional practices, that have a long historical legacy and play a continuing role in shaping wider sets of social, political and cultural relations (Goldberg, 2009). In addition, I want to suggest that human geographies are the result of racialised connections that mean communities today inhabit locations marked by legacies of violence and/or slavery (McKittrick, 2006).

Legacies of race relations in Australia play a key role in the formation of shared social spaces that emerge amongst African women in western Sydney. These spaces are also gendered and gendered experiences of migration and settlement influence the form that these spaces take and the meaning women bring to them. The historical conditions through which reproductive labour has been imposed on women, shapes the terrain of women's organisation, agency and struggle. Social and sexual divisions of reproductive labour have shaped notions of paid and unpaid work and influenced the place of women, particularly

black women (Collins, 1991), in relation to the public. Practices developed in the social reproduction of families and communities have been passed over generations and represent the creation of common wisdom and collective knowledge acquired through experiences of oppression and resistance (Collins, 1991; Federici, 2004; Lemke-Santangelo, 1996). Shared social spaces are where collective knowledges are embodied and transmitted and where alternatives to the dominant or hegemonic can be negotiated. Shifting attention to "life on the margins" (Fortier, 2000, p. 106) helps us to understand who is included/excluded and what alternative forms of knowledge and practices exist away from the dominant. Black women in diasporas across the world have innovatively worked to produce alternative spatial and social practices to provide for themselves and their communities (McKittrick, 2003). In this sense, a discussion of the global circulation of race and capitalism can help situate the current study in the context of a wider conversation about black diasporas (Bailey, 2012; P. . Collins, 1991, p. 32; Ejorh, 2011; Frost, 2002; Kanneh, 1998; Lemke-Santangelo, 1996; Mapedzahama & Kwansah-Aidoo, 2013; Ndhlovu, 2014; Nielsen, 2011; Pasura, 2014).

To sum up, the idea of sharing as the point where the body divides, has remained apt for the study of sharing patterns. Micro, interpersonal practices of sharing have consistently been related to the larger social bodies of community and society. From anthropology to sociology and political economy, the social body has been conceptualised as a functioning bounded entity. Functionalist approaches have focused on the integrative potential of sharing with theoretical and empirical implications for conceptualising sharing at the micro and macro levels. On the micro level, it has resulted in a focus on individual intention and the instrumentality behind sharing rather than the affective sociality of exchange. On a macro level, viewing the collective body as a cohesive whole has implications for the study of sharing in highly differentiated societies, raising questions about how difference and power is accounted for when the nation is still conceived of as a bounded entity associated with shared identification based on national identity. The implied functionalism of many of these approaches fails to acknowledge the role that historical relations of power and inequality play in who shares what and with whom. The aim of this discussion has been to re-centre power relations in an analysis of race and gender that is sensitive to the changing dynamics of capitalism. Sharing and associated forms of exchange, such as reciprocity and gift giving, were first approached in the context of what were perceived to be traditional, pre-capitalist contexts of exchange (Mauss, 1989). However, sharing can sensitise us to contemporary struggles over social and material resources and questions regarding who is considered part of and included in, the collective social body. Do we account for historical legacies of

racialised and gendered exclusion in the contemporary inclusion of difference? Does a declining welfare state increase the burden on individuals to compete for an individual share, reinscribing new forms of exclusion? These are some of the many questions that set the scene for understanding the relationships between sharing and the welfare state.

Difference and the Welfare State

In the liberal, democratic context practices of sharing are negotiated within the boundaries of the nation-state, the modern guarantor of social, political and economic inclusion (Bond, 2006). The welfare state apparatus was formed as part of the state's role to provide a protective safety net in the face of the damaging impact of market forces. In market economies, it is not enough to have a society of individuals searching for ownership of their own individual share of profits. The state needed to play an active role in protecting for social contingencies, in the form of sickness, unemployment and other factors that might make an individual less able to reach their full potential (Williams & Johnson, 2010). The contemporary liberal welfare state carries the burden of redistribution, a burden that recognises that people have differential access to social, political and economic inclusion and accepts that some sharing of profit is necessary to ameliorate social exclusion (Briggs, 1961). The infrastructure of the welfare state helps to deliver the social services which ensure a basic level of wellbeing and participation in society. The universal provision of welfare would ensure that members of society that are not equally placed to participate would be afforded the same opportunities as those that are. Consequently, universal welfare would help to ensure social solidarity and cohesion by fostering equality (Esping-Andersen, 1991). As part of this welfare state, the provision of social services provides a relief from the fluctuations of the labour market and help to decouple the living standards of individual citizens from their 'market value'. As a consequence, individuals are protected and not totally dependent on selling their labour power in the market and valued for more than their monetary worth (Lister, 1998b).

However, in practice economic constructions of the welfare state have gone hand in hand with gross inequalities in other domains of race and gender. The welfare state in Australia has developed alongside the ongoing exclusion (and violent acts of inclusion) of its Aboriginal inhabitants. In addition, the White Australia policy was explicitly theorised as an exercise in social justice; protecting labour and working conditions for white men and women (Lake & Reynolds, 2008, pp. 153–154). Race relations have played a fundamental

role in constituting national welfare arrangements. Contemporary multiculturalism continues to struggle with the question of how to recognise and include diverse communities and different needs in the provision of welfare. Writing about race, welfare and difference, Williams and Johnson (2010, p. 18) suggest that while,

> Challenges are increasingly made to the universalist assumptions of public service delivery, to public service values, to notions of professionalism and to the discriminatory practices that serve to replicate the relations of privilege and power between different categories of citizen. Ethnic diversity is still far from an embedded feature of service delivery.

Putting into place a framework that can address the needs of diverse cultural and ethnic groups remains a persistent tension in the contemporary manifestations of welfare provision. The institutional inclusion of difference and diversity has an impact on the opportunities for the societal participation of migrant and culturally diverse women. An ongoing tension between principles of universal access and acknowledgement of difference has shaped the form and content of migrant struggles for institutional inclusion in Australia. Politically, the abandonment of the White Australia policy in the 1970s had a significant impact on changes to the cultural and social institutions that were transferred from Britain (Aitkin, 2005, p. 2,7). The establishment of Ethnic Affairs Commissions, Ethnic Community Councils and SBS Radio shifted the status of migrants in the public sphere (Ang, Hawkins, & Dabboussy, 2008). The informal activities of migrant collectives, which were previously less documented, began to be recognised for their role in alleviating the social and economic discrimination that culturally diverse communities faced in the everyday (Henderson, 1975). When it came to including migrants in the provision of social services, *Galbally Committee of Review of Post Arrival Programs and Services to Migrants* (1978) provided a new institutional recognition that migrants bring with them diverse and unique experiences and require diverse and unique forms of support. The Galbally Report, saw funds channelled into language teaching, settlement services and smaller migrant organisations, which the report argued were the best channels for the provision of support to ethnic communities (Galbally, 1978). Principles of ethno-specificity were institutionalised with the opening of the first migrant resource centre in the late 1970s. Ethno-specificity, emphasises the governance of migrants by other migrants who share the same national, ethno-racial and linguistic backgrounds. These institutionalised shifts in the inclusion of difference were accompanied by a civil society response. The Community Refugee Settlement Scheme, Good Neighbour

Movement, Rural Australians for Refugees and Ethnic Community Councils were community groups and organisations that played a role in the paid and unpaid support that was provided for migrants in between the state and community (Coombs, 2004; Gosden, 2006). I mention this participation to underscore that voluntary sector schemes have always played key roles in the provision of social services to refugees and migrants. Community sector volunteering and state-funded services have together created one of the most comprehensive resettlement programs in the world (Fozdar & Hartley, 2013). Yet the inclusion of migrants in the provision of social services has always been subject to contestation.

In Australia, the provision of ethno-specific services has been a particular site of contestation. Voices of conservative commentators, such as Geoffrey Blainey in the 1980s, suggested that recognition of difference encouraged "ethnic tribalism" and created powerful and costly ethnic lobbies (cited in Jupp, 2002, pp. 103-04, 110-112). These criticisms implied that migrant solidarity or 'difference' more generally, would threaten social cohesion — a cohesion that rested on a defined national identity based on Anglo-European ideals. In this respect, the institutionalisation of difference in the provision of welfare, has always been influenced by fluctuating popular and political debates regarding multicultural policy. Multiculturalism has always been as much invested in national identity as in managing diversity (Pardy & Lee, 2011). It is a particular model of inclusion that has been challenged a number of times in Australian history and in accordance with changing conceptions of how best to manage diversity (Jakubowicz, 2008; Vasta & Castles, 1996). The assumption that diversity threatens solidarity has not fuelled the same preoccupation with social cohesion and integration that is prevalent in western Europe (Holtug, 2010; Vasta, 2010). However, it is an assumption that has played a role in challenging the Federal Government's ministerial portfolio on multiculturalism in 2004 and again in 2013, when the incoming conservative government opted for the ministerial title of Immigration and Border Protection instead.

Discourses of social cohesion have played an important role in undercutting the institutionalised forms of welfare available to culturally diverse communities. Appealing to a politics of fear, Jakubowicz (1988, p. 39) argued that "social cohesion" is used as a "skeleton on which the moral order hangs" while on the other hand, "cultural difference meets little more than silence". These moral dimensions can be observed in shifting citizenship requirements for migrants and refugees, for example, the substance of a national citizenship test and values statement that was introduced to help solidify a defined set of national values

(Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2007). The point here is that following trends also detailed in the UK, ethnic voluntary organisations have been entangled in the rhetoric of social cohesion. The result is that support is increasingly tied to their ability to foster cohesion rather than the provision of culturally appropriate services for communities and by communities (Williams & Johnson, 2010, p. 85).

The concern that ethno-specificity solidifies ethnic group cleavages and threatens Australian national identity has led to a decline in support for ethno-specific services in favour of mainstream services (Kelaher & Manderson, 2000; Ho, 2009). This decline is referred to as common knowledge amongst community sector workers applying for funding grants. However, between policy and practice, the evidence for a decline in funding for ethno-specific groups is more complicated. Funds are still available to ethno-specific communities with complex needs but these funds are limited in favour of a broader push towards the provision of mainstream services (Simon-Kumar, 2014). Importantly, following international trends, discourses on social cohesion have converged with economic doctrines of service provision in complex ways (Newman, 2013; Squires, 2005; Williams & Johnson, 2010). As I have argued so far, the management of diversity and difference has always been integrally related to political-economic shifts in how capital is accumulated. As Andrew Jakubowicz (1988, p. 37) has noted in an early analysis of Australian migration policies, the question of social solidarity is one that has "haunted Australian capitalism and the state—it is not solely a problem of multiculturalism". The current migrant policy in Australia reflects a wish to create an immigration and resettlement policy that aims to maximise the economic gains of migration and at the same time, minimise the apparent 'social costs' of resettlement (Walsh, 2011). Such a policy produces manifold implications for the inclusion of difference and diversity. How economic imperatives have impacted on the provision of services for migrants remains an unanswered question. Similarly, it is not clear whether and to what extent, the burden of inclusion has shifted from the state to citizen or to the civic space in between. The next section will look at these questions through the rise of discourses of active citizenship. These discourses provide context for how migrants are invited to participate in the nation.

Measuring Active Citizenship

During the 1980s, the introduction of "economic rationalism" (Pusey, 2003) in Australia followed trends from neoliberal Thatcherism in the UK and Reagan's conservatism in the US. With financial deregulation and a limit to public sector involvement in the Australian

economy, the restructuring presented challenges to the state's traditionally redistributory role (Pusey, 2003). Neoliberalism is popularly associated with a retreat of the state. Rather than a complete retreat of the state, neoliberalism has seen an increase in the sites where the state was active. Scholars have argued that a diffusion of the state's responsibility for programs that impact on social and economic inclusion and exclusion (Trudeau, 2012). As the state sheds certain direct responsibilities for social welfare programs, the role of non-government organisations and local community organisations takes on a new meaning. These organisations now play a key role in the delivery of services. Writing in the context of the US, Dan Trudeau (2012) conceptualises their role as one of a "shadow state apparatus" where organisations working under state contract provide services that were previously the responsibility of the state. The extension of state contracts, and transfer of responsibility, raises questions of what exactly constitutes the *public* provision of services (Newman, 2007). New forms of governance associated with neoliberalism have seen increased financialisation (including household micro-management of finances) and a shift in conventional understandings of the relationship between the state and the market, and the market and civil society (Larner, 2006). In Australia, governments have expanded publicly funded social provision without expanding the public sector, by directly subsidising the private provision of contracted services (Meagher & Goodwin, 2015). The blurred lines between the public and private delivery of services also changes the role that migrants and migrant civil society play in the provision of support for their communities.

The emphasis on active citizenship is one point where discourses and policies of neoliberalism converge with that of multiculturalism and difference. Both reflect a concern with how to "manage" difference and engender social cohesion to produce economically productive citizens. In regards to the inclusion of cultural diversity, Maree Pardy and Julian Lee (2011, p. 299) have argued that active citizenship represents a movement away from "seeing multiculturalism as a state assisted response to the demands by immigrants, to a "new intergrationism" as state imposed and demanded of immigrants". Citizens are consequently now considered to be individuals with specific interests, rather than members of collectives (Ilcan & Basok, 2004). Writing in the context of community and social work practice, Baker Collins (2009, p.299) argues that economic imperatives have created a shift from "social citizenship" that guarantees social entitlements to "market citizenship' and an associated emphasis on individual responsibility and ownership". This shift shapes the terms upon which migrants are allowed to enter the nation.

However, the shift towards the responsible, active citizen is also part and parcel of a renewed interest in the voluntary sector, social capital and the community as key sources of social support and inclusion. An acknowledgement that unfettered neoliberalism has consequences for society has rejuvenated the idea that civil society and public institutions can present a viable 'third way' (Giddens, 2001; Boyle & Rogerson, 2006). The rise of the language of social capital is part of this larger reimagined role for collective civil society (Arneil, 2006). Together with an emphasis on partnership and collaboration, in theory, the shift towards civil society participation provides an opening for the inclusion of culturally diverse community groups.[7] Non-profit and volunteer organisations have the potential to provide more localised services and could be more responsive to the local needs of culturally diverse communities. However, it is not clear if this is as radical a shift as is suggested in the literature on neoliberalism and citizenship. In Australia, legislation, regulation, mandate and centralised planning have played and continue to play, a key role in the rollout of Australia's welfare state (Brown & Keast, 2005). Volunteers have always filled the gaps in an under resourced community sector and have organised at local, state and national levels to provide services that were formerly beyond the purview of governments bureaucracies (Brown & Keast, 2005; Darcy, Waterford, & McIvor, 2009). This is particularly the case in regards to migrant volunteer organisations which have mediated in various ways between migrants, their families, and society and in relation to the changing 'ethnic' identity that defines them. However, the introduction of contracted out and competitive funding impacts on the extent to which migrant community organisations can influence the "localised settings in which patterns of social interaction and social group formation are realised" (Agnew, 1996, p. 133).

The introduction of contracting out services and competitive funding changes the once relatively autonomous way in which voluntary agencies were supported. Contracted agencies are held strictly accountable to government requirements. Stringent accountability requirements have been interpreted as a way of silencing community organisations under the guise of market values of competition and choice (Darcy et al., 2009; N. Ryan, 2005). Structurally, contracted services have blurred the lines of accountability, placing strenuous

[7] In critical analysis of partnerships, the power dynamics involved with partnership and collaboration come to the fore. While the ideal of partnership is cooperation, mutuality and understanding (Peck & Tickell, 1994, p. 251), partnership has been interpreted as a new form of social governance based on trust and collaboration and a manifestation of the "failures of market mechanisms" (Jessop, 2002, p. 455). Larner and Craig (2005, p. 403), question whether "partnerships might signal a wider hybridisation of markets and societies, where market competition and contractual obligations are 're-embedded' in an 'inclusive' post-neoliberal consensus".

accountability requirements on community organisations that absolve the state of responsibility for the provision of social services (Brown & Keast, 2005, p. 514). Herein lies one of many contradictions apparent in the activation of community groups. While there is an emphasis on the importance of civil society participation, there is a corresponding decline in stable institutional support for these activities with the 'core funding' of larger organisations no longer guaranteed. This section has attempted to wade through the rhetoric of active citizenship. This rhetoric provides the context for understanding the conditions for migrant women's inclusion. However, to understand what these shifts in welfare mean for migrant women in their everyday lives, we need a conception of politics and participation that goes beyond any one set of institutions or political spaces. Women interact with and make meaning of these changes in their everyday lives.

The Politics of Sharing

In their everyday activities as professionals and practitioners, women are the central agents of the reconfiguration of state institutions (Schild, 2000, p. 277). Women provide much of the emotional labour associated with the reconfiguring of the community sector, building and sustaining relationships of support and the brokering between institutional and non-institutional settings (Larner, 2006; Mason, 2007; Neufeld, Harrison, Stewart, Hughes, & Spitzer, 2002). In the wake of institutional constraints and opportunities, migrant women have responded with distinctive forms of organisation. In Australia, migrant women have always worked within and outside the home to provide welfare for their communities. Their activities have taken place amid assimilatory pressures where institutional involvement has influenced how, where and in what form, women make political claims.[8] A gendered approach to this activity is necessary to conceptualise where this activity fits in relation to public and institutional forms of organising. Dominant social science definitions of power,

[8] In Australia, Christina Ho (2008) has detailed how the challenges migrant women face in their daily life have underpinned their more visible activist forms of organising. Crucially, Ho's analysis points to a number of tensions that continue to shape how women organise social support in their work, community and home lives. Firstly, women's groups are not highly visible and remain separate from trade union participation. Secondly, migrant women face exclusion from mainstream feminist developments. Quoting Ien Ang she suggests that "non-white women were recognised only to a certain extent: she argues that feminism functioned as 'a nation', one that invited 'other' women to join as long as they did not disrupt the ultimate integrity of that nation" (1995, p. 72, cited in Ho, 2008). Consequently, these marginalised women began to organise their own independent associations, the Immigrant Women's Speakout Association established in 1986 and the Association of Non-English Speaking Background Women of Australia in 1987.

activism and resistance fail to capture the meaning of these concepts as they are lived in the everyday lives of culturally diverse women. Collins (1991, p. 147) argues that they "fail to acknowledge that for members of some social groups, unofficial, private and seemingly invisible spheres of life and organisation can be just as important spaces for resistance as labour unions or political parties". Feminist citizenship practice also makes a case for acknowledging the less formal expressions of citizenship responsibility like community care and provisioning (Kershaw, 2010). Interaction with the social service state plays a key role in women's citizenship practice. The articulation of a feminist conception of citizenship, Lister (1998a) argues, is often achieved through women's contributions to struggles for welfare provision. It is when women negotiate with, struggle against or move through welfare institutions, that they enact their citizenship. Viewing citizenship as a practice of struggle rather than solely a formal status (while citizenship status remains crucially important), disrupts the public-private dichotomy associated with politics and situates citizenship as a practice of contestation. This contestation can take place in many different sites and through which, subjects become political (Isin, 2008, p. 282). I want to suggest a notion of the political that is not contained in any set of institutions or in particular public spaces but about struggles for recognition and the use and distribution of resources. To make this point Lister (1998, p. 27) draws on David Held's conception of politics:

> politics is about power; that is about the capacity of social agents, agencies and institutions to maintain or transform their environment, social or physical ... Accordingly, politics is a phenomenon found in and between all groups, institutions (formal and informal) and societies, cutting across public and private life. It is expressed in all the activities of cooperation, negotiation and struggle over the use and distribution of resources. It is involved in all the relations, institutions and structures which are implicated in the activities of production and reproduction in the life of societies.

Held's conception of power provides a framework to understand how demands and claims are not necessarily visible, resistant or transformative. This conception of politics is not separate from social life and operates on the many levels and in the many places where women gather to make political decisions (Pateman, 1989, p. 110). How, where, why and with whom women share with one another speaks to cooperation, negotiation and struggle over the distribution of resources. Sharing helps to capture a located and situated insight into "how multiple projects coexist. And also, how contradictions between them are resolved in *particular* sites at *specific* moments, and what forms of labor are at stake" (Newman, 2013, p.

206). As Newman suggests, such questions are empirical as well as theoretical. Focusing on migrant women at the intersection of their communities, the community sector and a wider national imaginary, provides an insight into how these struggles are influenced by the processes through which difference is managed in Australia.

In this discussion, I have attempted to synthesise the social, political and economic contexts that influences migrant women's participation and inclusion in the welfare state. I have suggested that histories of racialisation and gendering provide the context for the current way that difference is included in public institutions of welfare. However, the inclusion and management of difference interacts in complex ways with the political economy of neoliberalism. Migrant women's participation in the community sector can help shed light on this interaction. Theoretically, citizenship figures prominently throughout discussions of multiculturalism and welfare. However, I do not use citizenship as an overarching or sole explanatory concept. I suggest instead, as McNevin (2012, p. 199) articulated, "what do we fail to anticipate by attempting to contain the political solely within an analytics of citizenship?" Instead, sharing provides a way to glimpse how struggles over resources shape social imaginings of community at a variety of scales and in relation to the wider social articulation of difference (Bhabha, 1994). I now turn to provide a brief typology of sharing to help provide a map for the forms of sharing that can be discerned in the empirical Chapters Three–Seven.

A Typology of Sharing Practices

Persistent tensions characterise relationships of sharing in the advanced neoliberal context. As an interpersonal exchange, sharing is flexible, easily morphing into a form of lending, gifting or reciprocity. On a collective level, the different cultural scripts that guide sharing produce different meanings and systems of value. These tensions intensify as the act of sharing is oriented to an expanded collective and as it nears proximity to institutions of funding, where commodities are exchanged and produced. The relationships of sharing observed in this study can be categorised as four broadly different types that shift from least to the most institutionally engaged.

Using the term *sharing* to describe everyday practices of support is fraught with ambiguity and is difficult to map. The following typology attempts to capture the variety of ways sharing was referred to and observed in everyday interactions. In addition, it will briefly engage with

the anthropological and sociological literature on exchange. A typology of sharing can help shed light on the complex interaction between intention, practice and scale of activity and advance our understanding of migrant relationships of support.

Sharing Space

> There is no such thing as an "African community". We see each other on the street and, I recognise you, but I do not *know* you.

This previous quote came from a Rwandan man who was at pains to unpack the subtle dynamics of being associated with other African migrants in Australia, but not feeling part of an "African community". He explained that just because those from Africa recognise each other on the predominantly white Australian streets, initial recognition is not the same as *knowing* someone. His observation was in reference to the fleeting moments of recognition that take place when people share space with one another. Sharing space is a taken for granted but essential facet of what it means to share. Sharing space refers less to sharing as a form of exchange and more to the intangible, embodied and affective dimension of sharing. Shared space draws attention to the situated and relational nature of social exchange. It is this form of sharing that distinguishes it from other forms of exchange. While we share space with one another, we do not talk about *gifting* space to someone. That is, unless the space is commodified in the form of private property and involves a transferal of ownership.

What impact sharing space with one another has on us is less clear. As David Studdert (2005, p. 9) pointed out in his analysis of community, there is no sociological consensus "to the meaning experiential content and behavioural consequences of the primary condition of 'being with others' ". While merely "being with others" is not alone enough to generate shared identification, sharing space with others is a fundamental precondition for us to experience recognition (Honneth, 1995). Recognition relies on being recognised, in space, with another human being. In the everyday, sharing public spaces also provides the opportunity for encounters between strangers. The implicit role sharing space plays has resulted in analysis such as Gordon Allport's (1954) "contact hypothesis" which suggests that when different groups share space with one another they accrue a comfort and familiarity that lessens anxiety and results in less prejudice. In highly differentiated, multicultural city contexts, urban geography and sociology have broadened these behaviourist concerns to grapple with what role shared space plays in how we forge a sense of civic culture out of

difference (Amin, 2002; Valentine, 2008). How does the "throwntogetherness" (Massey, 2005, p. 151) of cities influence how we create a sense of "togetherness in difference" (Ang, 2003)? What is the character and quality of the ties that result from merely sharing space? Is proximity to one another or a "collectivity of space" (Sennett, 2000) enough to generate meaningful connections?

Whether fleeting, intimate or sustained over time, everyday interaction in shared spaces tells us about how we live with difference. In the context of the super diverse, multicultural city the micro-sociology of everyday interaction can provide a welcome alternative to top-down approaches to multicultural policy. In this vein, Wise and Velayutham (2009) have argued for a movement away from viewing multiculturalism as a set of policies "concerned with the management and containment of diversity by nation states" (p. 2) to a notion of *everyday multiculturalism*. Everyday multiculturalism is an approach that is attentive to the everyday practice and lived experience of diversity in specific situations and spaces of encounter (Wise and Velayutham 2009, p. 3). This approach takes into account that it is in the mundanity of everyday interaction that a rich array of interpretive possibility is contained. Yet micro-sociologies of everyday interaction are ultimately bound up with wider social, cultural and political processes that influence who shares space, how and with what effect.

Space is relational and our ability to share space and the meaning we bring to it changes according to our social and material relationships with others. In this respect, how we share space is highly gendered, with women facing more difficulties 'taking up space', in both a physical, and a social sense. This is despite holding a cultural burden to 'give more', and the traditional responsibility for maintaining family and community relations (Komter, 2005, p. 85). On a more general level, societal groups visibly marked as 'other' have differential access to comfort in different public or private spaces. An important consequence of this is that who they share with and where is shaped by their experience moving through space. How isolated, marginalised or invisible we feel as individuals and collectives, impacts on how we share space with others and the meaning that we attribute to shared social spaces.

Sharing as Hospitable Encounter

This aspect of sharing involves the offering of food, money, information or other tangible and intangible goods, such as friendship, support, stories or knowledge that were previously owned by you but are now offered up to another. Viewing sharing as a hospitable encounter focuses attention on the power of sharing to invite those who are relative strangers, into a

new social relationship. As an invitation, sharing is a flexible social relation and does not initially require the strong ties of family, friendship or solidarity. Locating a particular social distance that is required in order to initiate exchange between two or more parties is impossible to quantify. Sharing acts more as a mobile hospitable encounter that has the potential to open boundaries and provide a new space for mutual recognition. Here recognition refers to an intersubjective relation which results in the basic confirmation by others of the idea I have of my own value (Deranty & Renault, 2007, p. 99). Giving someone part of what is yours has the potential to be a relationship of recognition.

Customary codes for welcoming strangers and the rituals of hospitality that accompany these encounters, provide an insight into the cultural norms of behaviour and action that guide sharing (Lynch, Germann Molz, McIntosh, Lugosi, & Lashley, 2011). Sharing in these instances is intricately linked to norms of hospitality and takes place in intermediary spaces where giving a gift or generalised reciprocity is not required and where social relationships are not prefigured, but in process. However, there are other facets of hospitality that hint at the multidimensionality of sharing in hospitable encounters. For example, Ben Jelloun (1999, p. 1) describes hospitality as a reciprocal right to protection and shelter, suggesting that hospitable encounters involve, "an action (a welcome), an attitude (the opening of oneself to the face of another [...] and the opening of one's door and the offering of the space of one's house to a stranger), and a principle (disinteredness)". Sharing is often an act of hospitality, but it raises pertinent questions regarding the attitudes, principles and ethics that guide the act. In this sense, it touches closely on theories of gift giving and reciprocity.

In practice, the differences between sharing and other forms of exchange such as lending, generalised reciprocity and in particular, gift giving, are difficult to discern. What is notable in most instances is that sharing does not have the formality of gift giving and displays a degree of normative freedom that gift giving does not. For example, sharing has none of the frills of giving a gift such as the focus on occasion or the ritual of wrapping and has little to do with the norms surrounding the appropriate way to receive a gift, open it and reciprocate (Komter, 2007, pp. 94–97). In contrast, sharing can seem so under-ritualised that it can easily go unnoticed to observers. This is particularly the case because it is not even always clear what the object being shared is, when it is stories, support and social space being offered as an invitation to another. Yet, since Bronislaw Malinowski's (1993/1922) work on the Kula Ring as a form of gift giving and Marcel Mauss's (1989) exposition of gift exchange, it has been clear that intention remains important. Goods are not solely exchanged for

economic profit but they are also "vehicles and instruments for realities of another order: influence, power, sympathy, status, emotion" (Levi-Strauss, 1996, p.19 cited in Komter, 2005, p. 110). However, attention to sharing as a situated spatio-temporal act helps to draw attention to the unobservable in sharing and the fact that the exchange cannot be easily located in the actions or intentions of the giver or receiver or the 'object' exchanged, but in the social space and affective intensities, in between. Komter (2005, p. 110), separates the act of sharing from the attitude or intention behind the act. However, in the offering of something that is yours, the outstretched hand holding money, food, the physicality of the space and affective intensities in between, is often conflated with a particular set of 'we feelings' or sense of social solidarity. Why do we open the door, share our belongings or food, stop in the street and offer what is ours or be open for someone to share their stories and struggles? Answers to these questions are increasingly complicated in highly differentiated societies. In the small scale, pre-capitalist, context about which Malinowski and Mauss were writing, sharing was conflated with a more static notion of shared identification and belonging to a bounded community of people. From this context, practices of exchange have been interpreted as functional to the social solidarity of a community (Price, 1975). Sharing in the highly differentiated, city context troubles the association between the action of exchange and the intention to maintain a particular social order. A movement away from functionalist accounts of solidarity opens up the space to understand how practices of sharing are important in and of themselves rather than solely the means to a socially cohesive end.[9]

The reductionism of functionalist accounts of solidarity, where esteeming another is reduced to individual motivation and an intention to maintain a particular social order, fails to capture the far more complex role that trust plays in the invitation to share. Why do we share with someone when we do not know if they will be able to reciprocate? Sharing with those who cannot reciprocate demonstrates that new social relations can form despite asymmetries.

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[9] Emile Durkheim's writing in *The Division of Labour in Society* (1997/1893) played a significant role in functionalist definitions of solidarity. Durkheim offered two conceptions of solidarity. The first was mechanical solidarity, where society is organised in terms of the beliefs and sentiments common to all the members of the group and in which societal cohesion is the product of the homogeneity of individuals in a defined system. The second was organic solidarity, which arises from the increasing specialisation of work in industrial societies and relies on the interdependence generated from individuals fulfilling distinct functions in the division of labour (Durkheim, 1997/1893). For Durkheim, societal structure formed the basis of solidarity and solidarity then ensured the maintenance of societal structures. Talcott Parsons made this functionalist position more explicit when he defined solidarity as the "... generalised capacity to control and to bring into line the behaviour of the system's units in accordance with the integrative needs of the site" (Parsons, 1971, p. 41).

These relationships can evolve through the creation of systems of joint ownership rather than complete transferal of ownership (Kennedy, 2016). Sharing tells us about the social dynamics of trust; the ways we can, under particular conditions, surrender our ego for those different to us, outside our usual milieu or the occasionally anarchic bursts of surrender (Misztal, 1996; Simmel, 1971). Rather than explaining this surrender with reference to the exact amount of knowledge or cognitive familiarity necessary or what sharing means for one's relative social position, it is necessary to take into account the anticipatory nature of sharing, where the surrendering of one's ego in the form of deciding to share with them, is an act of invitation or faith; faith in our 'idea of being' — not just being, but being with others. In this sense, sharing as a hospitable act gets to the heart of recognition, it involves greeting another as a face and this face makes the conception of the other into a living presence, an expression, a discourse (Levinas, 1979, p. 66). Sharing as a hospitable act can consequently be situated as an act of recognition which goes beyond simply seeing each other in space to a process with which "subjects are normatively incorporated into society by learning to see themselves as recognised with respect to certain characteristics" (Nancy Fraser & Honneth, 2003, p. 249). Consequently, sharing as an invitation invites theoretical and normative questions about how we should relate to strangers and how a cosmopolitan, unconditional "universal hospitality" (Kant, 1957, p. 21, cited in Lynch et al., 2011, p. 7) could guide an inclusive solidarity and ethic of care, when strangerhood is the norm (Amin, 2013b; Parekh, 2008).

Sharing as Solidarity Economy

Hospitable encounters of sharing accumulate social recognition and at times, lead to the more consistent provisioning of goods, services and support. The extension of sharing from an interpersonal exchange to a wider network of participants can involve the sharing of childcare for friends, haircuts and beauty regimes, the lending of money, the importation and distribution of goods, the organisation of rotating credit schemes, the helping with homework and sharing information about available social services. The term 'solidarity economy' encompasses two necessary components of sharing. Sharing is an economy in the sense that there is an exchange for the social and material benefit of participants of a collective. Yet these acts of sharing also encompass significant intangible and emotional labour. Immaterial labour works in economies other than the directly fiscal (Spivak, 1985). Drawing on Spivak's assessment of value, Jarrett (2014) argued in relation to women's immaterial labour in digital economies, that acts of sharing also circulate within "symbolic,

social and cultural economies in which 'value' is constituted in terms other than the abstraction of 'labour time'" (Jarrett, 2014, p. 18). The boundaries around supporting and care as *reproductive* activities and the economic benefits of sharing with one another as *productive* activities are fugitive and permeable — sharing does not neatly fit into either (Collins et al., 2009, p. 28). Viewing multiple acts of sharing through the lens of informal economies of solidarity, helps bring these two facets of sharing together and provides a reminder that social relationships of sharing have a value in and of themselves, rather than always a means to an end.

Sharing makes explicit the social embeddedness of all forms of economic exchange (Polanyi, 1971). Political economists and economic sociologists have long located the value of sharing as a form of exchange that helped communities access scarce resources. Unexpectedly, anecdotes about hunters and gatherers offer understanding about how pooling the day's spoils and sharing them with a wider collective is necessary for the survival and, ultimately, for benefit of all involved (Wenzel, Hovelsrud-Broda, & Kishigami, 2000). Sharing is thus situated as a pragmatic act of exchange, guided by instrumental motives: if you share now, someone else will share with you when you are in need. However, in practice, the solidarity economy is also more complex than the basic necessities of survival. Economic interpretations of sharing situate value in a set of tangible material, economic exchanges and elicit a utility hierarchy of shared objects. In practice, even something as material and tangible as the sharing of money is embedded within other, less instrumental, social rituals of exchange. The interplay between tangible and intangible, affective and material raises questions about how to locate 'value' in solidarity economies. While profit and loss are useful for describing the exchange of money in a developed economic system, they are deeply misleading with respect to sharing (Simmel, 1971, p. 50). Trying to quantify participation in coffee rituals, shared childcare days, dancing and the sharing of stories ignores the affective and intangible aspect of sharing. The reason why individuals engage with one another in a collective cannot be fully explained through scarcity or demand, or the value of objects alone as some objects gain their value only as they are desired in exchange (Simmel, 1971, p. 58). In extended networks of sharing, cooking extra food to share with neighbours sits alongside the baby sitting of children when mothers have appointments, but trying to value these exchanges through the value of an isolated object limits our understanding of sharing at a collective scale. Here value cannot be easily located in particular objects exchanged or in accordance with a prior valuation of the objects being exchanged (Simmel, 1971, p. 57). In solidarity economies value is relational, created in

between the giver and receiver, through the social processes of sharing and the culturally inflected ways we come to practice it. In this sense, sharing cannot be explained by focusing on the intention of the giver or receiver but like other forms of "exchange constitutes a third process, something that emerges when each of those two processes is simultaneously the cause and the effect of the other" (Simmel, 1971, p. 57).

However, economies are also subject to the environments in which they operate. The use of space, resources and the access to channels of distribution can be subject to informal and formal regulation. Informal economies can also produce or be produced by the formation of groups defined by their role in provisioning for the community. Group formation together with a more goal-oriented practice increases the expectation of reciprocity. Expectations change according to the amount of exchanges taking place, the length of time we share and changing circumstances. Together with the potential for institutional regulation, sharing economies are subject to significant change and variation.

Sharing as Community Work

In contrast with solidarity economies of sharing, community work directly facilitates the activities of the community. To understand micro practices of sharing as forms of community work I have broadly drawn on social work literature and particularly the work of Collins et al (2009) on women's informal provisioning. Caroline Moser (1989) suggests that low income women in different societies engage in reproductive and productive labour and also have a 'triple role' through their engagement in community-managing activities. Community work includes the collective organisation of social events and services, rituals, celebrations and activities to improve participation in groups and organisations. However, these activities can take place informally or through more formalised group processes or organisations. For many women there is a recognition that if events are organised outside school hours, if child care is not provided or if transport, caring responsibilities, food preparation is not taken into consideration, then community spaces cannot function. Therefore, this form of sharing is a form of social provisioning, but for collective consumption (Collins et al., 2009; Moser, 1989). This form of sharing plays a particular role in alleviating disadvantage in the community. We see this form of sharing in accounts of community rosters for visiting asylum seekers held in detention and in the offers of couches to homeless asylum seekers without employment.

The community work of sharing exposes the permeable boundaries between friends, family, community, home and work. These boundaries are politicised ones but the tensions between paid and unpaid forms of labour do not always figure in discussion of community work practice. When formal employment in the community sector professionalises community work, sharing as an invitation and a human encounter, can sit in tension with sharing as a form of commodity exchange. Similarly, turning 'community' into 'work' has implications for the flexibility of sharing as it can involve the fixing of boundaries of who and what is included in the community. The fixing of community boundaries is exacerbated by conditional funding or policy dictates that separate communities via differences that are not always understood. For example, even more obvious and meaningful policy distinctions between refugees and migrants can be a source of antagonism when both groups are trying to work collectively together. While the community sector does not follow a strict competitive market model, competition for resources and visibility, shifts the burden of redistribution onto community groups. Struggles for institutional recognition form in the wake of the shift from informal to formal, unpaid to paid. As Deranty and Renault (2007, p.101) argue, "institutions not only express recognition or denial of recognition, they also produce different kinds of recognition and different denials of recognition". A key reason that sharing as a form of community is often not institutionally recognised is that it is gendered labour. Much of the community work that women partake in, particularly the affective, immaterial labour, has been sidelined in favour of productive rather than socially-reproductive labour (Cameron & Gibson-Graham, 2003; Gutierrez-Rodriguez, 2014; Jarrett, 2014; Kershaw, 2010).

Sharing as a form of community work can sensitise us to the ways identity categories are constantly reassessed in relation to the material needs of communities. In this sense, the recognition is inextricably linked to redistribution and the recognition gained from interpersonal acts of sharing is related to wider structures of support. As Deranty and Renault (2007, pp. 99) suggest, "it is inaccurate to analyse subjectivation as occurring outside an institutional framework. It is always within institutional frameworks that individuals address their demands for recognition towards other individuals and institutions. Similarly, socialisation is not only the internalisation of social roles, "this internalization goes together with an effort to transform institutions and the recognition effects they produce" (Deranty & Renault, 2007, p. 104). Who we choose to share with and why can draw attention to the way that individual identities are inextricably linked to the treatment of collectives. Individual and collective struggles are interdependent with individual wellbeing and self-esteem linked to

processes of inclusion and exclusion that operate on the collective level as much as the individual level (Martineau, 2012, p. 164).

Conclusion: A Map of Sharing to Trace the Shifting Burden

Social practices of sharing do not take place in a vacuum, neatly aligning with theoretical insights into exchange. They happen in everyday spaces where individuals face differential access to social and material resources. As has been shown, situating sharing as an everyday practice and a sensitising concept has implications for micro and macro level research on interpersonal exchange and collective organisation. In this typology, I have largely moved away from a focus on individual intention so that I can focus attention on the different forms and scales of collective practices of sharing. However, the typology has the potential to bridge the divide between a focus on intentionality and a multiscalar, practice approach. Table 1 goes some way towards mapping the relationship between intention in different forms of sharing. Sharing space can be unintentional but as an interpersonal, material, embodied act, it requires individuals to be in physical proximity. Sharing as a hospitable encounter or act of invitation, is intentional. It is guided by an ethic surrounding the act of extending ownership to someone else. This extension can take place as an interpersonal exchange or has the potential to extend beyond to become a form of collective provisioning that does not require direct proximity. Lastly, sharing as a form of community work involves the intention to recast the boundaries between the individual and the collective. Through everyday practices and collaborative activities, sharing at the level of community generates shared goals and shared intentionality.

Table 1: The intentionality and scale of sharing

Sharing →	***Scale:* Interpersonal →**	***Scale*: Collective**
Unintentional	Proximity	Shared space
Intentional	Sharing as invitation/hospitality	Solidarity Economy
Recasting boundaries between individual & collective	Synergetic sharing	Community Work

Table 1 is not presented as a strict guide to the sharing practices I trace in this thesis, but a complement to the typology. The table reiterates that a focus on the individual action and

decision to share with another is limited unless it is viewed in the context of collective intention and action. The different forms and scales of sharing help discern the social practices and processes through which individual subjects become collective. Intentionality does not have to be exclusively individual and the individual intention to share is related to and can derive from, shared collective intentionality. Collective representations and feelings are not the product of a single intention or of the simple addition of single intentions; as a totality, they are greater than the sum of its parts (Searle, 1990). The forms of sharing outlined in this typology require different amounts of physical proximity and operate on different scales of activity. The typology that has been presented in this chapter will help to loosely map the different forms of sharing that I observed in this research. Together with Table 1, the typology suggests that there is a transition between social practices and habits towards institutions, where the degree of collective feelings and struggles are intensified (Agustín, 2015). Table 1 is a visual reminder that individual intention is always related to larger collective intentions and scales of activity. The question of individual and collective intention is important because it relates to how we understand social movements and processes of institutionalisation; processes that figure strongly in this study.

Ultimately I suggest that attention to the social fluidity of exchange, the affective intensities that are generated and the direction they take, can sensitise us to larger issues of inclusion and exclusion. In this chapter I have laid the foundation for my focus on the material practices of sharing. I have suggested that the materiality of sharing can sensitise us to the structural conditions within which community comes into play. However, the intentions, ethics and meaning women bring to sharing also change as their practices change. To be attentive to this change I focus on the processes of sharing rather than on measurable outcomes. My aim is to trace how sharing changes when women come in contact with institutional processes but without "setting up an opposition between authentic and inauthentic social relations" and rooting an analysis in an understanding of the "contradictions and possibilities of existing society" (Young, 2000, p. 196).

The contemporary rise of the sharing economy demonstrates some of the contradictions, possibilities and tensions of existing notions of sharing; tensions foreshadowed in writings on the gift and commodity exchange. The sharing economy amplifies many of the tensions between sharing as an altruistic act of offering, akin to the functioning of the gift economy and the economisation of social exchange, in the form of commodity exchange. Sharing economies are based on principles of collaborative consumption and participatory culture

and aim to facilitate the exchange of goods and services. They involve a collection of services that enable private and commercial owners of particular resources to make them available to others for a price (Kennedy, 2016, p. 446). Much that is described in the sharing economy is not actually sharing and requires a full transferal of ownership and compensation. In the commodified public domain of exchange, sharing swiftly becomes a (particularly unregulated) form of commodity exchange. There are a number of tensions present in the sharing economy that are applicable to the provision of social services. These tensions are located in the blurred boundaries between informal/formal, unpaid/paid, regulated/unregulated forms of labour and where competing processes of commodification and decommodification can be glimpsed.

In the context of a steady decline in funding for ethno-specific and feminist services, this tension becomes particularly apparent in the practices of sharing migrant women engage in. The meaning migrant women bring to sharing does not always align with a conception of the institutional exclusions that have been foregrounded in this chapter. But the meaning they bring points to the strain between different scales of activity and different rationales for support. The subsequent chapters will turn to look at my empirical data and roughly follow the progression of the typology of sharing. They will not aim to directly answer the many questions raised in this chapter, rather, they will provide a sense of the lived experience of these complexities.

Chapter Three

Unsettling Stories: The Invisible Spaces of Arrival

It is only with time that we get a sense of what it means to have arrived in a new place. Arrivals are created in the space between our memory, our impressions of arrival and our initial imagining of the journey. It is often only upon later reflection that our initial impressions of arriving, give us any sense of what it means to have arrived. When Nadia arrived in Australia from Cairo in 2000, she looked around her accommodation, turned on the television and recalls her stomach sinking as she listened to the language that she was expected to learn. During the daytime, she would peer out the window, building courage to venture out into the streets of Botany. Leaving the house, she recalls her confusion about what she saw around her, "the street is full of Turkish, Chinese and I feel this is, I don't know, is this Australia or not?"

In the months after arriving she moved to Pendle Hill, joining the many South Sudanese who had begun settling in the area. She noted that many of the Sudanese she knew had journeyed from South Sudan to Kenya, Kenya to Australia. They spoke Dinka, Nuer, Swahili or other dialects, but with no English they found themselves separately navigating the unruly Sydney transport system, each attempting to reach the English classes that they had been enrolled in. In her account, Nadia suggests that arrival is an ongoing process of navigating disorientation. She had plans to orient herself; she hoped she would study again when she arrived, but she soon realised this was going to take time. She explained that this was one of the problems many migrating face, "when we arrive some of us have just borrowed money for our ticket from Africa to Australia and we need to find a job to pay back the ticket money".

While Nadia did not easily feel a sense of place, place emerged through the increasing circulation of information regarding migration and settlement in Australia. She remembers, when she first got enough money to fly back to Khartoum, friends of friends would ask her, "Are you from Blacktown? How is the life? How is the system? How can we settle?" While

Australia, Sydney or western Sydney did not resonate, Blacktown did; it is a suburb that has one of the highest proportions of Sudanese in Australia and was twenty minutes' drive from where Nadia was based in Pendle Hill.[10] By that point in time she had been used to answering the call of cousins and cousins of cousins. She would prepare lists of families about to come, organising welcome baskets full of food, and sit down with them to help apply for housing, Medicare, Centrelink upon their arrival. When she would visit Cairo, she would hold informal orientations with a couple of families based around the suburb of Giza in Cairo but she recalls the orientations getting bigger and bigger until she got a sound system and

> I just look around and I feel the street is full of Sudanese people and I print out some information about service providers like Smith Family and Salvation Army and some organisations that support new arrivals and I organised everything by myself.

She tells me that people continue to come up to her in Sydney and while she forgets who they are, they say, "Are you Nadia? I met you at home! You did the orientation! And they become my friends ..."

Nadia's story is not unique. For many of the newly arrived, imaginings and knowledge of place had begun to form long before they arrive in Australia. Through suburbs of Giza in Egypt or streets of Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, Blacktown is discussed as a possibility of a new life. Our visions of place are central to us as social beings. Nadia's initial reflections on the enthusiasm with which people conceive of Blacktown is indicative of the way we try and conceive and imagine our lives in relation to the places we are in or moving to and the people we want to become. The aim of this chapter is to help lay the foundation for understanding how is it that the eclecticism of the African community comes into being. A significant body of literature traces the experience of resettlement in Australia and internationally, and it draws attention to the importance of the context of initial reception for the formation of belonging and citizenship (Chelpi-den Hamer & Mazzucato, 2010; Koopmans, 2004; Min Zhou, Lee, Vallejo, Tafoya-Estrada, & Yang Sao Xiong, 2008; Portes & Fernandez-Kelly, 2008; Trudeau, 2012). In Australia, much of the literature on resettlement is heavily focused on frames of psychosocial wellbeing and barriers to

[10] Between 2001 and 2011 there was a 232% increase in Sudanese people in Blacktown with numbers growing from 928 in 2001 to 2155 in 2011 (profile.id, 2017)

integration (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010; Gifford, Correa-Velez, & Sampson, 2009; Pittaway & Muli, 2009; Pittaway, Muli, & Shteir, 2009; Sampson & Gifford, 2010). This literature can both reflect and play a role in critiquing, the pathologising tendency contained in approaches to refugees, migration and trauma. However, much of this is more policy-oriented literature and is theoretically distinct from the work that focuses more on the link between the social and the spatial (Amin & Thrift, 2007; Giritli-Nygren & Schmauch, 2012; Noble & Poynting, 2010). In the stories that I trace in this chapter, women reflect on their initial arrival by drawing heavily on observations and movements through place. These memories play a significant role in shaping the meaning they attribute to sharing space with one another in the years following their initial arrival. Briefly introducing Nadia, Mercy, Grace, Mary and Kelly who all arrived between the late 1990s and early 2000s, this chapter will focus on the impact that being socially dispersed and without stable housing has on the strength of the affinities that develop across African women in western Sydney[11]. The spatiality of the city figures prominently in accounts of accessing support. To understand the impact of moving through the city, I adopt a framework of space not just as material, but as social spaces, imagined and practiced in the everyday. Here, physical and social space are conceived of as inseparable and socially produced through everyday practices, representations and perceptions (Lefebvre, 1991).

How people experience and relate to the places around them is an essential component of their sense of comfort and belonging. Reflections of resettlement point to the way that bodies, places and communities are mutually constituted (Longhurst, 1997; O'Connor, 2010). Tracing the lived experience of observation and movement through space provides an insight into the "dominant spatial orderings that produce moments of exclusion and/or inclusion for particular social groups" (Valentine, 2007, p. 19). The 'migrant' can be a figure of interruption and their arrival can unsettle a sense of the assumed normalcy of place (Gedalof, 2012). The women in this chapter convey a sense of what it is like to arrive in a place and not yet know the norms that guide it. It is through their experience of being simultaneously invisible and hyper visible that they develop a sense of where they are

[11] During this period of time African communities represented some of the fastest growing migrant groups in Australia and 5.6% of the Australian population (ABS, 2006). This was particularly the case for refugee arrivals which increased from 16% of the Refugee and Humanitarian intake in the period from 1998-1999 to 70% between 2003-2005 (ABS, 2012).

positioned in relation to others. As a result, the sharing that emerges among African women in western Sydney is related to their initial sense of who belongs and where.

This discussion will begin by suggesting that it is the quiet, unremarkable recollections of the "view outside the window", that provides a glimpse of the taken for granted fear, discomfort and precarity that women face during initial settlement. It will then move to look at experiences of a "vacuum in support" that women experienced upon arrival. A vacuum that is exacerbated by cultural expectations of welcome and support and gendered experiences of invisibility. The last section will argue that it is the experience of being racialised while moving through every day spaces and the denial of the right to be *of place*, which creates the conditions for sharing among women from different backgrounds. It will conclude with the caveat to community, highlighting that in practice community is always contested and conditional. This conception of community will set the foundation for the use of community in the chapters that follow. While the resettlement environment is often defined by stability and settlement, it is the unsettling dynamics of immobility and mobility, visibility and invisibility that influence how women navigate towards social relations of support.

The View from Inside the Window

Not long after speaking with Nadia I accompanied her to a picnic where Nadia's friend, a North Sudanese woman I was sitting with offered a snapshot of her initial arrival without any prompting: "It was just so quiet ..." Her words more noticeable because I had not asked for them, they were offered and then drowned out by the hum of the buzzing birthday picnic we were both guests at. Silences, pauses and interventions into conversations were often based around women trying to get me to appreciate the weight of finding yourself simultaneously disconnected from your physical surrounding, your family and your friends. They would continue, trying to describe what they spent their days observing:

> Can you imagine? It is very quiet area, it's not in the shopping or station area. It is the other side of the road. No-one is around there, everyone is just coming out with their car and going. For me it is a bit different; a *big* difference.

The "difference" was made big because of the absence of social spaces where they could connect with others. Sitting and viewing neighbours always leaving their house, left women with a sense of being outside the daily rhythms of the city and invisible to those coming and going. Yet reflections of being outside the city, only hint at the precarity of what was behind

the façade of their first homes. I will provide a brief snapshot of two of these circumstances by drawing on the stories of a Kenyan migrant, Mercy, and a South Sudanese refugee, Grace.

Mercy

Mercy grew up in a village in rural Kenya and recalls her first months in Sydney were consumed by looking out the window down at the playground at Redfern's social housing towers. Upon meeting her husband when he was travelling in Kenya, Mercy had arrived on a spouse visa to Australia and recalls those windows with trepidation. More than once she witnessed people attempt suicide and remembering the crowds of onlookers waiting for an ambulance as a man's body waited on the roof of the car below, she wondered where it was she had arrived. Not long after having her first baby, she realised that there was a park where other women were walking with their children. The park was very close but out of sight from her apartment, she complained, "Paul never told me about this park and I never knew it was there!" She eventually ventured out, and met her friend, an Aboriginal gay man who she would sit and chat with in the months she lived in this flat.

Despite having connections to Australia through her husband, Mercy's reflections on her husband's lack of help resonated with accounts of women who were sponsored, but whose sponsors would only do a few things in the first couple of weeks upon arriving and then stop. Mercy recalls overhearing her husband talk to his family about her, "All she eats is bread and milk" and agitated by the memory she exclaimed, "No-one just eats bread and milk!" Like many other women, Mercy hinted at the small everyday difficulties that she faced gaining a sense of control over her life without knowing basic information about food, shopping and transport. Not knowing what ingredients to cook with in Australia, she remembers fondly when she eventually heard of a store in Seven Hills, a fifty-minute train ride from Redfern that sold South African flour. Navigating the journey was a source of freedom and consternation. But the flour reminded her of home and in an effort to cook and share food that she knew best, she made an effort to move through the city. However, for many women, the consistent and plethora of comments about the difficulty of navigating train rides or orienting movement within the city, draws attention to more enduring anxieties of being out of place.

Everyday difficulties of food, shopping, crossing roads and navigating the city were compounded for refugees. Subtly woven into narratives of initial arrival were sinister accounts of how the danger and discomforts of movement through the city were linked to finding stable housing, employment and schools for children to attend.

Grace

Grace had arrived as a single mother of eight children and came through a refugee visa due to the ongoing conflict in South Sudan. One of many of the large number of female headed households Grace was forced to confront the precarity of the resettlement environment, having come from a community who had little experience of money or the services taken for granted in Australia (Manderson, Kelaher, Markovic, & McManus, 1998). Grace found herself having to continually move house in the first year of arrival. She describes her first experience looking for private rental accommodation two months after arriving in Australia. With two other Sudanese mothers that she met through the assistance of a settlement support worker, they tried to find schooling for the children. Without any knowledge of the city or transport system she explains that, "we didn't know anywhere so we just got a train and we reached Ashfield!"

In Ashfield, the school that they found for the boys did have one other South Sudanese family but because she and the other two women did not know the system, they did not realise they would have to pay for the school which was Catholic and had additional fees not required for public schools. Struggling with English and without thinking to go to the workers who had helped her in the initial weeks of arrival, she waited until the school talked to the other refugee family and through their help interpreting, helped negotiate the cost. The house she had moved into in Ashfield was in a terrible condition, "cause I trust the real estate agents, I signed the lease before I inspected the house." She continued,

> Someone who came said Grace you complain and I will help you but my English was bad though. Through the TAFE they refer me to the counsellor, the counsellor refer me to legal aid at Marrickville but I try to go to Marrickville. I didn't know where train station to take, I couldn't go and no-one helped me to go so I lost that case. I was thinking the train was only one line ... but here the train is different directions all in English!

In this instance, the dire housing that Grace faced was compounded by the difficulty she faced navigating transport, particularly in western Sydney.[12] In this sense, disorientation had serious implications for her knowledge of the system and her ability to assert her rights. The next social housing that she was eligible for required her moving away from her friends to live in Doonside, a far western suburb in Sydney that was just over a one-hour train and bus ride away from Ashfield. The move to a different house was difficult, she had become acquainted with her children's school and was used to living around the other two Sudanese families. The move impacted on her ability to turn up to English classes, keep her children in school; and hinting at the taken for granted costs associated with constant movement, she remarked,

> Our heart was still in Ashfield, we still shopped there, went to classes in English. We were then rushing, rushing. I can use TAFE in Blacktown, which was closer, but I was not comfortable with it. I did not know who they are and what I can get from it. Yeah in Central we already knew the teachers and our kids refused to change the school. It was also hard for me to get a different uniform for them ...

The precarity of housing greatly affected the initial relationships she had built with the other Sudanese women she lived with in Ashfield. She reflected on how difficult it was leaving the other women because they would help each other with childcare, they would share food and have dinner together and when someone in Africa was in danger, they would help with the money to send back home. Similarly, without these women nearby she found herself alone, in dangerous situations. She recalls waking up in the Doonside house one day and realising that someone had tried to burn the house down. While she was sleeping, people from the train station that was located a minute's walk away opened the security door of her house, placed old cardboard boxes and oil and set light to it. She discovered the boxes in the morning, extinguished before a larger fire started. She did not reflect on the motive of the incident but upon calling the police Anglicare workers helped her to apply for another community house and she was moved back to a suburb close to Ashfield.

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[12] In Sydney, there is an inequitable distribution of public transport services across the greater metropolitan region with a large proportion of disadvantaged groups in western Sydney at risk of transport related social exclusion (Hurni, 2005). In the outer areas of western Sydney where public transport is less frequent and car dependency greater, lower income households have reduced access to employment and other services as well as having to bear an increased burden of transport costs (Hurni, 2005, p. 4).

Precarious and unsafe housing coupled with the difficulty and expense of transporting families posed dangers for many women like Grace. Unfortunately, such unsettling incidents were not uncommon. She recalls the problem with another Sudanese woman who had taken up private rental but whose landlord used to come and just stand at the door of her house at all hours of the day and night. Until she met Grace this woman was petrified and did not know what to do nor where to go for help.

The Compounding Factors

While Mercy's story suggests that there is a degree of taken for granted discomfort that can accompany any act of migration, together with Grace's narrative, both women draw attention to some of the compounding factors that contribute to the precarity of resettlement, particularly for those women of refugee backgrounds. It was through remembering their experiences of looking outside the window that women express the confluence of social, material and emotional factors that contributed to a sense of the aloneness, disorientation and invisibility upon arrival. In nearly all accounts of initial arrival, the difficulty experienced navigating the city, curtailed any sense of stability for women. This disorientation was indicative of a more pervasive structural barrier to safe, secure and long-term housing that allowed them consistent access to areas of specific support. These narratives suggest that the unsettling dynamics of arriving in a new country are exacerbated by the precarious housing situations women face. In this sense, experiences of being out of place are intricately bound up with precarious housing situations. Grace's story is one of many that suggest refugees, particularly those with large families and little knowledge of the city, are particularly vulnerable to housing stress and have differential access to comfort in the city. Together both narratives suggest that it is not a sense of physical stability that is important in and of itself but access and consistent connection to social support. In this vein, Fozdar and Hartley (2014, p. 149) suggest that, "Secure housing in countries of resettlement, while not in itself sufficient for making a 'home', is a vital precondition in providing refugees with a place from which to begin to re-establish themselves, to resettle successfully". Together with a lack of other social spaces for women to frequent, unstable homes force a continual and inhibited movement for these women. In these instances, settlement is defined by mobility rather than stability. As the next section will explore, the dynamics of mobility during this period influence the movement towards support.

The Vacuum of Support

In reflections on initial arrival, mention of service providers for refugees and migrants was overwhelmingly absent.[13] Yet consistent references to the absence of other Africans suggests that expectations of support were bound up with expectations of community. Consequently, the lack of others to share experiences of settlement with, played a definitive role in future efforts to move towards and (re) create community spaces through sharing with one another. In this section I explore the cultural and gendered dynamics of this movement through Mary's story and then introduce the interplay between informal and formal provision of support, and invisibility/visibility through the experience of Fatu, a Sierra Leonean service provider.

Mary

Mary had arrived from Kenya after experiences of inter-tribal conflict in her region, leaving her large extended family and children behind to establish a new life before sending for her children later. Mary acutely felt the absence of other African community spaces upon arrival and it was six months after arriving in Australia that Mary attempted to find "the Africans, any African organization" and was eventually told about the African Community Council. The council was formed as a coordinating body for the African community in Australia but she distinctly remembers travelling out to the suburb of Strathfield and telling the president, "there must be something very wrong if you're the President of the African Community Council and it took me six to eight months to know you or meet you!" There was clearly a gap between what the council provided and how it included newly arrived women. Accounts of the organisations that were formed in the 1990s and 2000s suggest that there was a gendered barrier to accessing the national or umbrella African organisations that were being initiated by recent arrivals. At this point in time, public bodies were dominated by men, a considerable source of frustration for many women that started organising informal community support for one another. The source of this frustration went beyond gendered

[13]The Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program provides early practical support to humanitarian refugee entrants on arrival, generally for the first six-twelve months. Refugee and humanitarian entrants along with family stream migrants with low English proficiency, dependents of skilled migrants in rural and regional areas with low English proficiency, selected temporary residents and newly arrived communities are also eligible for Settlement Support Services in their first five years of life in Australia (Department of Social Services, 2017a, 2017b). For a summary of available services please see appendix.

barriers within their own communities; there was a sense that no-one was there to provide help. Upon getting involved with the African Community Council she describes that this was not just a gap between service providers and African communities, but a serious "vacuum where Africans need to know what is out there for them". Mary suggested that this vacuum was in place largely because of the absence of any social spaces where shared experiences could bring people together and open them up to the different forms of support available in Australia. The problems Mary faced accessing the African Community Council draws attention to the gendered constitution of more formal organisations at the time and what the absence of informal, women's spaces meant for newly arrived women. Gendered barriers influence the effectiveness of community councils. Mary's experience demonstrates that association with community councils is influenced by intersecting power dynamics and does not automatically indicate the possession of social capital and community connectedness (Putnam, 2000).

Upon probing Mary, along with Nadia, Grace and a number of other women further, it was clear that they did have contact with local non-government and religious organisations, whether for help with housing, furniture, information regarding English classes or assistance regarding social services of Medicare and Centrelink. Yet the vacuum Mary continually referred to pointed to the absence of an intermediary infrastructure of support; in this case, a social space of invitation that could access the socially and spatially dispersed African women in western Sydney, not only connect them to available services, but connect them to each other. Yet expectations of support differed considerably between women and interviews with service providers painted a complex picture of the interaction between informal and formal provision of support.

Fatu

Fatu was a Sierra Leonean service provider who worked for a small multicultural service in western Sydney. She reflected on the fact that her family was lucky because her family settled around a number of other Sierra Leonean families in Marrickville and the local council played a very active and welcoming role to the new families. As her English improved during her teenage years, she remembered running from house to house, helping older family members navigate Medicare and Centrelink as she learned "how the system worked". She was offered a job with the local migrant resource centre not long after finishing school, but suggested that the gap between services and communities that she also observed when she

first arrived was not solely about the physicality of access, but contradictions regarding the form and content of support expected. She argued that in Sierra Leon, like she expected was the case in a number of other African countries,

> There is nothing like social security, nothing like that so it is all about community. Everyone is dependent on each other and when something comes up, everybody depends on each other, like weddings, funerals, naming ceremonies, all of those things, it is community, community. When somebody is in need it is the community that supports, so that is the culture that people are used to. Somebody, governments, saying I am coming to help you, I don't think that that concept or idea is, like people would even think about that when they come here, to expect that.

This quote suggests that the distance between services and newly arrived women is exacerbated by a cultural vacuum in what it means to give and receive support. It was the absence of the aunties, grandmothers and extended family that created a vacuum in support for newly arrived women. In fact, not only would some communities not expect government support, but previous experiences of government's 'coming to help' could be filled with trauma for refugee communities. Yet the absence of the state in everyday relationships also provided a degree of peace and freedom that was otherwise not experienced for women. I was given a hint of what this meant, albeit in broken English, after my brief meeting with a softly spoken elderly Congolese refugee I met while visiting communal garden plots located close to the feet of Sydney's Blue Mountains. As I dropped her off to the train station closest to the plot of land she rented for ten dollars a week, she hauntingly reflected that life in Australia was good because people, "leave me alone" and "no-one embarrasses me here".

While for this Congolese woman a new degree of invisibility brought relief, for Mary, like many others, it was indicative of a more concerning absence of any social fabric of support, where women were not aware of where they could ask for help or how to go about accessing it. The narratives of women who found themselves dispersed throughout western Sydney, without stable housing, employment, knowledge of the city or grasp of the language, suggest that there was little sense that they had actually arrived. A lack of shared social spaces meant that cultural codes of welcome were absent. This absence contributed to a sense of being out of place for many women and for those with the time, space and resources, their own experience of loneliness gave them a commitment to creating a sense of place for new arrivals. As Esther, a Kenyan woman who initially arrived through a skilled visa explained, setting up intermediary organisations was seen as essential to engaging those in need because:

> Usually the African culture is that we tend to help each other—a lot. Say for example you are my friend and your mother has passed, I will feel it as an obligation to reach out to you and help you and you don't need to ask me to help you, you don't need to ask me for help. But if I don't know you, I can't do that. So the organization facilitates that, you get to know people who can then help you when you need their help but if you don't have an organisation that brings people together so you get to know a lot of people then that can't happen.

Esther was well established in Sydney when we spoke. However, she felt for the many international students and refugees she knew were continuing to arrive in Australia without anywhere to go for a cup of tea. Like Mary, Fatu and Grace experienced upon gaining some stability with housing, employment and family, she wanted herself and her home to be more visible, somewhere new arrivals can come when they do not know anyone. Their testimony suggests that without such a place to congregate, a sense of being invisible while 'in place' lingers long after initial arrival.

During my interview with Fatu, she suggested that until newly arrived women are 'known' to one another it is difficult to link them with available services. As such, the vacuum of support that Mary refers to consists of a visible community infrastructure that African communities and service providers can both access. As we sat in her office on the second story of a multicultural service she peered out the window into the bustling train station and shopping mall and suggested that while a lot had changed in the years since her initial arrival, she continued to face difficulty accessing African communities today:

> They [African communities] are probably invisible. I mean they are visible physically, but when it comes to the local government or maybe service providers, in that way they are invisible. Yeah I mean invisible in a case that there is no participation, no active participation, I can't see it at all and even service providers are saying: "How do we access these hard to reach communities?" Which are the African communities. But every time I go outside I see a lot of them outside, I see a lot of people so you know, I am just trying to figure out a way of how to involve them.

As she pointed outside into the diverse multicultural streets of Bankstown, it was clear that she was grappling with a more complex and persist tension between visibility and invisibility. On the one hand, the previous decade had seen an increasing presence of people from African backgrounds who were physically visible in the city streets, particularly in parts of western Sydney (adding to the international reputation of suburbs such as Blacktown). Yet

for the same communities, their lack of visibility or accessibility to public institutions of support, rendered them invisible. Narratives of initial arrival suggest that the tensions between invisibility and visibility are not solely useful analytic frames but felt strongly at the individual and collective levels. Being visible has the result of inhibiting movement through public spaces, creating discomfort and distrust while simultaneously rendering important the comfort and recognition that comes from sharing space with other Africans. As the next section attests, a gradual movement towards collective social spaces is not based on particular traits of ethnicity, language and religion, despite the vital role these difference play. Accumulated discomfort that comes from being positioned as 'out of place', where women gain a sense of who belongs and where in the wider Australian imaginary and consequently, create affinities across black, ethnic and in particular cases, welfare recipients of a range of backgrounds.

The Whole Black Thing

In my first interview with Mary she had neglected to tell me that as she disembarked from the plane at Sydney's Kingsford Smith Airport, she left the baggage area and continued out to the bustling arrivals lounge. She knew no-one in Australia and had no idea just how far away it was but upon looking around she saw one African looking woman and ran towards her. Abeba was from Ethiopia and happened to be waiting for someone else. While neither of the women knew each other, Mary went home with Abeba until a local organisation, St Vincent's, helped her find housing in the weeks following. Amidst the anxiety of the airport, such a fleeting moment of connection speaks to the power of sharing space with those who allow you to glimpse comfort or home. Amongst the aloneness and immobility of initial settlement and before the social spaces of recognition that evolve, there are small, albeit telling moments of connection. These moments tell us about the conditions that give rise to, and shape, the sharing that takes place across African communities. Reflections on the initial points of connection and initial movements through space, suggest that feelings of comfort and recognition are inextricably linked with what Kelly casually refers to as, "the whole black thing".

Kelly

At one of the first times I spoke to Kelly about my research she leaned casually against the wall and questioned the breadth of my research. She was keen to speak to me about her

experience arriving in Australia and she also kept me on my toes, bumping into me at events and to my displeasure, interrogating me about my progress. She took notice at my use of community: "but that is not my community, this is more of my community" looking around at the mismatch of inner city hipsters and queers we found ourselves with and with a grin provoked, "Am I the outlier in your research?" Kelly made it clear that she hated the way that people assumed that she was a refugee solely because she was black and wanted to make sure that I did not make similar assumptions: "I don't think TV did us any favours, all we see is the World Vision ads and things like that!" She laughed, recalling her job volunteering for World Vision, people walking up to her and asking: "Are you one of our success stories?". "I wasn't even a refugee!" she exclaimed. Pausing, she looked embarrassed that she appeared to be distancing herself from refugees, of course there was nothing wrong with refugees, she shrugged and said that sometimes she just gave in when she tried to get people to donate, "Yes, I am one of the success stories. You should donate to World Vision" mimicking the robotic voice she put on when she succumbed to their expectations.

Kelly's initial comments on community reflected a common frustration that the heterogeneity of the African community is erased in popular, political and academic discourses. Kelly was born in Zimbabwe to a middle-class family. She grew up in boarding schools and moved around considerably before arriving in Australia on a student visa in 2001. She studied in Perth before getting a partner visa and moving to Sydney where she remains.

> When I moved and came to Perth, the people I hung out with were black people. There were four or five other Zimbabweans and that was the community, not the community but the people I was like 'hey' or they were like 'hey to me'.

Kelly was not only conscious of this expectation, she also did not want me to read too much into her association with other Zimbabweans, careful to clarify that although her Shona dialect actually improved in the first weeks of coming to Perth, sharing language was not a sign of deeper shared affinities or that shared culture or tradition that brought them together. She reflected on how she met another Sudanese man that she was friends with at the time but found it difficult to articulate where or how the relationship developed but eventually suggested that it "was possibly, the whole black thing". Kelly's casual mention of the whole black thing entailed a degree of boredom or disinterest but throughout the telling of her story, it was also clear that it was a provocation; a call to more carefully interrogate what it means to be black African in Australia.

She elaborated:

> When I first got to Australia there were not a lot of black people. So when you saw black people you would get the nod. Which used to shit me by the way.

I asked her to tell me more about the nod she was referring to. She promptly narrowed her eyes, stared at me, lowering her smiling face down to the right and back up again and I could imagine receiving the subtle acknowledgement as I passed her by on the narrow inner-city street outside.

> It is sort of like the gay nod or the courtesy look but then they try and say hello because Africans are very community (whereas amongst queers you might look and do the courtesy look, but you don't go all the way because you are trying to be cool!). But with Africans, they want to say hello and sometimes I would ignore them because I am like, 'don't look at me, you are just saying hi because I am black!' It irritated me a bit because it is like, you are trying to fit in and under the radar and then there is Mr Jumbo walking, bee-lining to you with their huge grin like he is your uncle and I mean it in a lovely ... but you know, you are trying to fit in and go under the radar and sometimes it was like from across streets!

> It is like kind of ... having come, frankly I didn't realise or acknowledge my colour until I came to Australia. Do you know what I mean? I was never aware of it until I came here and then it felt like a big deal.

Despite the fact that Zimbabwe was a country where the colour of your skin could determine the social, geographical and legal boundaries of your belonging, it was experiences in Australia that forced Kelly to experience and acknowledge her blackness in a fundamentally different way. For Kelly, like many other women, there was a degree of difficulty in trying to articulate why it was they found themselves associating with other people from Africa despite their differences. Being black was quickly gaining new meaning in Australia. Aasiya, a Somali service provider who became a highly active community organiser, who will figure in the following chapters, points with far more warmth and nostalgia at the processes of looking for other black people in public spaces:

> We used to look for one another, one person there, one person there, I think one of the girls was from Jamaica but you still had this common that you are all black and you could sort of understand one another ...

'Sort of' understanding one another is a description that points to how difficult it is to articulate the feelings of comfort that come from bodies and proximity. There was an affinity with other black people that elicited an emotional, if unspoken, response. The comments about bodies being touched, questioned or abused on trips to MacDonald's or routine bus rides, suggests that this response formed through the difficulties moving through public space as a visible minority. For Kelly, being black formed tensions between visibility/invisibility that were full of contradictions. On the one hand, she felt like she had to put in one-hundred and fifty per cent to be noticed when it came to being in the running for potential jobs or potential partners. If she did not, she would remain effectively invisible. On the other, she found herself disturbingly visible on the city streets. She recounted that one day she walked through the streets of Perth on her way to a job interview. She was disgruntled about her lack of progress getting employment and even in the years that followed felt that she would have been a director had she not been in Australia. On that particular day she was stopped on the way to the interview and had a strawberry milkshake thrown on her carefully prepared suit. Kelly went from experiencing a sense of invisibility to forced visibility: she was exposed on volatile city streets.

When I interviewed Kelly she was at home recovering from an injury inflicted from the past years spent as a part-time, semi-professional boxer in Australia. She hints at the relationship between her decision to begin boxing and the racism she faced in those early years. She talked me through a brutal attack where she was accosted by a man in a city post office who hurled racial and homophobic abuse at her and her partner before physically assaulting her. The attack made her hyper-vigilant and painfully aware of her own visibility. The pain that accompanies such violent acts of exclusion have the ability to transform belongings. Kelly did not necessarily feel affinity towards other African communities. But shared experiences of moving through public space and being collectively denied a sense of comfort creates new affinities. Despite wanting to call Australia home, home becomes a fraught and contested terrain. She explained the impact that the public attack had on her:

> When something like that happens, it disempowers you ... It is one thing when you get hit in private it is another when you get hit and then your partner gets hit. It is a lot to deal with and then based on your colour as well. So then amongst a hundred reasons, including my own bitterness I actually went back to England at that point you know, I was upset, and then went home and then realised that my perceptions of home as a place where I could go and just forget my troubles were not quite right either.

Kelly reiterates that belonging and movement through public space is a very concrete dimension of our experience of freedom. Being denied the freedom to move in comfort and safety precipitates a search for the comforts associated with home. Despite going to England and Zimbabwe and even deciding to keep her Zimbabwean citizenship because "if people are always going to ask where I am from, I may as well be from there". She eventually describes herself as "homeless" and like many migrants realises that the comforts associated with home are no longer there.

Through her ambivalence, humour and pain, Kelly's story suggests that the interplay between markers of comfort or home and racialisation creates the conditions for a solidarity across women to form. A solidarity not based on shared culture but shared experiences of being out of place. Crucially, while Kelly, Mary, Grace and many other women drawn on in the following chapters come from different ethnic, religious, and educational backgrounds, when moving through public space there are commonalities in the way that they are marked as visible and different. Experiences in moving through space creates the particular conditions for comfort and recognition among black communities in Sydney even though these boundaries are porous and as one man argued to me, accompanied with a sense that "I recognise you. But I do not know you." and that knowing one another made all of the meaningful difference.

In the context of popular and political discourse that isolates refugees as *problems* that need to be *solved*, meaningful connection is a precondition for the formation of solidarity. As an upwardly mobile, educated and middle-class woman, Kelly, like many other women, had moments where her anger, resentment and fear of being "painted with the same brush" caused her to distance herself from newly arrived refugee communities. Her distancing is reflective of her negative experiences moving through physical spaces, as well as her confrontation with the representations and discourses that construct the nation as a symbolic space. Acknowledging the ways that the symbolic and the physical can function together, can help trace the nuanced and porous ways that communities emerge during resettlement.

The Possibilities of Home: The Labour of Continually Arriving

In the context of Australia, reflections on belonging and identification are inevitably influenced by processes of racialisation and how these processes structure a sense of who belongs and where. However, unlike Kelly, experiences of racism were not readily shared by

other women. Raising the topic of racism can be read as a sign of ingratitude, or as Sara Ahmed (2012, p. 43) says, of 'the failing to be grateful for the hospitality we have received by virtue of our arrival'. Perhaps the 'virtue of arrival' is even more loaded in a country like Australia, where many of those that arrive in the wrong fashion, languish in Australia's offshore detention facilities or without access to basic social services. However, the absence of obvert discussion of experiences of racism can also be telling of the way that women actively choose to make meaning of, and articulate, their experiences. The more I got to know Nadia, Grace, Mary and Kelly the more the silences seemed to point to a refusal to let experiences of racism render them placeless. Despite differing expectations of life in Australia there was a sense that Australia had enough space for everyone, providing them with an opportunity to claim a sense of home regardless of their simultaneous visibility/invisibility. Regardless of experiences of being excluded or marked as different, there was a growing awareness that Australian streets were in practice, full of difference. In the introduction to this chapter, I recounted Nadia's confusion about the lack of people that could fit the ethno-cultural stereotype of an Australian that she had envisaged. Similar expectations were echoed by Kelly, who recalls looking around and seeing

> all these Asian people and I thought, I swear they said I am in Perth, Australia, but I think I am in China? Not in a racist way, I was just quite shocked, my geography obviously wasn't that good and I didn't realise that Asia was that close.

While the expectations of Australian suburbs were disrupted by the diversity and difference of the social spaces encountered, they also presented an opportunity that African communities can also 'emerge' as a collective.

In this sense, there was a refusal to let their experiences of initial arrival be defined by experiences of precarity or exclusion. Crucially, being denied a sense of home in a physical and social sense was not a new experience for many of the women whose freedom to access and move through space had been curtailed many times before arriving in Australia. Assiya, a Somali migrant whose experiences I will draw on extensively in later chapters, hinted at the complex way that a sense of citizenship, identity and movement interact. Reflecting on whether or not she felt a sense of belonging where she grew up in Kenya she explained:

> No, just ah, it's hard to say what, a sense of non-belonging I think. Because in Kenya you are always told go back to Somalia but you couldn't go back, I have never been, I still haven't gone there but I strongly identify as being a Somali, but I have never

> back, never gone to Somalia. But the Kenyans would tell you, go back to your country and you think what country? And then you go to London and you are not, you know, a person from London. And then you go to the Middle East and you are not an Arab from the Middle East and in early Sydney I came to you know, there was definitely a sense of non-belonging ... But which is different to now.

I continued, asking her where she was living at the time that she first arrived in Sydney and despite saying that her sense of belonging has changed over time she also indicates that she continues to struggle to call Australia home:

> I lived in Parramatta. And it is amazing, even though I have lived here this long the first question that comes up with people is, 'Oh, where have you come from?' And then you think when does this circle end and you become Aussie? Or not Aussie? Or you know? And who decides? I remember one time this guy, you know this was after a while probably five years ago and he said 'Where you from again?' and I go, 'From Parramatta' and he got very upset.
>
> Did he get upset? Why do you think?
>
> I think he just assumed, just tell him where I come from and all that. I mean it is good to tell someone where I am from, but sometimes you feel, I don't feel like redoing it you know.

In this instance Aasiya was only allowed to be a legitimate inhabitant of Parramatta if she explains her skin colour and accent and does not claim to be Australian. The man she encountered took it upon himself to regulate whether or not she was normal or abnormal, appropriate or inconceivable in relation to a wider national imaginary (Amin & Thrift, 2002, p. 105). Ghassan Hage (1998) argues that such individuals are 'managers' of national space where those visibly different or 'ethnic' are typically the object of the management of 'white' national space. Consequently, as Noble and Poynting (2010, p. 490) suggests, extending Hage's argument, movement is experienced differentially for visible migrants and the "pleasures and powers it confers are not distributed evenly but linked to relations of inequality and practices of social exclusion". For Aasiya, "Where have you come from?" is a call to explain who you are and why you are out of place. It situates her in a cycle of continual arrival, never quite belonging despite living in and feeling a sense of affinity towards Australia. She conveys a frustration with this cycle and who decides and when, whether she has finally arrived, as an Australian. Aasiya's recollection reiterates Noble and

Poynting's (2010, p. 497) assessment that a focus on everyday life entails that we think of belonging,

> less as 'imagined community' and more as material practices of social containment and enablement. A sense of belonging is not simply a symbolic process of identification, but a highly charged relation of inclusion in particular places which serve to regulate our movement within and across diverse social domains.

Using Noble's insights, we can see the exchange as a practice of containment which serves to regulate her sense of belonging. However, in this instance Aasiya also refuses to follow the script, disrupting her position as the good migrant, grateful for his hospitality by claiming her belonging regardless. She is neither nor easily 'caged' despite likely feeling a visceral sensation of not being in one's place (Hage, 1998, p. 45). In the instance above, Aasiya reflects a tiredness that accompanies the labour involved with being appropriately in place. Finding ways to resist, or at times, consciously inhabit, (for example, Kelly's performance of "Yes, I am one of the success stories. You should donate to World Vision"), being excluded from a sense of belonging in her locale as well as a wider polity, extends from an individual to a collective practice. While in particular public moments it is individuals like Aasiya who have to carry the burden of disrupting the narrative, such experiences begin to form the fabric of the shared practices and shared belongings that evolve across African women.

Conclusion: The Caveats to 'the Community'

At times when I was volunteering at the African Village Market, during the afternoon lull, between occasional purchases of waxed Ghanaian material and familiar enquiries about the whereabouts of the other volunteers, I try and imagine Kelly visiting. She showed interest when I told her about the shop, but made it clear that she was not involved in many African community events. I doubted whether Parramatta, or Blacktown for that matter, was on her radar. Kelly ended her interview with a warning about romanticising the idea of a bounded African community tied through shared interest. She laughed about the fact that she had been 'out' in regards to her sexuality in both Africa and England. Upon arriving in Australia, she was forced to switch between her African name on the queer scene and an anglicised name with her Zimbabwean friends. One night these friends took her in a car and refused to let her out. They joined a church group that prayed over her for hours against her will. This was an experience that she felt robbed her of her faith, and in trying to remain anonymous,

she would move from church to church in Australia until she stopped attending. Kelly no longer had trust that there would be any affinity that came from simply being black African in Australia.

Much could be drawn from Kelly's narrative and the story of her two names, however, I draw on it briefly as a concluding warning against the notion of a romanticised community on the margins of a dominant society. In this chapter I suggest that experiences of initial arrival, in particular the disorientation that comes from being rendered simultaneously visible and invisible, creates the conditions for sharing to emerge among African women. What is clear from the narratives of these women is that uninhibited movement through, and belonging in space is fundamental to our sense of wellbeing, security and happiness. The more we feel out of place, the greater the emotion attached to finding a sense of belonging in place, as Yuval-Davis aptly notes, "the emotional components of people's constructions of themselves and their identities become more central the more threatened and less secure they become" (Yuval-Davis, 2011, p. 15). For many women, initial experiences of discomfort bring their sense of African-ness, migrant-ness, homeless-ness or difference, to the fore. However, while resettlement provides the particular conditions for emerging affinities; the notion of community that emerges is always ambiguous, contingent and contested.

Through disorientation, precarity and exclusion, Nadia, Grace, Mary, Fatu search to transform a vacuum in support with social spaces of community. Yet Kelly, experiences being simultaneously racialised by the wider Australian public and discriminated against from the communities she is positioned as belonging to. Her experiences provide the impetus to withdraw from the notion of community and her story sits as a reminder that while obvert acts of inclusion and exclusion, racism and marginalisation are visibly powerful, power is also transmitted through our invisible affective ties, "who we love, the communities that we live in, who we expend our emotional energies building ties with" (Rowe, 2005, p. 16). Crucially, the social connections and affinities that form within and across even marginalised communities, are functions of power. Consequently, who belongs and where, becomes a central theme for the following chapters, opening the possibility for viewing how migrants are discursively and materially included in the nation as well as how they move through and create, alternative social spaces of support. Drawing on Miranne and Young's (2000) notion of boundaries as provisional and shifting, the next chapter will suggest that even through experiences of marginalisation and exclusion, boundaries can be used as an enabling force to sustain new relationships within and across communities.

Chapter Four
"One Hand Cannot Clap": Creating Spaces of Welcome

The Hunter Valley is approximately two and a half hours by car from the centre of Sydney. The valley is surrounded by dehydrated fields, pockets of wild bushland and manicured vineyards which attract many weekend visitors from Sydney. The Hunter was chosen as the site for the annual Intercultural Exchange (ICE) which would be held in a collection of houses in the area. At the local tourist information booth on the way into the valley the bus carrying women from Sydney stopped to do initial introductions. Twenty-five or so women stood side by side, they included an Iraqi, Indian, Ethiopian, Burundian, Congolese, Rwandan, Kenyan, Ghanaian, South Sudanese, a Chinese woman and her ninety-three-year-old mother and a five-foot tall, Syrian nun. One by one we went around the circle giving our name and our background. The cheers of organisers were received with the sheepish laughter of the group. All of these women had come to the Hunter Valley to engage in daily activities with one another and to stay with other, potentially migrant but predominantly Anglo-Australian hosts, based in the area.

The exchange began in 2007 through simple acts of invitation and reciprocity. Upon seeing a sign for a new African dinner dance that was starting in Sydney, a couple of Anglo-Australian women from Ulladulla, a town three hours south of Sydney, asked if they could attend. They did not have enough money to stay in a hotel for the night so Mary, who we met in Chapter Three, housed them. Not long after the dance, the women from Ulladulla asked if Mary and her friends wanted to come and stay at their place down south. From this initial interaction, not a government sponsored initiative, the Intercultural Exchange was borne. At first, they contact friends of friends for places to stay and access to buses and gradually, they involved the local Migrant Resource Centre who helped with funding, insurance and access to new or isolated women of all nationalities. Mary and the other volunteers involved with ICE saw it as a way to provide a space where women could share culture, experiences, information, friendship and support with one another. The exchange provided an important social space of sharing that was intimate, in the sense that it provided for the sharing of personal, often

traumatic stories, and was also public, in the sense of being surrounded by unfamiliar faces, landscapes and unknown local histories. Balancing family, transport and the dynamics of piecemeal work, these women were often isolated from each other in Sydney. ICE provides a space for women to come together generating new social ties and commitments without pre-existing obligations generated from membership to one specific community (Young, 2000). These relationships developed through the sharing of every day routines, the "How do you do that?", "How do you cook that?", "What do you call that?" interactions. The exchange evolved to be a space where the sharing of space, food, culture and stories would help transcend the isolation and non-belonging experienced during initial resettlement. ICE would provide the women that attended with a sense, however fleeting, of being welcomed into a new home. There was a sense, as one of the event flyers advertised, that "one hand cannot clap": it is only together that women can have a meaningful impact on the world.

What is clear from the advent of ICE and the African Women's Dinner Dance is that the boundaries women face during settlement are not only disabling but enabling. Emergent community spaces provide the space for new affinities to develop across differences in class, ethnicity and nationality. A new "geography of opportunity" is created when women get the time and space to share their experiences prior and post migration and in relation to the experience of others (Young & Miranne, 2000, p. 12). Sharing with one another figures prominently in observations and accounts of how these women move towards and begin to create, a sense of home in the spaces they find themselves in. The collectives that form in these spaces do so in lieu of practices that *create* ties rather than presuming the pre-existence of social ties. Experiences upon initial arrival in Australia texture the affinities that develop between women. Nevertheless, the reason why women share cannot be easily isolated to presumptions regarding what it is that they have "in common", or how they are "uncommon" (Ahmed & Fortier, 2003, p. 254). The shared social spaces that are forged suggests that collectives can also form through what Ahmed argues (2000), is the very work that we need to do in order to get closer to others. Everyday practices of sharing can sensitise us to how, why and with what effect getting closer to one another has. Sharing creates the potential for social relationships that are reminiscent of home. Home emerges as an organising motif and a site of productive social relations, bringing otherwise disparate communities together through generating trust, comfort and familiarity.

Drawing on critical geographies of home (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Brickell, 2012), I approach home as an imaginative space of emotion and belonging, in addition to a physical

location. The meaning women attribute to feeling at home, is intensified as a consequence of experiences of marginalisation and non-belonging upon initial arrival. Experiences of disorientation, precarity and violence contribute to the search for ideal home-like-spaces. These spaces are forged through creative and at times transient engagements with place, time and space. Replete with play and performance, sharing with one another allows women to foster an openness to engage with strangers. These spaces do not neatly reflect associations of home as a territorial space, but bring women a sense of localised belonging in Australia. A key way that women forge a sense of being and belonging in place, is through unsettling the dynamics of host and guest and creating their own welcome.

I start this chapter by drawing on a first-hand account of what it means to be the recipient of sharing. The experience of being welcomed and supported creates a sense of trust that is suggestive of the quality and character of the social ties that form. Drawing on ethnographic description, I look at the acts of sharing that are performative and embodied and go beyond tangible, material exchange. Customary codes for welcoming strangers influence the meaning women bring to being welcomed. I then argue that the existence of social ties and dependencies, rather than solely the ability to be independent, plays a role in creating a sense of being home. Sharing becomes a more intentional practice as spaces are cultivated to create trust, comfort and associations of home on a more collective scale. The last section will demonstrate that even when sharing is unmediated by institutions and the exchange of money, it remains subject to tensions, contradictions and challenges that are inherent in social relationships. While home as a concept is associated with communitarian notions of fixity, bounded communities and family, for the women in this study, home spaces remain important sites for the formation of solidarities across differences. The solidarity that emerges is tied to the everyday work that particular women do to recreate "a sense of place in the unhomely homes they find themselves in" (Gedalof, 2003, p. 107). The aim of this chapter is to suggest that associations of home and community are essential for the reception of support and understanding this association paves the way for interpreting so called *private* aspects of care and home in relation to the *public* provision of support that is explored in later chapters.

Hospitable Encounters: Aster's Story

After our initial meeting at ICE, I went to meet Aster at one of Sydney's few Ethiopian restaurants. The beige tiles of the shop front café walls followed through to a back room.

Restaurant tables were set up in front of a stage-like sitting area, for what could have been an Ethiopian tea ceremony or performance. The dramatic colours of a mural on the back wall depicted the image of a large group of men and women together, dressed in traditional garb and representing what Aster later tells me is the over eighty-five ethnic groups that make up what we know as Ethiopia. She greeted the women at the street front café front attached to the restaurant, joking with the owners in between the sweet bread and coffee we enjoyed and which I soon discovered were only entrees to the feast that started to appear. Aster's story provides an insight into the emotions that are generated through sharing support, hospitality and a sense of home.

Aster began our conversation by reminiscing about her life in Addis Ababa and the vibrancy of the city streets. Nostalgia framed her reflection on her sense of home prior to migration. She had lived in a suburb with her friends and siblings nearby and where, to the slight dismay of her parents, she lived alone in a small inner city apartment. Laughing, she recalls that when she first met her soon-to-be Australian husband, she had believed that marrying a western man would give independence not possible in male dominated Ethiopian society and after obtaining a partner visa, she migrated to Sydney permanently. She recounted the difficulties and regret she faced in those early years in Sydney when her home became a site of conflict and violence. With clenched fists on the table, Aster took me to the apartment she shared with her increasingly volatile husband and the threat of his alcohol-fuelled violence.

> When my husband's job was getting worse, he was an IT professional, he can't skip one day of drinking and I am getting scared of him when he is drinking too much and I am getting scared of him getting angry, even my heart is pumping and I don't know anywhere to go, I don't have anyone ...

She emphasises having nowhere to go and no-one to turn to for help a number of times in her recollection of that period in time. A sense of aloneness punctuates her narrative and sits in stark contrast to her reflection on the vibrancy of her social world in the cafes, workplaces and streets of Addis Ababa. While she remembers being isolated from support in Sydney, it was her neighbour's eventual invitation of home-cooked food, a spare bed and advice, that gave her confidence to change her situation. Her neighbour had come from Sierra Leone. Aster reflected on one particularly harrowing night where she helped Aster:

> I text her: "please open the door for me, if I am coming" or "please don't sleep I am scared now- I might come to you". She said "yes, please, come quickly!" Because my husband is asking me where are you going? She said to me "please don't ask me to wait for you, you don't need to spend that kind of time there, it is already worse, he is already drunk. If you don't feel secure and safe don't stay there. You have to come, this is your house."

The neighbour not only invites Aster in, but widens the boundaries of her home to include Aster, "this is your house" she said, emphasising that it should be treated as a shared space. Aster looked at me carefully and explained, "This is our culture ... this is African culture, what we share." For Aster, the offer to treat the house as her own gave her a sense of security she had not yet experienced in Australia. Her neighbour not only encouraged her to share in all that was hers, but encouraged her to act to change her situation. Aster recalls that they sat together one night and her neighbour continued, "I am really very sorry for you because he is a good man, I am good with him. But what I can see you are hurting yourself. It is okay, we Africans have passed through a lot, we have a lot of torture and trauma and don't want more here. Live your own life." Her neighbour's words made a significant impression on Aster filling a vacuum of support she missed in Australia. They were not only a call to live her own life, they were an act of recognition of her and her history.

In the invitation to share her house, cultural scripts of support figure prominently. For Aster, the neighbour's words reflected a culture of hospitality that is uniquely African and requires that you share what you have with those in need, your friends and your family. Trying to explain what this means to me, she made clear, "You can't ignore them [friends and family]! You can't say I have not got anything. Whatever you have got, you have to share." While Aster did not necessarily have a similar sense of obligation to her neighbour, the offers of support were reminiscent of these ties and, of home. A shared sense of what it means to be African that is based both on a conception of shared history and a culture of sharing, played a role in the sense of homeliness that accompanies her neighbour's support. But such preparedness to offer support was not based on a stable pre-existing identification and Aster suggested they both had very different pre-migration experiences. Comfort is forged through offers of support that come from those who are different as well as those similar to us.

In a painfully similar story of intimate partner violence, an Eritrean woman, Faven found solace with a group of Northern Sudanese women who helped look after her child so she could leave the abusive relationship she was in. With the support of the group she learnt

Arabic and became a close friend and community member of the Sudanese women. Stories such as these unsettle presumptions of solidarity based on shared linguistic or ethnic background. Similarly, they remind researchers to look beyond what they assume are observable similarities. In the cases of Aster and Faven, the act of being invited to share with strangers gives strength to the affinities that develop.

In Aster's case, her neighbour's support gives her the confidence to imagine a new home in Australia. Through an elaborate process of connection, she utilised her pre-migration contacts to seek out community spaces:

> There was no Africans around there then and finally what I remember is one of my friends, Kadice in Ethiopia, he told me, "I got a brother in Melbourne". But then if in Melbourne, what could I do? He is in a different state, so I don't need his address and number. Finally, I couldn't find anyone here and what I did is I called to Ethiopia, to a friend, I got his brother's number and I called him to Melbourne: "Do you know anyone here in Sydney from Ethiopia? I am nearly three months I couldn't see any Abusha! (We are called 'Abusha') and he said "oh they are many, they are thousands."
>
> "So where are they?!"

The seemingly convoluted process of calling contacts in Ethiopia, to access people in Melbourne, who would know people in Sydney, is an indication of the multiple connections, fostered within and beyond the purview of the nation state, that are called on to create a sense of home. In Aster's case, after circumnavigating points of contact from Sydney to Ethiopia, to Melbourne and back again, she met other Ethiopians living in western Sydney. Her initial meeting gives a sense of the yearning that accompanied the search for support and the appreciation that followed.

> ... after I got Abebe [Ethiopian friend] he called me, he talked to me, he took me to the church the next Sunday and I meet many people and I feel home, I felt so good. And then I met each other and people were inviting me. When someone is new here people are inviting to their places, everyone. Very good. Then they prepare traditional food and then they inviting me and one time when we went to someone's place, after that I say: "I feel so at home in this house, I don't want to live in my house, is it possible can we get somewhere where people are around because it is very different for me, living without people."

Her emotional account of what it felt like to be welcomed into their home and share in their food is only one part of what she associates with being home. It is when attending church, that she feels a sense of homeliness, not the private property we associate with territorial notions of the home. As an imaginary space, home develop simultaneously with new social spaces of comfort and new relationships of support. As part of this process, a sense of being and belonging in place begins to form.

In the popular imaginary, home is often constructed as a site of independence, where private property rights and nuclear family structures provide the basic comfort, safety and stability necessary to lead a fulfilling and productive life (Rossler, 2005). Access to long-term, stable housing is also a fundamental to refugee and migrant communities' health and wellbeing (Fozdar & Hartley, 2014b). However, for Aster being at home is not geographically fixed and home is a site where she can depend on others. Sharing lifts to church, home-cooked meals, support with housing or late night shelter were acts that did not demanded reciprocity, but were invitations of shared ownership and dependence. The asymmetry in these acts of sharing have the impact of creating a sense of solidarity through the mutual recognition that individuals have a different ability to give and take. It is often only with family and within the confines of the home, that such asymmetry and dependence is considered acceptable.

Aster suggests that new affinities develop as relationships and spaces are mutually reconfigured. The way Aster reflects on her story suggests that the experience of marginalisation and aloneness also produces new conditions for seeing relationships. Many other women echoed these sentiments. Sophie, a Rwandan refugee who arrived alone and pregnant in Australia remembers how after having contact with different families who supported her, "I started seeing things in a different way ... family became like community organisation because now I belonged to my community, to the Rwandese community." What these stories suggest is that initial acts of inviting someone to share have the power to forge new social relationships. Relationships that are neither a recreation of romanticised pre-migratory relations nor entirely unique to the resettlement environment. The next section will look at how women begin to mobilise these relations, forging collective social spaces between newly arrived communities. As part of this, women intentionally use sharing as a way to imagine and actualise spaces of home, playing with social, temporal and spatial boundaries.

"If people don't invite you, it means they haven't welcomed you properly": Creating Social Spaces of Welcome

For those who find themselves in relatively stable homes, creating accessible community spaces becomes a concern. I will return to the story of Kenyan migrant, Mary who was introduced in Chapter Three. Very soon after Mary arrived she realised that services were available to refugees and migrants arriving in Australia. However, she saw a vacuum in support between these services and the new arrivals that she realised were still isolated from services well into their second, third and fourth year in Australia. More African communities becoming visible in Sydney was a key turning point for many women who had arrived in the late 1990s and early 2000s. These women had gained a sense of stability in regards to their housing and families but now sought out ways to welcome and connect with new arrivals.

Mary heard about a group of asylum seekers of African background that were detained in Sydney's Villawood detention centre. Mary and a group of other women embarked on the train trip out to visit them, welcoming them with food, news and began to organise the occasional weekend gathering. With the asylum seekers unable to leave the detention facility, these visits were simply to give them a sense that they were not alone. Alongside these visits, more durable collectives formed in the homes of those who had settled in Sydney. One such group emerged among refugees of Somali background and who had settled in the Auburn area. These groups were loosely formed, highly gendered and often located within the home. A Somali migrant Aasiya wanted to get more involved in the settlement of newly arrived communities and recalls the dynamics of the groups:

> Most of these women didn't have any other support, back in Africa you have your mum, aunt, cousins all these people who are a support, here you don't, so then the idea was to form a group so that they can support each other as women.

The formation of the informal collectives did not go uncontested. In Africa, Aasiya suggests women would rely on informal family relations, while the scheduling of group meetings and the meeting with strangers in Australia, was associated with 'public', 'professional' or 'male' forms of organising. Partaking in groups was a source of concern for some Somali women. Together with their husbands, these women were confronted with what constituted appropriate behaviour for them in Australia. From Aasiya's perspective, discussions about gender were not the primary focus of these groups, basic welfare was.

> Course the men didn't like it, their women forming groups or anything. But it was good for the women because if someone was sick there would be somebody else close by to look after them if she was having a baby, we still have that loose connection of women. So if you are in Auburn I can ring someone to kind of partner you for your nine months of pregnancy until you have the baby. So yeah somebody you can call on. So it is just women supporting other women. We began the women's group in the 90s and it is still happening till today, any women who needs that support. All she has to do is call out.

Despite the protests coming from some husbands, these women continued to visit each other's houses, help with childcare and assist in navigating the local bureaucracies of Medicare and Centrelink. Community now provided the familial forms of support that mothers and aunts would have played in the months leading up to and following pregnancy. The way that women reflect on these groups suggests an idealisation of the stability and support women had prior to migration. Yet, for women of refugee backgrounds in particular, the fixity of familiar relations was unsettled long before arrival in Australia. Many of the camps and neighbourhoods where refugees were situated before arriving in Australia involved women organising with one another to ensure their safety, comfort and health. As such, establishing flexible relations of support was not something that was new to the Australian context. The forms of organisation that emerged during resettlement, are reflective of a large number of female headed households, the amount of women arriving through Women at Risk visas and with a lack of family and friends.[14] Consequently, the resettlement environment also provided a unique geography of opportunity for women to imagine and actualise new spaces of community and home together.

Aster's story is an example that these women are motivated to create new social spaces through a nostalgia for a romanticised vision of home, but also in response to the fact that home confines, aggravates and rejects (Moore, 2000, p. 213). Women often face the brunt of stress in the home as well as the burden of home-making practices. The events that emerge to engage women were not only created to provide a sense of home, but to be spaces of reprieve from the realities of home. In this vein, the African Women's Dinner Dance started in 2005 as one night where women could attend without children, to eat, dance, share stories

[14] Of the 13,756 refugee and humanitarian visas issued by Australia in 2014-15, the offshore Refugee Program included 1,009 Woman at Risk visas and 133 In-Country Special Humanitarian Program visas. Of those issued visas, 15% were from Africa (Refugee Council, 2016).

and be welcomed into a larger community of support. Here, receiving information about services available was embedded within less instrumental forms of exchange. The vibrancy of the music and dance (and the consistent calls to stop talking so that speakers could be heard) cloaked the sharing and reception of support, in noisy cultural scripts of sociality, comfort and home. Rather than placing the burden on individual women to 'call out' for help (as Aasiya suggested previously), the idea was to create more vibrant social spaces where a more transient sense of being home could be taken to them. Consequently, cultural scripts of welcome and invitation went hand in hand with a recognition that accessible, affordable and culturally sensitive spaces were necessary to engage women. At the dinner dance, the sharing of food, music, incense, coffee, dancing and storytelling were not merely decorative flourishes, but shared goods that generated the conditions necessary for people to be open to engage with one another.

Figure 1: Dance floor of the African Women's Dinner Dance
Image Courtesy Louise Whelan and African Women's Group Australia

Coupled with a belief in women as the centre of home and the catalyst for change, sharing with other women helped accrue the trust necessary for women to receive information. For these women, the vacuum between service providers and communities existed because

services neglected to pay attention to the materiality of reception. For support to be received, some attempt at creating a home-like-space must be given. Community social spaces helped to fill this vacuum. To evidence this, Mary recounted that at the first dinner dance one woman told her story of domestic violence to a packed room. After the dance, Mary had fifteen women come to her afterwards to report domestic violence. In her eyes, the success of the first event was not solely in generating a sense of being at home on the individual level, but in creating relationships of support.

While these events explicitly aimed to involve African communities, they were not considered exclusively African spaces. Open invitations, provide glimpses of the way solidarity did not necessarily correspond with clear group boundaries. Other migrants and refugees were encouraged to attend and many from the wider Australian public were also invited. Fluid rather than fixed notions of who was included in the community influenced the trajectory of future organising. As mentioned in the introduction, upon seeing a sign for the dinner dance, a couple of Anglo women from Ulladulla, a town three hours south of Sydney, asked if they could attend. They did not have enough money to stay in a hotel for the night so Mary housed them. In the morning, they all woke up and cooked breakfast together, conversing over the "how do you do that, how do you cook that, what do you call that" moments. Not long after the dance, the women from Ulladulla asked if Mary and her friends wanted to come and stay at their place down south. From this initial interaction, not a government sponsored initiative, the Intercultural Exchange was borne.

ICE was unlike the collectives that formed within the home or the dinner dance, held in a set location. The establishment of the Exchange was an example of a transitory space where 'home' was mobilised in relation to the Australian polity. The ethno-cultural assumptions that women held pre-migration were often disrupted when they were confronted by the multicultural diversity of Sydney's streets. But women wanted to experience a definitive part of Australian culture. Mary stressed that there were families who had never been to the Opera House, never seen the harbour bridge and had no idea what calling Australia 'home' entailed. ICE was created as an accessible and educational space where practical barriers to travel could be overcome. Mary stated that "our people can't travel much because of big families, because of transport, because of timing!" She tried to explain the impact that this has on African communities:

> Our people *never visit*, they have *never* been to rural areas, even they have never been to an Australian home most of them! And from our culture if you go to visit

> somewhere and if people don't invite you, it means they haven't welcomed you properly. I mean ... they haven't accepted you.

By linking a sense of being welcomed with a sense of being accepted, Mary reiterates again, the important role that rituals of welcome play in generating comfort and belonging. In this sense, the exchange not only allowed women a space away from their families to be themselves, but allowed them to feel welcomed into a wider Australian community. However, ICE did more than allow women a sense of being welcomed. The exchange was a way that they could actualise new spaces of belonging, unsettling the dynamics of host and guest that are associated with home and who holds the right to welcome and share with, the stranger. Attendees could create their own welcome: one that included an invitation into the home of an Australian but where they were also invited to share their histories and cultures.

Figure 2: Sharing the traditional food that women prepared with their hosts

The small collectives, the dance and the exchange decoupled notions of home and community from territorial fixity. Without ethnic or national ties in common, the potential boundedness of community was replaced with an eagerness for expansion. This was except, however, in the case of men, only one of whom was allowed to attend the dance, the DJ, DJ

Prince 2000, and for a couple of the dances, a male photographer. The collectives that were evolving were unequivocally gendered. The power of sharing was also understood to come more naturally to women. Mary stated when I interviewed her,

> The good thing about the women is, if you give them information they share with the whole family and with their neighbours, while men, its theirs, they just share what they think they can share, but a woman comes and puts it out there. So, you deal with a woman and you are dealing with the whole community.

But in this case, the community that Mary refers to, was discussed in more inclusionary than exclusionary terms. This section has introduced the notion of welcoming as an inclusionary ideal that uses practices of sharing to create a sense of home for women. However, the hospitable encounters that women experience in these spaces also have the ability to leave conflictual attitudes and values unmoved (Valentine, 2008, p. 326). The last two sections of this chapter will provide a more textured account of what kind of hospitable encounters produce what kinds of meaningful contact, with those who are different and/or unfamiliar.

Spaces of Difference

From its inception, ICE was envisaged as an event open to women of all national, ethnic and religious backgrounds. While women from Kenya, Ghana, Ethiopia and Sudan comprise the majority of participants, as the organisers explained, they aimed to have at least a quarter of the group composed of other refugee and migrant women. A large amount of effort was put into ensuring that an ethnically and religiously diverse group of women were able to attend. Commenting on the importance of interacting with different people Mary argued,

> if you just take one group, what are they sharing? But if you take different people, one thing they are improving their English because they are sitting next to someone who they have to talk English with, you are learning about their culture, they are learning about your culture, by the time we reach there we have already learned the cultures of the people you are living with here in Australia.

Interacting with people from different backgrounds involves negotiating socio-cultural expectations of what it means to be hospitable. Understanding and appreciating difference, is understood to play a key role in belonging to a multicultural nation. Mary suggested that working with women from different backgrounds was key to generating an ethic of solidarity that takes difference into account, it makes women,

> ... appreciate other people ... because in this bus you have an Iraqi, you have an Afghani, you have an Indian, you have an African, you have an Australian ... Muslims who have also never stayed with a Christian family and at the end of the day they come to realise everybody is the same.

Mary articulates a conception of difference that is underscored by a sense of shared humanity. While Lydia had arrived in Australia as a student from Nigeria over five years ago, and had a relatively easy transition to life here, she came in contact with women who had experienced a number of traumatic events prior to and after migration to Australia. Sharing stories with this woman, provided her with a new sense of understanding and empathy for the plight of refugees. As she explained further:

> I knew some people who went through hardship but the extent of damage or hardship they went through didn't sink through until you have one on one conversations. That's when you get to know *man*, some of them went through *hell* ... it is alright to see somebody as a refugee but not until you talk to the person we can't say move on, you have to be there to know exactly. I mean, for a woman to be raped and not be able to talk about it! Because in Africa, a lot of people think when it happens to you that you are either the bad girl or you asked for it you see, that sort of thing.

In this instance, confronting differences became a key way that she began to understand the kind of traumatic experiences some women faced prior to migration to Australia. Similarly Lydia was also forced to confront some of her own preconceptions about refugees 'moving on' when they resettle and the ways women are assumed to be implicated in the sexual violence they experience. Her reflections on the Exchange suggest that spending time with one another generates social and emotional ties to other women, as well as commitments (however loose), to participation in community events. She reflected on a sense of shared feelings at the exchange, "everybody's mentality was that we were all refugees, but where I come from we don't have that sort of thing. But [ICE] was the best!" In part, Lydia suggests that her enthusiasm stems from her engagement with such a diverse group of women. For her, the Exchange was a defining reason why she got more involved in helping to organise women's events. However, her reflections on other participants also warn against romanticising the hospitable encounter as a means to productively engage with or transform, prejudice.

Lydia had arrived in Australia as a skilled migrant, she had spoken fluent English already, had access to money and education in Australia and carefully followed the teachings of Sydney's larger Pentecostal Churches. Some of her judgements about other participants were revealed when she reflected on the exchange. For young Muslim attendees, she perceived the trip as a *gift* where they were given the time and space where they did not have to, or seemed not to, care about "their law" and were allowed to be free like her own children. Similarly, her anecdotes about making friends pointed to the micro ways that she intervened in the lives of other women in interest of managing difference at the Exchange. She recounted her complicated friendship dynamics at the Exchange:

> We were three. One lady from the Pacific Islands, she is an islander and one I think she is Ethiopian, but she is a rebel, she smokes, she drinks and she is very aggressive. Whereas the other ladies, everyone is very scared of her and I was the only that could stand her and I told her I am not going to take her nonsense. On the bus she was smoking, I said you want to smoke, you go outside, when we stop the bus you smoke outside, you can't smoke inside and she is like, a lot of people don't tell her what to do and so when she was like "this is my friend" and I said, "yes, this is my friend to, we are going to be best friends as far as I am concerned." So when I was asked to pick somebody else, I picked her.

The tone of this anecdote suggests that Lydia took it upon herself to impose a particular idea of civility and etiquette that should be displayed in shared spaces. While she reflects on the friendship that was borne out of these exchanges, her tone betrays a sense of disciplining the Ethiopian woman. Her attitude reveals an implicit set of power relations where Lydia suggests friendship is a courtesy that she has the power to extend or withhold. Despite feeling a sense of being changed by ICE, her judgements about others suggest she discovers a way to tolerate and manage difference rather than embrace it. While tolerance is most often discussed in relation to host societies and migrant populations, it helps to explain Lydia's willingness to tolerate and share with this woman but her unwillingness to reflect on her own role in the relationship. Tolerance reveals relations of power, class or educational privilege that influence who has the power to extend tolerance, or withhold it, from others (Valentine, 2008, p. 329). The dynamics of tolerance and hospitality speak closely to those of sharing. Who has the power to share, with whom and with what intent speak to the relations of power in between the giver and receiver. Lydia's judgements made it clear that these power relations are also embodied and negotiated around embodied markers of difference, such as religious clothing, sexuality, age and ethnicity (Lynch et al., 2011, p. 15). At ICE, it becomes

clear that women negotiate these differences through bringing their sociocultural expectations surrounding hospitality to the fore. How sharing is used in hospitable encounters reveals the way that individuals and communities manage their own difference and that of others' difference(Cresswell, 1996; Lugosi, 2009). Expectations surrounding the hospitality encounter play a role in how individuals greet, embrace and manage difference (Lugosi, 2009). Lydia's reflection of sharing with the Ethiopian women goes further, and reflects her expectations of the duties, obligations and moral virtues involved with sharing space with others (Telfer, 2000).

On a micro, everyday level, ICE speaks to the question of how we forge mutual cooperation across differences. In sociology, shared participation has often been conceptualised as a precondition for trust, solidarity and belonging. Social contact and cooperation between members of different groups is an important element in the process of creating a common identity, a sense of belonging together as a "we," rather than a "I" (Loobuyck, 2012). In the case of the Exchange, this "we" includes a number of different women who do not rely solely on collective identification based on intimate relations or common interests and concern, although that can play a role at times (Dean, 1996). In fact, as Lydia's narrative attests, there can be obvious differences in ideas about appropriate behaviour too. But the organisers are explicit in their belief that this disagreement creates the basis for a stronger sense of "we" to emerge from the group after negotiating the hospitable encounters of the Exchange. Consequently, the Exchange is an example of Jodi Dean's (1996, p. 3) concept of reflective solidarity as, "the mutual expectation of a responsible orientation to relationship" where, the risk of disagreement which accompanies diversity is transformed to provide a basis for intersubjective ties and commitments. The openness of the social events that are organised goes some way towards creating an inclusive understanding of "we" where the strength of the bond connecting women, stems from a mutual recognition of each other instead of from an exclusion of someone else (Dean, 1996). In practice, sharing is embedded within relations of power and can elicit disagreements and judgement about others that can result in exclusion the likes of which Lydia came close to. However, ICE is also an example of reflective solidarity in the sense that "we" is, at least for a period of time, interpreted not as given, but as "in process" where the risk of disagreement which accompanies diversity, can be transformed to provide a basis for intersubjective ties and commitments (Dean, 1996, p. 3).

Focusing on the micro-scale of encounters suggests that sharing plays a key role in the 'doing' of togetherness, creating the conditions for mutual acknowledgement. This section has

demonstrated the tensions inherent in sharing across differences. Yet, the women that organise and attend, have faith in the hospitable encounter to create an environment of welcome and openness to engage with others. In the next section, I draw on my experience attending an afternoon barbeque to draw attention to the energy that is invested in consciously fostering an environment of openness and welcome. Ethnographic insights allow for a more textured insight into how sharing does not just enact pre-existing solidarities but creates them through play and performance.

Borrowing from Home: Playing with Space and Time

This section will turn to look at the often banal, ritualised ways that openness to others is fostered at social gatherings. Cultivating a new 'shareable' space draws on cultural expressions of welcome, while inevitably incorporating new norms and values of community into the fold. I approach norms and values not as independent 'things' that have autonomy, nor are they solely 'mental representations', but as embodied both in the particular physical dispositions and in the language, practices and the institutions of a culture (Van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 189). Drawing on an afternoon barbeque that I was invited to, I want to bring to the fore how women play with the socio-temporal dynamics of home spaces in order to generate a flexibility and openness to new norms of community. Of particular importance to this process is the relationship between imaginings of community and the actualisation of space.

One weekend I was invited to attended a barbeque at Adhama's house. She had invited me and Mercy, to attend and when I asked what time we should aim for, she replied as though she was in Kenya where she had originally from, "There is no time to come in Africa! We just give 11am but we really mean *any time* after that." After being the first to arrive at events many, many times, I had already taken into account I could leave my house well after midday and still not be considered late. Far more concerned with punctuality than me, Mercy waited patiently in the doorway of her redbrick council housing block for me to pick her up. As anticipated, we were the first guests to arrive. Greeted by the sons and nephews congregating by the television we saw Adhama come out of the bedroom and were put to work straight away: Mercy in the kitchen and me cleaning the tables in the shed and arranging them outside. The garden appeared to be a shared council backyard with each dwelling having a small concrete courtyard that backed onto a larger shared lawn. I set twelve places, the long banquet style setting just fitting in before the open compost garden where vegetable scraps bordered the ground-level patio. Not long after Adhama appeared, looking

at the table she shook her head, “No, no. This won’t work. We can have one table for food, one for drink and people can sit around like a village, food on their laps.” Embarrassed that I had spent a good fifteen minutes arranging the tables in what I suddenly realised was such a western format (knives and forks wrapped in serviettes and all), I quickly changed the arrangement.

Adhama and I had envisaged this space in fundamentally different ways. Using her image of the village as a guide to the seating arrangement and emphasising the flexibility of when guests could come or leave, were small, albeit telling moments that Adhama was consciously attempting to generate a sense of home within the distinctively Sydney, redbrick, suburban garden. Such imaginings of home continued to be actualised in material ways to engender a sense of comfort amongst those attending. The importance of creating a sense of home became clear when I realised that most of those invited did not know each other. For Adhama, having markers of home helped to generate a comfort and familiarity that she knew would assist alleviating the nerves, distrust or everyday anxieties, of being somewhere new. In this sense, playing with the time and space of this barbeque is just one part of cultivating a space of invitation where women demonstrated an openness to engage with those who were otherwise strangers. There was a great deal of play and performance in this process, something that my own presence continually drew attention to.

As the tables were filled with chicken, rice, curries and salads, Mercy called me over to stand with her. She grabbed the wooden spoon on the smaller table near the food and began to stir olive oil through the soft dough that was prepared for chapattis. She asked if I had ever made chapattis and when I said no, she offered to show me. She effortlessly rolled the dough, lightly flouring the surface of the table until it was ready to be flattened out into what looked to me to be a perfect circle. As I took over the rolling, the conversation turned to the role that Indian food plays in the Kenyan diet with colonial links, systems of indentured labour and vibrant diaspora communities creating “such great food!” Through this conversation my barely oval shaped attempts at rolling chapattis generated much laughter, particularly from the women in the group, “Have you done this before?” — words that accompanied knowing smiles. The laughter was reminiscent of the many jokes made regarding “big boss” African women and their boyfriends. These were jokes that I was included in, but which were contingent on social stereotypes I was not aware of and that they knew I was not aware of. There was power in the history and practice of sharing these jokes and making this food. The subtle creation and maintenance of social boundaries could be

heard through that laughter. Jokes functioned as a way of uniting those around me in shared knowledge of cultural tropes and practices. I realised in the moments of rolling chapattis, like other moments where I was being taught, that I was more visible, that the burden of social interaction shifted onto me and in a minor way, united those around me.

The very physicality of teaching me to roll, shape and cook the dough also narrowed boundaries between Mercy and me. By this point in time we had spent many hours volunteering together at a range of events, sharing stories as we commuted on the train or in traffic. However, it was after spending time in the comfort of this home and at a later date, eating chapattis and relaxing in her own home, that she shared the difficulties of marriage, children, life and study in a way that blurred the boundaries between friendship, research and volunteering colleagues.

Figure 3: Lessons in chapati rolling

It was clear that trust accrued through these acts of sharing. Partly because they drew on gendered and cultural norms of women's interaction in the home and partly because they provided the reprieve necessary to open the possibility of new relationships forming. The

formation of new relationships was a key motivator to the practice and performance of sharing at these group events

For example, in the middle of lunch, with paper plates resting precariously on our laps, Adhama jumped on the opportunity to do introductions, going around the circle we had to say our name, what we do and who we knew in the group. It was at this moment that I realised that for Adhama, the social aspect of the barbeque, the catching up with friends, went hand in hand with an aim to introduce a few younger families to a larger collective. Later the discussion turned to a rotating credit scheme that everyone was invited to join.[15] The barbeque at Adhama's was not the first time I had encountered a rotating credit scheme in western Sydney. I recall being shocked when the loud discussions, food and minding of children gave way to a more purposeful and concentrated exchange of one-hundred dollar notes. The money was collected, pooled, counted and recounted, jokes about the informal treasurer being made as she playfully pretended to pocket the money. In fact, at that time, despite the other acts of sharing taking place, the sharing of money presented itself as the ultimate act of exchange — an act that suggested a degree of commitment, trust and potential sacrifice that the sharing of space, food, friendship did not. The pooling of money gives the act of sharing obvious material dimension. Sharing money had a clear function, it insured individuals in times of need. With the majority of those women receiving little more than welfare payments and having significant trouble finding employment, this was no small feat. But my time helping to set up for the barbeque had made it clear that these collectives were about far more.

Organisers like Adhama knew that creating the conditions for strangers to open up to one another required them to play with the time, space and sociality of the gatherings. They intentionally tried to foster the feelings of comfort, trust and familiarity that they valued upon arrival in Australia. The interactions at the barbeque suggested that the trust necessary to be open to new relationships was embodied in the actual practices of making food, sharing stories, the disagreements about form and style of the event. Adhama was not solely recreating or reclaiming a specific moment in shared pre-migration history, but cultivating a

[15] Rotating credit schemes involve members pooling a predetermined amount of money every week, fortnight or month and the total sum accrued can be apportioned to someone in the group who is in particular need at that time. These schemes are a wide spread part of rural and urban economies around the world and work as collective savings schemes (Brenda, 2010; Ambec & Treich, 2007).

new 'shareable' space that drew on cultural expressions of welcome, but also invited new norms and values of community. Adhama's home space, like that of the dance and exchange, demonstrated that communities not only produce, but are produced by, cultural performance (Alexander, 2003, p. 107). Women imagined and practiced being a community that was intertwined with a new sense of being in place. The community that was evolving reflects an interplay between social spaces that create a sense of being home and in place and new cultures of sharing. Wendell Berry (1977) articulated this connection by arguing that, "Our culture must be our response to our place, our culture and our place are images of each other and inseparable from each other." (Berry 1997 in Alexander, 2003). Adhama's barbeque reiterated that home, sharing and community emerge simultaneously through embodied everyday practices.

Figure 4: Creating a village in the backyard barbeque

Conclusion: Performing Community

After a long two days of visiting the local surrounds and hearing local histories, ICE culminated in a Saturday night fiesta. From early afternoon onwards everyone congregated in

their host's kitchen and prepared a national or ethnic dish to be shared with everyone at the local hall or community centre that night. Not long after eating the colossal feast that had amassed, everyone was directed to prepare for the disorganised array of cultural performances that each national or ethnic group, or individual representing their group, was encouraged to partake in. As the town hosts sung songs of welcome and one of the Hawaiian partners was part of a traditional greeting, the women I was sitting next to nervously discussed between themselves what they could do. One could barely contain her laughter: "but I don't know how to do the [traditional Ethiopian] dance?" Aster, sitting amongst them, quickly moved her shoulders up and down, "You know! Remember to shake your shoulders, we have to do something!" There was such a disparity between the seriousness of the host Hunter Valley community and the three women in front of me. As I tactfully ignored the calls to perform my (Irish? Maltese? Australian?) traditions, each group performed, not necessarily mimicking the moves of a specific cultural dance, but laughing together while fluidly interpreting the call to represent their homeland. All the while dancing to East African hits, spun by the East African DJ, regardless of the nation they were meant to be representing. The malleability of the music, dance and performance, spoke to the fluidity of constructions of home, culture and tradition. These were important facets of a sense of belonging, but were not easily retrieved from a time prior to migration, and were instead, constructed in the process of sharing them with others.

In this chapter I have demonstrated that sharing has the ability to reconfigure social, spatial and temporal boundaries. A situated ethnographic account of these practices suggests that the sensorial, affective and embodied aspect of sharing creates the conditions for openness, trust and comfort to accrue. Programs such as the Exchange or the dance are the more visible manifestations of many more informal groups that use direct social relations to destabilise the dichotomy between host and guest, creating alternative spaces where women can welcome and be welcomed in the nation. Despite the often-precarious housing situation women find themselves in pre- and post-migration, 'home' remains an important imagined space, influencing how women actualise new social spaces, events and collectives. However, although articulated in connection with feelings of comfort, the voices throughout this chapter also point to the way that home is not territorially bounded and extends outside the domestic realm to belonging at the levels of collective, nation and polity. Their voices and practices help articulate a notion of home that is multi-scalar and multidimensional. This provides an opportunity to question the dichotomy between conceptions of home based on communitarian ideals of bounded community or cosmopolitan ideals of mobility,

transnationalism and difference. The social spaces that form across African women, are not merely extensions of communities of origin. While beyond the scope of this chapter, it is important to note that they hold elements of transnational social spaces (Faist, 2000). The attempt to foster a solidarity that is oriented outwards and towards those that are different, also provides the opportunity for women to experience and create affinities that relate simultaneously to local, national and transnational spheres of belonging.

Figure 5: Saturday night performances in the hall of the local church

It is the perceived success of these events that contributes to sharing becoming an increasingly goal-oriented practice. With an increasing knowledge of the resources that are available for community groups, key organisers begin to expand their activities to include other, more isolated women. As part of the expansion of community events, the structures that shape the conditions for direct relations, begin to reveal themselves. Chapter Five will look specifically at how institutions begin to reveal themselves, as women stumble upon them.

Chapter Five

Stumbling Upon an Institution

After our interview, I sat with Nadia, the North Sudanese woman I introduced in Chapter Three. The silence of the suburban Wiley Park street was punctuated by the dissonant sounds of a rooster's tardy afternoon crow and the dying hum of inappropriately sized car engines. Serving tea with copious amounts of sugar, Nadia talked to me about her idea for a multicultural performance. It would raise money for children in Africa and all African communities would participate in the event. It would involve a coordinated effort with the local councils, service providers and many of her friends. As we continued sipping black tea and eating biscuits, she carefully imagined and planned a new social space for African communities in Sydney. The music, dance and performance would make people happy and they could also use this energy to raise money for those back in Africa. I had come to interview Nadia, but during that afternoon she implied that I could help liaise with the relevant organisations and potentially the local council, while she organised the performers and the fundraising. I hadn't known her for very long, but it was clear that she saw new relationships as an opportunity to expand on the events that she was already running. It was through some of these events, an information session that she ran for Sudanese communities in Lakemba that I had met her and a number of her friends. It quickly became apparent that she was not alone in her organising.

Nadia's North Sudanese friends circulated a number of ideas about events that they thought would bring the community together and for a good cause. In these conversations, there was a sense of urgency. A feeling that the collective energy of groups needed to be harnessed soon if these events were to go ahead. I blamed this sense of urgency for the failed attempt to cancel an afternoon catch up in Bankstown with one of Nadia's friends, Fathia. My excuses of sickness and injury fell on deaf ears as Fathia insisted on coming to meet in Redfern instead. She arrived at the park to meet me prepared with falafel, salad, mangoes, a box of chocolates and a bunch of flowers for me. As we sat and ate I turned the conversation to the regular Sanduk gatherings that she was involved in. Sanduk meant "money box" in Arabic and the gatherings were an informal rotating credit scheme where she and another ten regulars would cook lunch, make coffee and pool money so that one person could take the

sum every fortnight. She quickly changed the topic. She introduced me to her new grander idea of an art and cultural organisation that she intended to set up. The organisation would be about engaging a wide range of communities, building bridges through art. It would be based in Sydney but she would use it to build relationships beyond the neighbourhood, beyond the nation; it would be about cultivating peace on an international scale with a sister organisation to be set up in Sudan. She told me that I would be nominated to be one of the board members; an offer that at this point, was accompanied with a swift serving of stress.

Fathia's plans for a community organisation were full of faith that another world was possible. Fathia was always adorned with heavy jewellery and long scarves. She would generally sit down next to me with a heaviness that suggested the weight of world peace was on her shoulders. She was an artist and documentary film maker in Sudan but in English she struggles to find the right words to convey the power art holds to bring peace to the world. For her, Australia was a new beginning, a place of opportunity and had the possibility for growth and change. "The peace here is good", she would say. Laughing, she would say how lucky she was, she lives next to all of the important things: "the police, Centrelink and Medicare!" I laugh along, but with wariness; these institutions of support play a crucial role for women like Fathia and Nadia yet they also play a role in profiling young black youth on the streets, policing asylum seekers and denying refugees some of the basic social rights afforded to other citizens. For many in her community as well, it was clear that they were not just sites of inclusion, but sites of exclusion. Despite living near all the important institutions, she also felt constrained in her position in Sydney. Woven into our conversations were the same existential dilemmas we could all relate to: Where can she find *real* human connections, *real* understanding, how could she find love: "all types of love!" And, what would it look like? Would it mean peace? Such were the urgent conversations that would burst out minutes before I would exit the car in the no-stopping zone of Bankstown station. In the months following our initial meeting, discussions involved life, loneliness: "we always miss, we miss our families, our friends, our mothers", her afternoon job in child care and the fact she felt that many of her friends did not really share what she was going through, hinting at her own unrest in regard to her "community". But all through this she would keep returning to the progress of her organisation.

Figure 6: Mother Australia looking after her children of different cultures. Mother and children are inexticably linked and mutually dependent on each other for their wellbeing and happiness.
Courtesy of Sydney based Sudanese artist, Fathia Bella.

I have started this chapter with a reflection on my time with Nadia and Fathia to give a sense that practices of sharing expand as groups grow, creating pockets of familiarity and intimacy that also provide a sense of routine that was otherwise lacking. As both women shared their houses, food and time with me, the emotion and energy attached to expanded practices became clear. The solidarity that accrued through everyday acts of sharing was increasingly not only reflective and developing across differences (Dean, 1996), but oriented to larger community events. The new relationships accrued through sharing, helped women to clarify their goals and develop strategies to achieve them. So they began to act on their ideas using the new knowledge, skills and support networks that they had developed so far (Subban & Young, 2000, p. 97). For Fathia, like Nadia, community activities were a way to develop a sense of place, an avenue to contribute to Australia and importantly, a way to counter the negative images of the African community that they saw in the media. The ability to share with others was becoming a source of pride and passion, a potential source of income and

crucially, a way for women to belong. Actively manifesting the social change that they wanted to see in the world contributed to developing feelings of belonging. There was a strong sense that Australia offered them the opportunity for protection, freedom and social and political inclusion.

However, as women enter public spaces and use public resources to run larger activities, relationships of sharing, based on trust and reciprocity are confronted with the institutional rules and regulations of an increasingly marketised welfare state. Initial confrontations primarily take place across not-for-profit or local council organisations. These organisations differ in their provision of resettlement support, but across them there is some coherence between the rules, routines and procedures that they follow when working with informal community groups. Contact with this broad institution of resettlement support involves a re-scaling of sharing from an informal exchange between friends, to a local goal-oriented practice focused on creating community organisations and requiring involvement with state funded resettlement services. Access to new spaces and relationships can create a larger, more public platform for community organising and also change the form that sharing takes and the rationale that lies behind it.

In the following two chapters I am to provide a "thick" description (Geertz, 1973) of how contact with institutionalised spaces produces new conditions for sharing. New conditions for sharing influence the visions and practices of the "African community". I delve into the messy "actualities" of institutional processes (Smith, 2005, p. 31), to map the institutions of local government and resettlement services as they appear in the social worlds of women — as meetings with friends, work as volunteers, employment with services or in attempts to formalise organisations. These activities do not fit neatly into categories of paid work, community work, informal or formalised activities. The body of literature known as "New Institutionalism" provides the context for a more fluid mapping of these relationships, challenging the view of the institution as a stabilised container for action and helping refocus attention onto the centrality of people's experience. Together with Dorothy Smith's institutional ethnography, the aim is to think through institutions as verbs as well as nouns, foregrounding the "doing" of the institution with the aim to "attend to how institutional realities become given, without assuming what is given by this given" (Ahmed, 2012b, p. 21). In this chapter I focus on institutions not as given, but as instituted over time through particular organisational forms, roles, responsibilities and routines (Ahmed, 2012; March & Olsen, 1989). I will pay particular attention to what it means to be "unfamiliar" to the

institution, mapping seemingly invisible moments of confrontation where the particular "habits of the institution" are revealed by "coming up against them" (Ahmed, 2012, p. 26). I delve into the murky bureaucratic terrain that community organisers are confronted with, through the seemingly contradictory metaphor of *institutional walls* (Ahmed, 2012). Reference to institutional processes as "walls" helps to bring alive the lived experience of the institution for women like Fathia and Nadia. When they engage in the taken for granted, mundane labour of administration, otherwise elusive institutional boundaries, solidify as walls. The institution is experienced as an external, undeniable fact (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Individuals and collectives struggle and often successfully, to inhabit institutional spaces with agency and autonomy. But institutions, by the very fact of their existence, can set up patterns of conduct which channel action in one direction, "as against the many other directions that would theoretically be possible" (Longhofer & Winchester, 2012, p. 97). Sara Ahmed's (2012) elusive but apt question is important here: "[the institution] seems to embody a will to bring about a new kind of body, but does it?" And extending this question to the collective level, if the institution does bring about new collective, social bodies, how exactly does it do this?

I begin this chapter with an anecdote about a training session to incorporate her organisation that I attended with Fathia. These sessions are welcome sources of support in navigating the rules and regulations of institutional processes. Yet where exactly the visions and practices of migrant and culturally diverse women figure in the institutional processes is not clear. In the next section I capture the institutional roadblocks that women face and that precipitate a shift from 'meeting loosely' and with the relative autonomy afforded to those not quite in the institution, to the need to adopt a particular organisational form. There is a significant amount of work involved with learning the rules, responsibilities and roles of this organisational form. This work shifts how and where sharing can be enacted. I conclude by suggesting that the institutional walls that are faced during this process deflate the confidence of community organisers and question their trust in reciprocal relationships of support.

Easing into the Institution

When entering the administrative and political hub of Auburn local council you have to walk past the entrance to the library, the front desk of the council and the counters where questions are asked and fines are paid. It is past the occasional outbursts and quiet thanks, that the majority of council staff are located. The organisational heart of the council is built

around a ground floor sitting area that looks up to the four tiered levels which can only be accessed by swiping a security card. In the council building, the administrative and political functions of the council are removed from the spaces where the day to day concerns of residents' figure. Despite the inexhaustible energy of community workers, this separation from the public, gives the structure a quiet sterility.

In terms of state institutions, the local religious and non-religious resettlement providers are often the first port of call for migrant and refugee women. Following trends in the UK and US, these organisations each have a distinct relationship with the state, but together they increasingly shoulder the burden of welfare provision for newly arrived communities (Cope, 2001; Cunningham, Hearne, & James, 2013; Darcy et al., 2009; Trudeau, 2012). They act as an important sites where the values and practices of citizenship are imparted (Darcy et al., 2009). Resettlement organisations are also sites where the informal practices of citizenship are enacted through everyday, banal administrative tasks that produce new organisational boundaries around how, where and in what ways communities can participate and share in public spaces and resources. In this way, local councils, non-government organisations and non-profits play a key role in regulating community organisation through the imparting of information about registering an organisation, the legality of incorporation, the administration involved with gaining charity status or applying for funding grants.

However, the more I spoke to women like Fathia about their experience of organising community events, the more the physicality of the council building seemed an apt metaphor for the experience of women when they attempted to organise something with public funds or in public spaces. The materiality of the structure hints at the exclusionary impact that institutional rules and regulations have on the activity of African women's community groups and the activities of culturally and linguistically diverse communities more generally. Like the council buildings they visit, these spaces can be cordoned off or inaccessible for those who do not inhabit the roles and follow the rules of the institution. Yet, crucially, the 'fact' of the institution does not give a clear indication of its social significance for the women that come up against it (Hay, 2016, p. 521). For that, a more nuanced understanding of what it feels like to be out of place is required.

Over a year after the afternoon in Redfern I accompanied Fathia and her friend, Marwa to a government session on the rights and responsibilities of incorporated organisations at a Workers Club in South western Sydney. Incorporation is the official name for a change in

the governance structure of community groups as they become legal entities and protect individual members from legal liability. Incorporating a new organisation or association involves many steps. The requirements include: five or more members to form a group, a constitution that outlines the groups objectives, a public officer that is the signatory and point of contact for the association and meetings and records have to be kept for all meetings and all financial transactions. With the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*, public liability insurance is required for the group to meet in public spaces (Associations Incorporation Act, 2009). The session went through the details of incorporation including the potential for charity status which entails a tax exception and the opportunity to be considered a legitimate, accountable player in the provision of welfare in the eyes of the law.

Figure 7: Flyer promoting one of the many training sessions that are run by service providers and local councils to keep community groups up-to-date with changes to incorporation legislation

Fathia had sent me a photo of the letter with information about the session, reminding me that I would have to go with her and help take notes. We walked past the casino-like ground floor of the club and up the stairs. Looking around it was clear that the people attending the session were predominantly middle-aged white Australians, running a Legion Club, soccer clubs et cetera, however, myself and the two Sudanese women I sat with stood out, sitting at the back of the room, loudly whispering to each other for clarification. I waited until the end of the presentation to ask the many questions I had. The warm encouragement and congratulations Fathia and Marwa gave me after each question I raised, made me uncomfortable. If my presence was required to understand the process they were about to embark on, then there was something wrong. They were confident that the abstract bureaucracy could be navigated but I noticed my own patience waning with the organisers as I realised questions that would have been common from culturally diverse communities were not being addressed. Frustrated, our questioning got more confident, frequent and direct. My interviews with community development workers had made it clear that there were hundreds, if not thousands of small community groups wanting to apply for funding and organise spaces to meet. How did they all navigate this process?

The training session that day was a reminder that no-one involved seemed to know exactly how incorporation functions for a small scale but potentially transnational, organisation. It was assumed that there would be institutional hurdles to confront along the way, but the substance of those hurdles, their exact location and their form, was not easily discerned. I enquired: "What is the process when an organisation is linked to another overseas?" and "What happens when there will be an international transferral of money?". One of the facilitators said she would make a phone call and come back with some answers. For the whole second half of the session we waited for her return, getting the impression that they were not taking these questions seriously. Fathia's hopes were waiting patiently, albeit precariously, for this organisation to materialise but no one was sure what bureaucratic rules and regulations would be involved. The answers the organisers provided did not focus on explicit rules, goals or priorities but what 'tends to happen', making the proper protocol difficult to discern. It was clear that while the rules were rigid and subject to enforcement, they were also difficult for those unfamiliar to observe and practice. The nuances of incorporation, or the decision of whether to incorporate or not, were complicated, requiring a knowledge of the rules and regulations of tax and insurance, charity status and dealings with multiple government departments that individually handled certain parts of the process.

After the presentation, we went past the poker machines to the club café and talked. They were not perturbed by anything they had heard and when the women presenting came down to order food at the counter next to our table, Fathia jokily gestured that she would pay for the coffee. I realised that while I was angry about the barriers they faced creating an organisation, to some degree, they were used to being 'outside' the system, confronting processes that were in a language and format that they knew they would practice and learn. While the rules and regulations were confusing for all of us, they were more aware than me of the hurdles of organising in the public because those hurdles were far more explicit when you do not quite inhabit a role in the institution in the first place. In subtle ways that day exemplified Nirmal Puwar's argument that when bodies normally "outside" the institution arrive, disorientation ensues not only for those who feel "out of place" but for the rest of the room whose "world view is jolted." (Puwar 2004 in Ahmed, 2015). While there were no dramatic 'jolts' for the other attendees, the difference of Fathia and Marwa was noted through looks and stares. They were positioned as difficult, something I was aware from my own frustration with the session organisers, which could have unwittingly contributed to their difficulty by making their goals seem frustrating. It was clear that entry to the institution would not be secured through the familiarity and ease of, or garnered through the habit or accumulated practice associated with the *institutionalisation* of existing practice. But through persistence, using available relationships and avenues to force an opening where they can be seen, heard and ultimately, included. Consequently, women like Fathia do not ease into the institution but have to battle their way in. Ole Elgström suggested they have to "fight their way into institutional thinking" (Elgström, 2000, p. 458).

Hitting Institutional Walls

For many women of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds the organisational forms, habits, practices and norms of the institution cannot be glimpsed until they come up against them. Berger and Luckmann (1967, p. 76) were foundational in presenting institutions as socially constructed entities that can often achieve a reality that "confronts the individual as an external and coercive fact", involving a degree of social control that contributes to regularisation of social practices and the creation of habituated social action. Aasiya, the Somali migrant I introduced in Chapter Three provides a good insight into how institutions can impose themselves on the otherwise informal everyday activity of women's groups. From the early 1990s onwards Aasiya would help organise women to partner other

women who were pregnant, creating networks that would provide informal childcare and other basic support necessary for Somali families in Auburn. However, she remembers a sudden change in the way that the women involved were able to meet in the premises of the local service provider in their area. As she recalls,

> It was only four women in the beginning but then twenty ... as you go we were meeting loosely and doing our own thing and supporting each other on a voluntary basis and then, ah, we couldn't meet suddenly? I don't know whether it was the government, or what changed? Suddenly they wanted you to have public insurance and you should be registered as a group to meet in a migrant resource centre or a council. You know those rented places. So then we were forced to register an organisation ...

Aasiya describes a confrontation with new institutional rules and regulations that dictated the conditions under which small groups could meet in the spaces of local resettlement services. In contrast to the informal care that the groups used to provide, the new rules determined who is allowed to share, what they are able to share, in what spaces and in what organisational forms. Aasiya conveys a sense that her group stumbled upon an institutional roadblock that precipitated a shift in direction from "meeting loosely" and with the relative autonomy afforded to those not quite in the institution, to the need to adopt an organisational form. She conveys a sense that only the "practical labour" of "coming up against" the institution, allows the institution to become apparent (Ahmed, 2012, p. 174). Anecdotes such as these make it easy to see why institutions are often conceived off as solid structures, inflexible and requiring acquiescing to or manoeuvring around. Their form and content, however, is not clear and Aasiya was not sure where this organisational directive originated from, or why a change in the informality of the group was necessary. The system was more confusing because it was in sharp contrast to her experience of organising things in Kenya where:

> You do what you want, you don't have to have this corporate body that has laws that you have got to have a public officer, that you got to fill in reports and all this. It is real hard work especially if you are doing it on a voluntary basis. It still is, but you got to do it, you can't survive. Everybody asks you "Oh are you a registered organization?" And "Are you a non for profit?" Are you this? For any five dollars that we ask for.

For Aasiya, experience of being involved in voluntary groups in Africa was associated with a freedom to organise and act without adopting a particular form. In contrast to organising in Africa, meeting as a community group in Australia involves not only adopting a particular form, but the necessity of constantly accounting for yourself, answering the call to define who and what you are for every "five dollars" that you ask for. For Aasiya, being called to account for who and what you are was jarring, conveying a sense that she is not trusted and making her question whether the community work she was partaking in would be recognised as legitimate, useful and important. The affective power of these calls has to be understood in relation to the cultural context of behaviour, action and habits of these women. In her book, Ahmed draws on Rosalyn Diprose's assessment of Merleau-Ponty and the idea of habituated bodies to argue that, "meaning is both instituted (dependent upon being 'exposed to' an already meaningful world) and instituting (involves 'initiation' of the new, the opening of 'a future')" (Ahmed, 2015). Aasiya expresses a dissonance between the meaning she used to gain from organising events and the institution of new rules that make her account for which activities are valued in which organisational form. While for some, these processes are second nature, for Aasiya they are an experience almost akin to being 'hailed' as untrustworthy and as an outsider to the proper provision of welfare (Althusser, 1971). She is recruited into a new system where trust, reciprocity and the ability to share are based not on your position in relation to the social body but on having the right organisational 'body' with the right governance structure. A key part of being incorporated into this system is the institution of new roles, new routines and new responsibilities.

Being Denied the Right to Share

The friction caused by the institution of new roles and responsibilities for group organisers was brought home for one community who decided to expand their work with African women to include activities with young people and men. This expansion was considered a necessary step by organisers, they would be providing essential services and they would get the respect and credibility necessary to receive grants. With so much time and energy invested in creating vibrant social spaces they wanted to be taken seriously as a valid player in the provision of support for their community. With the aid of a community development worker from a local council they spent months engaging in the incorporation process, dealing with hours of administration as volunteers, while simultaneously continuing regular meetings and activities in their own time. Despite having successfully navigated the

incorporation process, receiving their first grant as an independent, autonomous body, the community development worker assisting recounted the disappointment and embarrassment experienced when they realised they were unable to use the funds. This was because they had found themselves stumped by the requirement to open a bank account on behalf of the collective. The treasurer of the group was unable to get the funds directly transferred to her account and to formally set up a bank account they needed to have further AGM (Annual General Meeting) minutes, reports, multiple signatures for the bank, all of which would take another few months to gather, at which point the allocated time slot for funding would expire. Despite hours of volunteer labour, these women were faced with a supposedly simple barrier that saw them lose the resources allocated to them. Their new organisational body had failed.

In this instance, the whole administration processes involved with setting up a group bank account and the subsequent withdrawal of funds can be contrasted with the dynamics of the rotating credit schemes many women informally partook in. Here, relationships and roles were subject to change according to individual and collective circumstances and trust was constantly negotiated and renegotiated. Individuals in these settings were not intrinsically trust worthy, but the close presence of the community played a role in shaping behaviour. Jokes about the treasurer also acted as a form of boundary maintenance with members charged with the collective pressure to facilitate sharing. This was based on a notion of sharing as a collective practice inherently concerned with engagement and aiming for a (however delayed) exchange, that will ultimately impact on the betterment of all of those involved. The contractual arrangements that the group was bound to as a formal, incorporated organisation disrupted the reciprocal relations that helped generate feelings of collectivity. The denial of funds had implications for their feelings of belonging that extend beyond the community level. Institutional hurdles denied women the ability to act and in doing so, challenged their sense of trust in a wider collective within which they can also give and be a recipient of support.

This had a significant impact on their sense that they belonged as valid citizens, to give and to take in relation to the nation. Like Greenberg et al. (1994), pointed out, many services users, "like ourselves, do not just want to 'take'; they also want to feel they 'give', because seeing oneself as a contributor is an elemental aspect of fully human life" (as cited in Furlong, 2003). I recalled one story where a Kenyan friend had been underpaid in her first cleaning job when she first arrived in Sydney. What intrigued me about the way that the story

unfolded was that she was not upset about the underpayment because she was denied money that she had worked for, but because she was denied the chance to pay tax. She was now living in Australia and she wanted to be able to give back and pay tax to the country that was her new home. When I attended her citizenship ceremony about a year later she did not have much to say about how it felt. Held in the grand sandstone walls of the Sydney Town Hall, the piece of paper and the ceremony did not seem to have a clear meaning to her. But the ability to give back, and to take, did.

Reciprocity is fundamental to feeling a sense of comfort and of belonging. Many migrants and refugees perceive Australia to be a liberal, relatively peaceful democracy and a place where you can actively enact your citizenship in acts of giving as well as receiving. However, the lack of reciprocity experienced at the institutional level of funding, is like walking into a wall where organisers are forced to question whether or not they actually belong. With inadequate organisational 'bodies', they are denied material recognition of the work they do with communities. Denial of funding holds emotional weight and is experienced as a form of misrecognition whereby trust in the system falters as their attempts to be 'active', 'engaged' citizens is invalidated. As Mary reiterated in the context of a conversation about employing people at the African Village Market, "sometimes I don't understand ... Like if I will be able to get ten people out of Centrelink that is helping the government, they are supposed to come and support me so that I can have more [resources]?" The affront to reciprocity was an affront to their attempt to be part of the wider collective body of the nation.

The way that funding bodies distribute funds with small ethnic groups also contributed to a sense of distrust. Seemingly mundane details needed to be accounted for in a format and timeframe that could directly contrast with the informal practices of the community. One council worker recalled one group who had received funds to produce a CD but they did not realise that receipts had to be kept for everything that they spent money on and the money could only be used for specified items during the specified grant period. They had no receipts and they had used funds to reimburse themselves for music related expenses they incurred prior to receiving the grant. The group did not only unsuccessfully account for purchases, they did not adequately consider the time-frame that the grant money had to be spent within.

A framework of outputs and inputs rationalises, justifies and accounts for action in a particular way, locating value in a tangible object of exchange, primarily the relationship

between the money spent and a tangible social impact. Action is only permissible if it is correctly framed. Records of the number of people attending events or clarification of the nature of the event do not indicate of the character or quality of the bonds between participants or the effects of the activities that go beyond one specific function. How it *feels* to share space with one another and get recognition for your attempt to help others has little value in these frameworks. As such, accounting for community activities with reference to numbers, inputs and outputs is a fundamentally different criterion for partaking in and assessing, collective action. The human processes whereby the collaboration materialised, the building of relationships, the negotiations and disagreements over style produce forms of social connection and disconnection that can be intangible, or at minimum, difficult to quantify. The attempt to quantify, is indicative of a logic that prioritises efficiency and cost-effectiveness and relies on the measurability and predictability of the items exchanged. These institutionalised logics translate to everyday practice, demanding not only new roles, but new routines that leave less time and space for the messy sociality of burgeoning community activities.

In the context of the difficulty in obtaining stable housing, employment and education, confrontation with the institutional wall has a compounding and powerful effect on organisers. Being a successful grant recipient gives the group a sense that they are esteemed, their activities worthy of recognition and assistance from the government. The withholding of funds deflates the confidence of community organisers, questions their trust in the process and undermines their sense that trust in public provision of support. One council worker recalled the shaky voice of a community leader as he called to inform her that he would no longer be applying for any more grants after a recent disappointment. These disappointments were often seen as failures, sometimes collective failures but often personal failures, community leaders feeling a sense that they let down friends, family and the wider community. These three social dimensions were intertwined, as one provider stated in a meeting about resettlement support for newly arrived African communities: “we are not just doing this for a “community” we are doing this for “our families, our brothers and our sisters.” For these women “community” was not some abstract external entity but part of a relational self, that brought meaning into the lives of those involved.

Practising How to Institutionalise a Community

I sat in a café with two council staff in western Sydney while we had a chat about their involvement with a number of community projects. Looking at each other knowingly, they said how some groups make it look like everything is running so smoothly but "they are like ducks: they are gliding along the water but struggling like crazy underneath!" They laughed, "we use the duck metaphor often ... "

In meetings regarding the funding of future events I would watch as exasperated service providers would reiterate in one long sentence:

> No, you can't do that, it is not in the constitution. In order to do that you will need to have more meetings, call an AGM, get support to change the constitution, have a formal vote and then we can go ahead and do that ... do we want to do all of that?

The room would be filled with blank, slightly bemused faces sitting in awkward silence afterwards. In such moments, resettlement workers were imparting information on the specific rights and responsibilities that are attached to the particular organisational forms of public provision. A key part of their job was to ensure that organisational bodies were "strong enough" to appropriately account for their roles, responsibilities and use of funds within the institution.

The majority of local councils and large not-for-profit service providers have community development or community project teams with staff employed to assist community groups in managing grant programs, gaining access to community meeting spaces and expanding their knowledge of the system. Speaking to a number of these workers in a formal and informal capacity provided an insight into what is often the first point of contact community organisers have with the wider resettlement apparatus. These new institutional relationships provide an opportunity for women to scale up their organising from that which relies on the pooling of money in the home to that which requires the accessing of external funds and spaces to engage more widely in the sharing of different forms of support. The different organisational form that community groups take when organising with public funds influences their access to and autonomy over the funding they receive. In order to achieve funding for community events funding bodies will usually want to make contact with organisations that are legal entities in their own right. Incorporated associations, registered co-operatives and companies limited by guarantee all have limited liability and are able to get insurance cover. As a result,

small community groups can take a number of forms in order to apply for funding. On the one hand, individuals, unincorporated groups or occasionally, incorporated groups can be auspiced under a not-for profit organisation. This type of relationship means the provider will partner the smaller organisation to support them in applying for small scale grants of $10,000 or less, providing insurance protection and gain the benefit of expanded skills and infrastructure (Parramatta City Council, 2012). On the other hand, incorporated, registered groups are able to apply for funding in their own right, including raising funds through tax or charity endorsements; they can define a constitution and run autonomously and without the need for partnerships with service providers.

Crucially, each group formation involves "different levels of regulation associated with the contractual arrangements and how actors engage in negotiations" (Delbridge & Edwards, 2013, p. 5). While the contractual arrangements are often legally determined through formal contracts, in practice, the negotiation of the use of public funds and public spaces is far messier and as Berger and Luckman suggested, it is through this everyday negotiation of such 'facts', that the institution becomes clear (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Community workers play a key role in the reproduction of these rules and regulations. They are not only acquainted with the roles and responsibilities of receiving funding they are also well acquainted with the forms of ambiguity, contestation and antagonism that culturally or linguistically diverse groups confront when working with public resources. They posit institutionalisation as an opportunity for informal groups to tap into a wider infrastructure of support. However, they also convey a sense that, to some degree, working within the institution is part of an expected or normative trajectory whereby a community emerges. In this way of thinking, institutional linkages are necessary to becoming a community. As Vanessa, a community development worker who worked with a number of African women's groups noted:

> You know because they've got the community, they have got the passion they know the intricacies of the community, culturally what is going to work, how to get the people together, culturally how ... all that stuff but they might just need that link with someone to provide the information or might just need the funds to make it happen or the venue, there might be something that they need to continue.

Discussions with resettlement staff were littered with references to contact, linkage and connection that naturalised the institution as a stabilising force. Such references were accompanied with genuine concern about how to take into account the dynamism of

communities and their unique cultural idiosyncrasies and passions, at the same time as developing a strong and transferable infrastructure for action. While describing her role, Vanessa was keen to stress the many options that are available to community groups and emphasised that communities have strengths prior to and separate from that which they receive from formal support. The informal, organic infrastructures of community relations was still what she considered to be the heart of organising. However, a key aspect of her job revolved around imparting information about and codifying, appropriate roles for those in the community involved in a project:

> They're functioning to an extent very well, because they are there to provide that social support whether that, orientation into the country, to support each other and our role I guess we see is to add if there is anything to build on what they have already got or to support them if there is a gap. So um things like if it is training that we are able to provide that allows the organisation to develop its skills so if it is managing a community organisation, what is the role? If I am the director in an Australian context, what is my role? If I am the treasure what is my role? If I am the secretary, public relations—what structure should I be having? What does the law say I need to do? Those types of things, so that even if it is not an incorporated organisation, that is registered as a group what do I need to do from the paper work side of things to make things function. Acknowledging that you don't also need that structure to make things work because things always happen. So there are different types of trainings and it is really determined by the groups as to what they need.

Vanessa clearly acknowledges that communities will make things happen regardless of the institutional capacity of the community. However, a significant component of what she does is help communities to reinterpret who they are in relation to institutional roles and responsibilities, at the same time recognising that the identity of those involved is already developed in relation to the fluidity, dynamism and organic activities of community and community processes. In fact, Vanessa is careful to refer to these links as enabling and facilitating what communities are already doing themselves and capable of doing without a defined structure. Yet she also pragmatically knows that helping community groups work within the institution requires imparting knowledge of particular roles and routines. Incidentally, these roles and routines are integrally linked to new norms surrounding appropriate and inappropriate behaviour (Hay, 2016, p. 522). How collective bodies should act in order to receive public funds and behave in public spaces, becomes a criterion for which the 'strength' of community is assessed:

> I think sometimes groups get really excited, we know what we want to do, we need some funding and sometimes I think it is too early to do it because their group, even if it is not registered, is not strong enough yet because they are still going to work out who they are ... how they are going to do things, but sometimes they pull it off [laughs].

I asked Vanessa to elaborate more on what it means for a group to be strong and she continued,

> For me ... and that is probably an outsider looking in and they are probably strong in what they do, but it is for the purposes of managing the grant which is I guess what I am looking at, to manage that grant, whatever that project may be. It is being able to deliver that project doing what you said you were going to do or, acknowledging that actually what we got funded for is not feasible anymore, be brave enough to say we want to change it and just to deliver it I guess ...

In this institutional context community organisers require skills in managing the roles and responsibilities of new organisational formations. It is management skills that come to evidence their strength, rather than the strength and tenacity of the affective connections that community members share. They need to know "who they are", cultivating a strong organisational structure and identity to produce reliable outcomes. Institutional requirements can be at odds with the informal processes of community groups. This tension is one often conceptualised in relation to traditional versus modern forms of organising. Western relations involve legal sanctions through relations that are anonymous and impersonal. Traditional settings rely on disapproval from the community, where a bounded community based on mechanical solidarity ensures compliance. However, in practice, institutional processes are far more complex than what this dichotomy suggests. Equating the strength of a group with western norms of organising is limited in what it can tell us about how culturally diverse women navigate institutional processes.

The Value of Relationships

Learning how to codify new roles and responsibilities to appear strong, is not always experienced as an abstract bureaucratic process. For some organisers, institutionalising processes becomes a necessary step towards legitimacy and fits with cultural expectations surrounding the authority and legitimacy of cultural leaders. These leaders may have standing within the community or the age, experience or knowledge necessary to be viewed

as a leader. In this respect, an already existing community infrastructure can align with new institutional imperatives to classify and solidify informal relationships. The pride they bring to the formalisation of roles, just as the disappointment that accompanies mistakes, reiterates that new governance structures are only instituted dependent upon an already meaningful world. In fact, if new governance structures were solely conceived as an imposition from above, it would conceal the points of similarity. These points destabilise our understanding of informal and formal organising. Cultural precedents for different forms of organising play a key role in the meaning women make of the institutional encounters they have.

In discussing informal institutions in Africa, Hyden (2006, pp. 78–83) suggested an "economy of affection" drives relationships. Here, charisma (an authority relationship based on personal trust), clientelism (the expression of political loyalty to providers of patronage), pooling (horizontal exchanged within small groups), and collective self-defence (for example, the development of shared norms of sovereignty and non-interference) play a key role in informal institutions. Yet, the narratives of community workers suggest that they recognise such economies of affection in organisations in Australia. Here the language of 'networking', 'linkage' and 'connection' figures again. This language helps to articulate the role that familiarity and trust plays in an organisational context. For Vanessa, this was an obvious part of accessing support.

> In Australia, it is all about who you know, somebody you have built that relationship and trust with or whatever. If I don't know where you're coming from, I don't trust you, it is going to be difficult to break that barrier ... Say for example if you call the council or any other organisation you call and you just say I want to talk to the person who is in charge of blaa, blaa, sometimes it takes, but you will probably never ever get in touch with that person! But if you say oh I want to talk to ... and have a name, you get through, you understand? [laughs] That is how the world is, that is how it works. It's been there forever and especially in Australia, it is very huge here even when you are looking for a job it is who you know.

As the previous quote attests, institutional walls can create significant barriers unless you have relationships to help you get things done. Yet, when teaching new groups how to institutionalise their practices, strength is equated with formal roles and responsibilities. Meanwhile, the labour involved with maintaining community relationships is considered informal, cultural residue. While resettlement staff are genuine in their respect and knowledge of community accountability, their own role necessitates that they teach

communities that strength lies in rigorous processes and external accountability. The assumption is that the creation of a strong bureaucratic, organisational body (and clear knowledge of its administrative functions) is the only way to mitigate against the risk of misused funds and ensure the creation of a trail of audit. But showing process is not the same as having process (Ahmed, 2012, p. 99). As the two council workers quoted at the beginning of this section suggest, many groups struggle to appear strong, to demonstrate evidence of formalised governance structures. A lot of energy goes into maintaining a semblance of control and stories of excitement and disappointment point to the emotional energy that is required to present the façade of a strong organisational body. The affective dimension of learning new institutional processes, points to a will on the part of communities to learn and habituate spaces of the public. Will is necessary to allow them to enter public spaces as valid participants, able to partake in and give back to some of the only public institutions that they have access to resettlement organisations and local councils. In this context, the will to work within the institution is reflective of a symbolic commitment to the vision of community they are trying to enact as well as their vision of belonging in the nation. Questioning commitment to the institution, means questioning the way you want to belong in Australia: as an active, mobile institutional player or as an ethnically siloed, culturally backward group. In this sense, the help community development workers give communities, is help with developing the traits of a good citizen. Encompassed within these teachings is a sense of what Ong (2003, p. 12) suggests is a form of belonging that is increasingly defined by "the civic duty of the individual to reduce his or her burden on society, and instead to build up his or her own human capital". In this case, economic self-sufficiency, accountability and good governance are necessary to belong in the polity. While Ong's focus is on the individualising potential of liberal and neoliberal forms of citizenship, in practice, alongside this individualising push is an often overlooked, collective one. The experience of community collectives suggests that the process is not neatly individualising and a preoccupation with strength comes from how to minimise risk at the collective, not just individual level. Underlying this shift in organising is the institution of a new monetarised exchange value based on a logic of personal responsibility and individual initiative (Harvey, 2009). Yet accounts of community development workers also suggest that there is a pragmatic awareness that social bodies play an integral role in the reconstitution of social relations at the institutional level. The testimony of women who find themselves 'hitting institutional walls' suggests that they are also aware of the value of their collectives. Helping to foster a sense of home, comfort and trust, these smaller groups can provide a catalyst for

individuals to access support, gain employment and cultivate a sense of belonging. The next section will suggest that when institutional rules and regulations constrain the very relationships that make collectives valuable, they are interpreted as abstract and punitive, sitting in stark contrast to the ethics that guide their sense of needing to share with others.

Insuring Against Risk

For women like Fathia and Aasiya the time they spend sharing with others does not come with a clear assurance of a job, house or new life in Australia. There was a belief that sharing with one another opened the possibility for change despite the fact that there was risk involved, it was not always clear if your act of sharing would be reciprocated nor if the relationship would be sustained over time. Nevertheless, they held a deep belief and trust in the process, knowing that building a collective was ultimately necessary to mitigate social isolation and its associated effects. As such, those looking for public funding were continually surprised by the institutional labour involved with accounting for their activities while ignoring the messy, generative sociality of sharing time and space with one another. Contact with the institution presents a contradiction between discourses that emphasise the need to be active engaged citizens and the seemingly mundane moments of administration or bureaucracy that undermines their everyday practices of solidarity (as will be explored further in Chapter Seven). This contradiction is particularly apparent when it comes to the complex rules and regulations surrounding insurance for incorporated organisations.[16] Insurance makes clear that it is not only individual use of public funds that needs to be accounted for, but the use of semi-public or public spaces, forming institutional barriers over where you can share and with whom.

The issue of insurance arose organically a number of times with responses ranging from exasperation to humour. In the middle of an interview, Grace, the South Sudanese woman introduce in Chapter Three turned to me, incredulous and laughing: "When I came I didn't think about insurance anyway, what is insurance? If anything happens who is responsible for

[16] According to NSW Fair Trading as part of corporate governance obligations, committee members are responsible for: assessing the risks applicable to the activities of the association, and determining if insurance is required, and if so the type and level of cover. The insurance policies that may be appropriate range from public liability insurance to directors and officers liability insurance, associations, personal accident, occupational health and safety cover, fidelity insurance, building insurance and much more (DFAT, 2011).

it!?" Grace provides an insightful reflection on the push for individual responsibility and accountability. Upon arriving in Australia, Grace learnt English, put her children through school and maintained close connections with other South Sudanese women she had arrived in Australia with. Her reflection on insurance came after she received a job working for the local nursing home. She recounts manoeuvring through a system she was previously unacquainted with, carefully learning the intricacies and fragility of white skin as she would bath and dress the elderly, predominantly Anglo-Australian residents. She recalls that the nursing home was very short of staff and that she had a number of friends who needed some form of work experience if they were going to be employable in their new life in Sydney. Grace saw the addition of her friends as mutually beneficial; her friends required work and the nursing home she was working for required more assistants. Although she was not exactly sure what it meant, she remembers that insurance was the reason they could not volunteer and the absurdity of trying to account for who is responsible for what action in what space.

When Grace mentioned insurance, I laughed along with her while I thought about what it could mean for her. Although I thought the absurdity of insurance was note-worthy it was only after saying hello a couple years later that it became clear just how incongruous community and institutional forms of accountability could be. Bumping into Grace was one of my favourite parts of going to the African Women's Dinner Dance. Two years after our initial interview I said hello, asking her how things were going. When I first interviewed her in 2014 she was in the middle of short-terms contracts with local resettlement providers but she had told me that she had been unemployed ever since and was unlikely to find employment without adequate certifications. Hearing the music turned up behind us I suggested we go and have a dance. She patted me on the arm and shook her head; her nephew had just died in Egypt and although she decided to still attend the night, it would not be appropriate to dance. "He was poisoned because someone else wanted his job", she said to me. "What!" I expressed how sad I was to hear the news, how does someone poison for a promotion? I was baffled. She smiled, "The world is not like here Claire ... But life, it will all be sorted in the end." I knew her faith comforted her. She had a narrative, a belief that explained the action and inaction in her life. Responsibility and risk rested firmly in the hands of something far beyond any of our reaches.

For the rest of the night I was haunted by our interaction. Sitting at the back of the room waiting for any late comers I realised she just gave me a far deeper understanding of why

insurance as "who is responsible for action" was so absurd for her. The idea that the bureaucratic requirements of insurance could be elevated to the level of a secular faith; the pillars of which were predictability and accountability, did not make sense. And the seemingly mundane bureaucratic checks were not only out of touch with the reality of her everyday life, but in direct conflict with bettering the plight of those around you. In practice, her faith was intertwined with her orientation towards community. Working to help others in need was an essential part of the faith most of the women I worked with and as many women suggested and one carefully stated, "no-one is 'nothing' in Africa". Creating a global community, the likes of which Fathia also imagined as she progressed through the institutional hurdles to form an organisation, resonated with the majority of women. Their matter of fact references to family, community and sharing reflect a fusion of religion, ethics and morals that has been linked to a specifically African conception of relationality. Consequently, the likes of insurance were based on an ethos of individual accountability that was in tension with the informal reliance on community reciprocity, trust and faith that many communities were used to. The institutional logic of insurance presents a significant challenge to the world view of women working within the system as well as their fundamental sense of trust in the system. Simmel (1971) articulates a conception of trust as,

> the feeling that there exists between our idea of being and the being itself a definite connection and unity, a certain consistency in our conception of it, an assurance and lack of resistance in the surrender of the Ego to this conception, which may rest upon particular reasons, but is not explained by them (cited in Misztal, 2001, p. 5)

Institutional processes unsettle the relationships, unity and connection that allow women to feel a sense of trust. This lack of trust is not easily articulated, but as Simmel suggests, neither are the reasons why we trust. Individual accountability and liability can create disunity because they are often at odds with notions of providing a safety net for the community. The imposition of roles, routines and a new exchange values constricts the spaces available for conflicting ideas, as well as the more organic processes of boundary maintenance and the rituals of invitation that help establish trust between women. At this institutional level, there is less room for the messy sociality of sharing and an emphasis on definable outcomes, efficient use of funds and the management of risk. Insurance is a particular site of contention. Insurance is not just about protecting monetary resources but about working to regulate the use of public and institutionalised spaces, creating a sense of who and what is appropriate and in what spaces. The sense of being 'out of place' in the institution

compounds already existing feelings of non-belonging associated with initial arrival. Delineating who belongs and where compounds an already existing sense of non-belonging for many women. It is in aiming to work within the spaces and norms of the institution, that women realise that they do not quite inhabit the institution, noticing the walls as they come up against the lack of reciprocity and the governance over their time and space to be with and help one another.

Conclusion: The Accumulating Anticipation of Walls

In thinking through how institutional realities become given, it is clear that women also find their own ways to contain the reach of institutional processes. As such, they do not seek to change the institution, but show a reflexive and pragmatic awareness that work is required. The institution of new roles does have social and material implications for how sharing can manifest between women. However, this chapter has tried to highlight how the codification of new rules and responsibilities is not deterministic and as Hay (2016 p. 533) suggested, despite leading to a degree of predictability, there is always space for contingency, ambiguity, contestation and antagonism in the production of norms and conventions. To lay the foundation for understanding how and where institutionalised action is sedimented or challenged, this chapter has drawn attention to the initial and subtle points where new norms of behaviour and action are first experienced. They are perceived to be illogical or nonsensical when they directly curtail the ability of people to share with one another and ultimately benefit the community. However, at the same time they reserve respect for the new ways of doing things in Australia because they are keen to build lives and communities that are strong, recognisable and trusted. A constant tension between giving and receiving is experienced within institutionalised spaces. This tension produces a scepticism in women regarding whether they are valued by the government. This scepticism plays a role in shaping their belonging at local and national levels. The ground on which their belonging forms is consistently unsettled by doubt. When, where and what activities will be funded is uncertain and the knowledge that institutional walls could form around any corner stifles their activities.

There is a significant emotional impact to hitting these walls. They are the sedimentation of history into a barrier (Ahmed, 2012). A barrier that makes change in the institution difficult as well as secures “the mobility of some” while remaining “invisible to those who can flow into spaces created by institutions” (Ahmed, 2012, p. 175). However, the separation between

those who face barriers and those who flow into institutional spaces is in practice, murky. Many of the workers in the community sector and local councils are also community members and key community organisers. They negotiate and learn multiple roles and responsibilities simultaneously. The next chapter will focus more specifically on the women who broker between institutional processes and new, emerging or isolated community groups. While this chapter has focused on the walls that women face when they first expand their community activities, Chapter Six will extend this analysis with a more specific focus on the actual process of institutionalising what were previously, informal acts of sharing. The institution of new roles and responsibilities shifts pre-existing relations of sharing and by doing so, creates new social distances and divisions. Tracing everyday sharing practices in the institutional context allows a unique insight into how institutional pressures shift the direction of community events. As I will argue in the next chapter, competitive funding and the forms of governance and accountability that come along with it, play a key role in shaping the conditions through which belonging is constructed and the African community is imagined and practiced.

Chapter Six

Brokering New Social Divisions

The Africultures Festival is the largest annual African festival in Australia. On the one-day event Auburn or Wyatt Parks are transformed for the day. The festival was in Auburn the first time that I attended. On the left-hand side of the park there was the Kilimanjaro stage and over towards Auburn community space, the Serengeti Stage. Bordering the festival was what was termed the Nile Food Court, where food could be purchased from Ethiopian, Sudanese, Ghanaian and other food venders. Around the perimeter of the festival was the African Market Place, a collection of commercial and information stalls selling African produce and providing information about available community services. Looking around you could see a kid's corner, a sporting zone and a one-day six-a-side football tournament in the distance. The festival was a vibrant event and at a far larger scale than other African events in Sydney.

Figure 8: Crowds gathering around the small stage at the Africultures Festival

When I first met Aasiya, one of the key organisers of Africultures, she was running through the hot April day fixated with the movements of the next performers. Sitting down with her later she told me that she started Africultures in 2009 to break down borders between different African communities in Sydney and between the African community and the broader Australian public. She talked about the resistance she faced in the beginning:

> It was so difficult and I can tell you that from my experience. No one has ever done this before so why do that? "I don't know you in Africa so why would I need to be part of this?" One, there wasn't the understanding. Secondly, people were afraid of the unknown, the community. I mean some of them had gone through such torture and trauma. You have the Southern Sudanese who dispersed through Kenya and you know, difficult routes to come here and then suddenly why would I want to deal with the rest of Africa, I didn't have a good experience with them which was totally understandable. There was also the objections from their organisations, some of these NGO's or organisations like to hoard their clients to be empowered and move on so they say "no, no that is not a good idea, don't get involved". So, there was a lot of suspicion, a lot of hard talking because people didn't understand the concept of 'together'.
>
> The first year we had around 2000 people turn up which was great for us. With all of the hard work we were doing. But I think gradually, as we work closer with all of the communities, and they can see that we are not doing it for us, it's about them and it's about communities. And we never say no to any community and we never say no if you don't have the money. We try and you know ... somehow involve you.

Aasiya's testimony is a paradigmatic example of the amount of energy that community organisers expend in order to create events that challenge preconceptions about ethnic, religious and national differences. Her experiences point to the significant degree of momentum that is required to break down barriers between often disparate and occasionally, antagonistic groups. Everyday antagonisms can be glimpsed in petty judgements about 'other communities', but such judgements also have a protective function, shielding those who share them from the individual and collective trauma that can lie behind community boundaries. I recall being told of one Sudanese gathering where a former child soldier opened the front door, of the western Sydney house he was visiting, to a former commander in the army. Both sat and had tea amongst the rest of the group, but two brutal histories sat in the silences between them. When even the act of sitting side by side and sharing space with one another was contentious and at times provoked direct antagonisms,

successfully including different communities was no small feat. Consequently, in this chapter I focus on the expanded, public community events that help to create a neutral ground for communities to meet and make visible a notion of community for those who are otherwise isolated. I suggest that in the process of organising larger scale events and making African community spaces visible, differences and divisions also come to the fore. The sedimentation of institutional processes accelerates social distances and narrows the opportunity for solidarity to form across differences.

Drawing on the experience of key community organisers who broker between multiple scales of activity, this chapter will interrogate the tensions that are produced as women try to be simultaneously accountable to their communities and institutional processes. Brokers identify the needs of communities and translate them into the language and logic of the institution. They forge new communicative links and exchange different forms of valuation in order to provide an account of community that will resonate in institutional spaces and enable them to access public funds and spaces for their events. Accountability in this context, will be conceptualised primarily as a social relationship. Material, discursive and embodied processes figure in how we provide an individual and collective account of who we are and what we need, in relation to others. The difficulties organisers face accounting for themselves and their communities reveals the barriers that impact on how smaller, culturally diverse or ethno-specific collectives access institutionalised support for their activities. In his reflections on accountability, Giddens suggests that "to be 'accountable' for one's activities is both to explicate the reasons for them and to supply the normative grounds whereby they may be 'justified'" (Giddens, 1984, p. 30). Giddens's definition of accountability will help to draw attention to the social dynamics and institutional logics that influence the trajectory of community organising. Institutional pressures play a key role in shaping the account of the "African community" that evolves in policy and practice.

To better understand the complex interdependencies of these logics, this chapter will bring together different strands in the literature regarding changing welfare states (Barnett, 2003; Cope, 2001; Newman, 2010) and the historical tensions of institutionalised multiculturalism in Australia (Jakubowicz, 1988; Moran, 2011; Tabar et al., 2003). Since the emergence of multiculturalism in Australia in the 1970s, how the government seeks to structure social policy around cultural difference has implications for how ethnically, culturally or linguistically diverse groups mobilise. Institutional processes influence how groups mobilise around the notion of an *ethnic community* that is meant to service the needs of their

community and represent their community in a wider political field (Tabar et al., 2003). However, less studied is the impact that an introduction of contracted out and competitively tendered services has had on the flow and concentration of power within culturally diverse communities. On what terms do the communities have to account for themselves in order to receive the available one-off grants or longer-term funding? A language around *competitive tendering* and *contracted out services* has become part of the everyday discourse of those employed in service provision. The fragmented nature of the more competitive paradigm means that collecting direct evidence of its impact has been a challenge and as it is often difficult to separate rhetoric from reality (Darcy et al., 2009, p. 2). In an attempt to fill the gap between rhetoric and reality, I will pay attention to what can be glimpsed about changing welfare states from below — when communities try and access public funds and public spaces. Specifically, what can be gained by being attentive to the changing way sharing is practiced among women involved with community organising. These organisers find themselves having to account for their communities through new rules, regulations, language and norms. Competing institutional pressures influence their struggle to suitably "inhabit the institution" (Delbridge & Edwards, 2013) while providing an appropriate account of community.

I start by expanding on the everyday difficulties Aasiya faces when organising Africultures with public funds and in public spaces. I suggest that the work involved with learning new rules and regulations makes it more viable to work with communities who already know the process, jeopardising the inclusion of those that do not. A social shift towards working with manageable communities is accompanied by a discursive shift regarding what it means to be a good citizen. The second section will suggest that community becomes a site of moralising ideas about citizenship and change. Institutional spaces are a particular site where these ideas circulate. Community organisers are encouraged to teach communities how to account for themselves and the pedagogy guiding these lessons of accountability reflect a larger discursive shift towards individual responsibility and active citizenship. The following two sections suggest that these discursive changes are related to two clear material shifts in the provision of support for communities. The first is the upward mobility of brokers. On an individual level, trying to inhabit the institutional norms of the workplace effect how they relate to community as a site of change and in need of change. The professionalisation of community work also creates new boundaries about how and why sharing can happen. The second, is the dynamics of competitive funding that reveal the discursive grounds upon which women are having to provide accounts of community to funding bodies. The imperative to teach

new systems of accountability reflects a shift in the state's role from providing welfare to culturally diverse communities, towards the building of communities' capacity for self-provisioning. An associated moralisation of welfare, concerned with social discipline rather than justice, exacerbates already existing class, educational and cultural differences within and across communities. I conclude that the material constraints placed on community organisers restricts the possibility for solidarity to develop across differences.

"… all this x, y and z!" Working with Manageable Communities

Before coming to Australia Aasiya was no stranger to working with refugee communities. Her grandparents were Somali refugees who escaped to Kenya where they were involved in community activities and her mother ran a soup kitchen that would at times involve her and her siblings missing out on food in favour of feeding the extra numbers that had arrived in the town. Despite arriving in Australia with the sense of *non-belonging* that was discussed in Chapter Three, in the messy afternoons spent preparing food to share, chatting about life back in Africa and waiting for those who were endlessly late to arrive, she felt a sense of being home. Aasiya suggested that feeling home in Australia provided a new opportunity to feel part of an African community, something that she was denied a chance to feel when in Africa. She explained how she used this sense of home and comfort to imagine larger events that would include more isolated pockets of the African communities in Sydney:

> We thought you know, rather than having just for one group we need to all get together so we understand one another because in Africa we don't meet. The borders are so tight but through Africultures we meet anybody from any culture and you can just start a dialogue, it just gives you the opportunity to talk to anybody, from any culture, on a neutral ground and see what they are. You find that Ethiopia and Eritrea are enemies as two countries, but down here at the festival they work together. They don't even understand why they are at war, it's just crazy isn't it?

For some communities, organising in public spaces presented new opportunities to create affinities and break down barriers. Aasiya's reference to meeting on neutral ground was a signal that the home spaces discussed in Chapter Three were not uncontested spaces of welcome. Creating new African events was a way to include communities that were marginalised or fearful of one another. Importantly, breaking down barriers between communities is also a key concern of local, state and federal governments. As part of the Department of Social Service's National Agenda for Multicultural Australia the federal

government articulated that the role that government institutions should play in creating what they title "A Better Australia" (Department of Social Services, 2014). As part of this they suggest that,

> Local, State and Commonwealth government will intervene when necessary to manage our diversity in the interests of cultural tolerance, social justice and economic efficiency. We need to plan. Overseas experience has shown the often tragic consequence that occur when societies are unable or unwilling to integrate newcomers (Department of Social Services, 2014).

Local NGO and not-for-profit organisations are increasingly charged with overseeing this aspect of the state's integrative functions and these organisations allocate small scale funding for community activities. Yet, as Chapters Three and Four demonstrated, creating openness to share across differences is a material, embodied labour and in practice, it is community events like Africultures that play a critical role in appeasing the suspicions by building trust and involving newly arrived or isolated communities.

Despite aligning with government imperatives, these events are heavily regulated and require stringent accountability processes. New forms of accountability demand a minimum level of expertise regarding what can be shared, what can be traded, in what spaces and with whom. While many organisers continue to use the language of *sharing*, Aasiya's narrative provides an insight into how informal economies of sharing become a form of community *work*. This work requires organisers to account for their own presence through appropriate certification and knowledge of the rules and regulations of public spaces. Through humour and frustration Aasiya provided an insight into the seemingly inconsequential or taken-for-granted energy required to teach the new requirements:

> ... it is very hard because the council inspector will come to you and say 'I want a food inspection certificate, I want a food handling, you know all this x, y, z and I want it kind of yesterday. And you are speaking to a community for whom yesterday might mean next month! And food handling certificate: "What's that?" We gather them and we go, "You know council wants this food handing certificate so, it's okay we know you don't have it but you need to come to this session so that the council can tell you a-z." And they say, "Okay, so what date?" And you give them a date and always give them – if the council environment health inspectors who normally do it are coming at five, you say you have to be there at three o' clock. Just to get them there at five! So it is hard work but they slowly learn and now you are at a stage where

we tell them, look mate if you don't do x, y, z you know the council is not going to allow you.

Figure 9: Two men watching the early performances as crowds start to trickle in

In her discussion on food handling certificates Aasiya suggested that it is not only community organisers that are expected to have a thorough knowledge of public liability insurance and a technical knowledge about food handing but the smaller community groups in attendance. The rigid council processes sit in contrast to the fluid spatiality and temporality that Aasiya was able to cultivate in smaller collectives based in home spaces. Despite her own efforts to make the festival a space of inclusion, Aasiya expressed her exasperation when people in the clothing section of the festival begin to sell food under the table or when those selling food, turn up late or ill-prepared. Aasiya explained that while Africultures was initiated to include those newly arrived or isolated from community activities, it is difficult to find the time to

include new communities because it involves teaching them how to account for themselves within a wider regulative system:

> Yeah so the ones who have been through the system know, they understand and they are the best people we can work with because they know the system. But if it is a new group we have to start from zero and slowly take them along the path so it is lots of hard work, 12 months' hard work and you finish and then before you wrap up again you start, you know, because we start from zero budget and then we got to find all the funds throughout the year.

In this quote, Aasiya conveyed the amount of work involved with including new communities while also being accountable to the processes of local councils and relevant funding bodies. With limited time and space to create inclusive events, she finds it easier to work with those who know the system and can help avoid the institutional walls that organisers face when processes are not followed. What is clear from Aasiya's anecdotes is that the walls of the institution solidify when food, clothing and accessories are not being shared, but bought and sold. The introduction of commodity exchange has material consequences for the festival as a space of invitation. Commodities are regulated by rules that determine when, how and who can engage in a relationship of exchange. Both participation at festivals and everyday acts of volunteering are bound up with these rules. Organisers like Aasiya have difficulty translating the logic of legal requirements. She described the different meanings brought to informal acts of sharing compared to the more regulated form of community work she confronts in institutional spaces:

> Everyone's looking out for somebody else and informally, they don't have to register to do it! I am going to do voluntary work and I need a badge and I need a certificate, they just do it because they'll give you time today and you will give them your time tomorrow it is just like give and take. Nobody wants a certificate or no one wants to sign in a form!

The frustration conveyed in Aasiya's reflection is shared among other organisers who feel the burden to learn and impart a new system of accountability. For these organisers, new forms of accountability seem abstract. But accountability is also embodied in the energy needed for the added work involved with organising events. The time spent accounting for funding, rules and certification comes at the expense of including communities that are differentially positioned to access and learn the system. Aasiya hinted at a change of

orientation from engaging isolated communities to working with manageable communities. This change is embedded in the work that women must do to be accountable to external bodies. Following the imposed rules and regulations becomes a prerequisite to participating as a community in public spaces. As such, the next section will suggest that brokers teach other community members to account for themselves in a way that reveals a normative conception of what it means to be a good citizen. Their positioning between multiple spheres of institutional activity impacts on how and when they employ this conception.

Moralising Community: From Inviting to Empowering

Community organisers regularly broker between newly arrived communities, registered or unregistered groups and larger funding bodies. Brokering involves a delicate balance between work, home and community lives. These different spheres of activity have different forms of accountability, processes of valuation and norms of behaviour and action associated with them. Figure 10 tries to capture three spheres of institutional activity that community organisers broker between. In the top sphere, are the larger service providers who have received the majority of competitively tendered funds and who are also a key source of employment for women. In the left-hand sphere, the community run organisations or informal groups exist side-by-side with the rotating credit schemes or the informal provision of support. In the right-hand sphere, is the spaces where women can access newly arrived communities, informal community spaces and when they practice every day acts of invitation to build a sense of community. The women who broker between these spheres, provide communicative links between them, translating different practices and processes.

However, each sphere does not exert an equal amount of pressure. The close proximity that women have to state funding bodies plays a role in changing norms of action and behaviour. As I argued in the previous section, this is often through simply changing the time and space that women have to share with one another. Funding pressures influence how women can move through and influence the bottom two spheres of activity. This pressure can be discerned in small, albeit telling moments. I witnessed a number of these moments during my volunteering or when attending organising meetings.

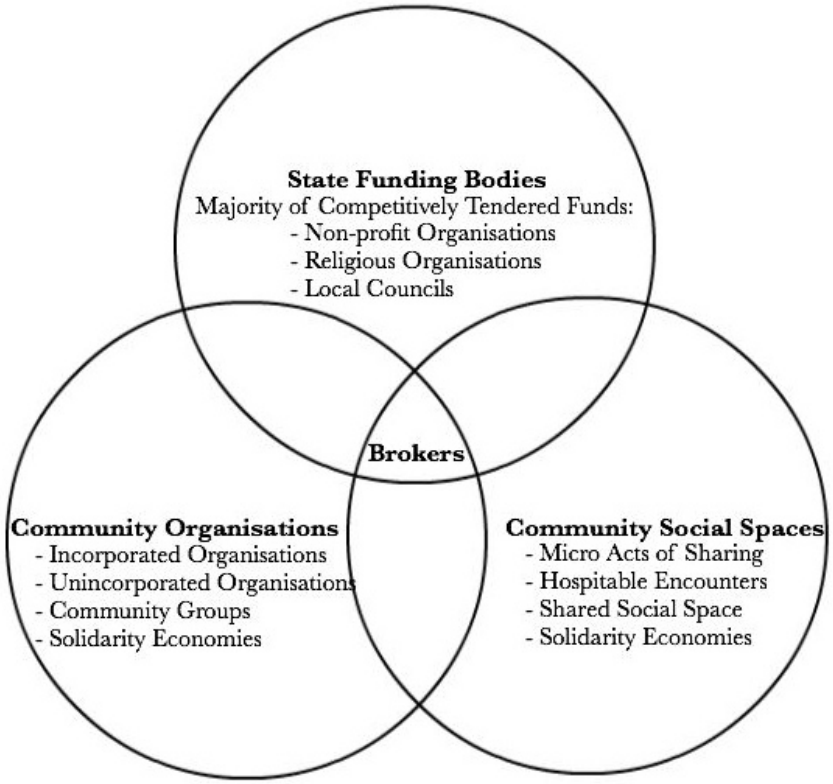

Figure 10: Spheres of institutional involvement

In the four years that I was involved with the African Women's Dinner Dance, it grew, changed location and went from face-to-face ticket sales to online ticket sales. Nearly all the women who organised the exchange were on casual or fixed-term contracts with organisations that assisted with migrant resettlement. Community events were a crucial, albeit taxing addition to their lives. There is a significant pressure involved with creating community events that span across these spheres. This pressure contributes to the push to teach communities the *right way* to do things. At times, an ethic of solidarity is muffled by the call to teach communities how to behave appropriately. When I was volunteering at the dance one evening I watched one (of the hundreds) of groups of immaculately dressed women turn up, vying for a position in the line to enter. This group wanted to purchase tickets at the door but internet sales had been introduced to make the event more efficient, streamlined and manageable, and after much discussion it had been decided that there would be no tickets sold on the night of the dance, with no exceptions. Upon being denied entry a number of times, the group, of what I was told were Nuer, Sudanese refugees, walked towards the sliding electronic doors, conferencing together and contacting people on their phones until they eventually decided to leave. Witnessing the women removed from the

main line of entry spoke to changing social distances between organisers and the segments of the communities they wished to include.

The incident at the dinner dance was one of many where a shift in behaviour and practice could be discerned. At that point, working on the door for three years had taught me the chaos that can ensue when four hundred women turn up in roughly the same one hour window of an eight-hour event, with their expectations in tow and ready to be met. Yet, the act of excluding the women placed them on the margins of an event that was created to include women like them. In meetings following the event, the presence of security was seen as a noteworthy improvement. Discussion took on a disciplinary tone that included the necessity of being tough, of how to teach attendees to change, teach them that they cannot rely on last minute entry and they cannot always rely on things being done for them. The disciplinary tone increased as the scale of the event expanded. Limited time and resources pitted efficiency against the idiosyncrasies of communities. Less time was given to foster the incidental and intangible sociality that came along with micro acts of sharing. The flexible social relationships of sharing, that did not have an immediate expectation of reciprocity, were challenged. These changes have an impact on the creation of inclusionary social spaces.

Internet sales streamlined the process of ticket sales. However, internet sales removed the possibility for social interaction — the introductions to new people, the invitations into new homes and the potential for new relationships to form — that came with acquiring a ticket via face-to-face ticket sales coordinated out of the home of friends or at the African Village Market. The aim here is not to situate technology as inauthentic and in opposition to authentic face-to-face community relations. Online shopping, Skype, Facebook and email played a key role in maintaining a constant transnational flow of goods and relationships that fostered a sense of home away from home, in Australia. However, internet sales did mean that The Market was less of a meeting place in the lead up to the event and the women who are directed to buy tickets at friends of friend's places, would not gain access to the same incidental relationships. In addition, many new refugees in particular, did not have access to the internet.

Figure 11: Flyer for the African Women's Dinner Dance
Courtesy of the African Women's Group

Once online sales were instituted by the online ticketing company, *Moshtix*, the immediate result was a decrease in presale tickets. The question of what to do when women turned up on the night without tickets was broached and there was an acknowledgement that some women may not be able to use the internet. While internet sales made sense for the scale of the event, the change created difficulties for those same women for whom the dance aimed to reach: those isolated from forms of support, unlikely to have or be able to use a computer or be able to read English. The consensus was that they could message one of the organisers for assistance, their children could help them book it or, "at the end of the day they should learn to use the internet anyway". What became apparent in these discussions, was that there was normative value being attached to competence, efficiency and timeliness. Sentiments around "they need to learn" as well as, "we need to be better organised to run this the right way" were repeated often and reflected a sense that organisers saw their role as one to teach attendees how to be accountable for themselves. Reactions to so called cultural traits such as *African time* are emblematic of emerging divisions based around the appropriate norms of behaviour and action that communities should adopt. There is a significant difference between the norms that are expected in the informal spaces of the home, to those expected in institutionalised, public or semi-public arenas where they represent an African community. The changing scale of activity elicits a corresponding change in the intention behind sharing. Where the act of invitation was central to sharing with other disparate communities, the aim of change and empowerment becomes the focus. Empowerment

brings with it an expanded set of expectations that are linked to the correct way to account for yourself as an efficient, active citizen. The importance organisers place on this goal and the inexhaustible work they do to impart it, exposes a moralisation of the community as a critical site for change and empowerment. A sense of responsibility for the safety, comfort and wellbeing of the community, intersects with a subtle moral regulation of those who are considered to be *the community*. This regulation can be discerned through attitudes on participation, reciprocation and through a more discerning sense of what should be shared, when and with whom.

In brokering between different systems of accountability, organisers develop a pedagogy surrounding empowerment (Newman, 2010). Newman (2010) suggests that pedagogies of empowerment are highly-gendered. It is women who do the work of developing and teaching communities how to empower themselves and their wider community. Their positions within or relationships with welfare institutions, shape the meanings they ascribe to being empowered. In the case of organisers working on African community events, particular goals of empowerment develop over time. Organisers suggest that newly arrived communities require their own time and space to grow because it is only over time that they develop a sense of what support they need and when. But organisers also share strong ideas about what this support should be and share it with newly arrived communities. In the institutional setting, sharing is less about creating safe spaces but about using these spaces to engender *empowerment*, *self-help* and *self-esteem*. Sharma (2008) suggests that these languages have emerged out of social movements and critical feminist practices but that they also align with neoliberal ideologies that aim to fashion "rights-bearing, entrepreneurial personhood" (p. 17). Empowering communities involves ensuring that they can be self-sufficient. As part of this, new norms of behaviour and action need to be imparted that encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own empowerment. These pedagogies have a more coercive and compulsory character and reflect an overall moralisation of welfare where the provision of support becomes a practice of social discipline rather than social justice (Newman, 2010, p. 213). Such a reading of empowerment in the institutional setting aligns with Abram (2007)'s theorisation of neoliberal rationalities that "require citizens to be tutored on the needs of good governance and the norms of good citizenship" (as cited in Newman, 2010, p. 713). Critical welfare scholars argue that these norms are increasingly imparted by non-government and contracted services that provide support for migrant communities (Trudeau, 2012). However, what these accounts neglect, is that norms of citizenship are imparted by particular groups within the communities that are in question.

The processes they encounter when trying to organise community spaces and events is where new norms of action and behaviour are learnt and imparted. In this case, the women who broker between services and communities come to equate a grasp of institutional processes, and the nuances of formal accountability, with what it means to be a good, active citizen.

I will now turn to look at how the upward mobility of brokers influences the norms of behaviour and action that they associate with being an empowered, good citizen. We can observe this through tracing how sharing with one another changes when women engage with the practice as a form of community work or from within professional settings. Sharing is not erased, but reframed through the institution of new personal and professional boundaries. I want to suggest that these boundaries are evidence of shifting class positions and also draw attention to the difficulty women face inhabiting institutional spaces. In this context, imparting new personal and professional boundaries can also be understood as a strategy to minimise discrimination for themselves and their communities.

Winning People on Side: The Role of the Professional Sharer

> Do you know what Kunta Kintie is? Have you watched Roots? You need to go and watch Roots particularly because you are doing this project. I can lend it to you. Kunta Kintie was an African who stole in the slave trade and he became known as Toby and when he was stolen and they were like what's your name he kept going "Kunta Kintie, Kunta Kintie", and they would hit him until one day he "went my name is Toby". And so when you talk about Kunta Kintie, it is a reference to this character in Roots but then it is just someone whose spirit can't be broken. Cause you know they chopped off his leg and did that and that just to try and break his spirit. And at his death, his whole generation, a generation of his children always told the story of Kunta Kintie. So when I say Kunta Kintie, when an African says someone is Kunta Kintie, it is the African who is out of the bush, who you can't take the bush out of. Not that African are bush, but you know, so yeah ... She hasn't been able to progress. She has done well, she doesn't have a bad job but you can't take ... she just, not can't filter ... because she doesn't shout at people or anything she just doesn't know how to navigate the, what I will loosely call in the comfort of my home, white politics. And not politics, as in politics as in something, it's just the way of communication and winning people on side. Which sucks because it is a bit inauthentic.

During my interview with Kelly, first introduced at the end of Chapter Three, she had intervened with the previous illuminating comment. She was not alone in her musing of Kunta Kintie. In Rollock et al's (2011) exploration of the public identities of black middle classes in the UK, the airing of *Roots*[17] in 1977 became an important frame of reference for her participants. It gave voice to the collective subjugation black people faced and simultaneously resonated strongly with their own experience as black professionals finding a way to inhabit the institutional spaces they were working within. In Kelly's exposition of her workmate's lack of professional progression, the story of Kunta Kinte also figures prominently. Drawing briefly on Kelly's reflection and Rollock's (2011) analysis of professional identities, I want to suggest that the upward mobility and professionalisation of brokerage contributes to how and why women impart new norms of behaviour and action when they work in institutionalised spaces.

We first met Kelly in Chapter Three, where she recounted experiences of racism in Australia that played a formative role in giving her a sense of being a black woman. The subsequent exclusion she faced from other Zimbabweans as a result of being a queer woman, left her wary of the idea of an African community. I want to briefly explore what her reflection on Kunta Kinte tells us about working in professional settings in Australia. Kelly depicted Kunta Kinte as a spirit that she admires but one that she also clearly perceives to be at odds with the reality of progressing in a professional world of "white politics". Without elaborating on what this means, her suggestion is that communication, politeness, and composure become forms of embodied capital necessary to inhabit the institutional norms of her workplace. She suggested that in the workplace, one has a responsibility to learn the nuanced ways that you need to present, and hide, aspects of your history, culture and identity to prevent discrimination.

Kelly was articulate in her criticism that the cultural depictions of black people in Australia, resist and restrict the possibility of fluid, diverse black identities. She drew on a critical language that was not readily available to most women who had not had the same educational upbringing. Where some women would reflect on these issues with silence,

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[17] *Roots* aired as a TV miniseries and is based on a novel by the same name written by Alex Haley and follows the story of African born Kunta Kinte who was kidnapped, sold into slavery and taken to the 'New World'. Exposing the pain of slavery, the story traces the subsequent generations of Kinte's family through the abolition of slavery and into modern times.

shrugs or wariness about being ungrateful, Kelly does so through articulating that a set of perceived norms associated with the black body persist in contemporary Australian society. These norms position black communities as devalued, uneducated, and criminalised and suggest that those who deviate from the norm, warrant closer inspection (Rollock et al., 2011). In this context, the comments Kelly made about her workmate's lack of upward mobility is stated as a pragmatic awareness of the position of whiteness in Australian society. Whiteness plays a key role in structuring institutional norms. In a movement indicative of Du Bois's (1989) "double consciousness", Kelly's reflection on her workmate indicates that to some extent, she is looking at both of them, "through the eyes of another". This view helps her to resist her own marginalisation in the workplace but also has an impact on her solidarity with those who do not share the same understanding of how institutional spaces should be inhabited. In fact, in critiquing her workmate, she reinscribes a modernist narrative of western civility and citizenship, through depicting a sense of the "Third World" backwardness of her workmate (Singh, 2016).

Kelly's reflection suggests that accounting for how and why you came to be in place, is an embodied process. Race, gender and class play an important role in how you provide an account and who you provide an account to. In many of the judgements about the best way to organise, professional or upwardly mobile women could be observed subtly differentiating themselves from those who are less educated, who reside in lower paid professions or whose communities face significant unemployment. I would see this manifest in crude forms with people stating, "Oh you don't want to interview me, I am not a *real* African ..." implying that their position in Australia meant that they were not *exotic* or *interesting enough* to be worthy of consideration. In these instances, women were simultaneously resisting their difference being viewed as a spectacle (Hall, 1997) through the research process, while inadvertently reinscribing a sense of other women as the spectacle, *real Africans*, who they are distanced from. This was particularly the case for women who were involved in community events but who were also employed in professional capacities outside of the community sector.

For educated, middle-class women who had arrived through skilled or student visas, the construction of public identities became one way of coping with the de-skilling they experienced in Australia. Here, Lacy's (2007, p. 73) definition of pubic identities as "purposeful, instrumental strategies that either reduce the probability of discrimination or curtails the extent of discrimination middle-class black people face in their public interactions with white strangers" is apt, but limited. This is not just about protecting against

interpersonal conflict, but also accounting for one's self in relation to a collective, from within an institutional context that fears the consequences of organised and politicised forms of difference (something that I will return to in the last section of this chapter). Part of addressing this fear is learning how to mediate the image of Africans in the wider community and learning how to reframe community through every day social distancing and boundary work (Meares, 2010). This boundary work can take inclusionary and exclusionary forms. In everyday discourse, this boundary work draws heavily on cultural tropes of what it means to be black. These tropes were at times based on negative or racist stereotypes and other times, more positive associations of community, sharing or a sense of the underlying relationality to an African way of life. Often comments were said with a knowing laugh and were not only telling of an attempt to differentiate, but of attempts to include, creating an ownership and fondness of the familiarity of the image evoked. This boundary work hints at the multiple worlds that brokers struggle to belong to simultaneously.

For the community organisers who are employed within the community sector, inclusionary gestures play a significant role in how they develop relationships with newly arrived communities. In moving between formalised work and work-place to informal community work and community spaces, many brokers are offered paid positions in the community sector. Here it is not your professional title, but your body, that marks you as being more or less able to provide an account. Black women embody the diversity community services want to work with and there is an understanding that sharing space with those who are not white provides comfort for the ethnically and culturally diverse communities who come to access services. When asked about what role their own background plays in the provision of services, community development workers repeated sentiments such as, "we look like the community" and "they feel more comfortable with us". These workers suggest that their bodies help them broker between diverse cultural groups and institutional contexts. They come to embody the comfort that is sought after experiences of non-belonging, exclusion or racism. Community sector managers recognise the importance of diversity in the workplace from a cultural point of view (while not explicitly acknowledging the role that simply sharing space with those who are not white plays). Cultural brokers are sought after as paid community workers and as part of these positions they play a key role in how institutional norms are inhabited, resisted or sedimented across different African communities. One way that the sedimentation of new norms can be observed, is through the institution of new boundaries between professional and personal. These boundaries effect what can be shared and when.

I observed the institution of new boundaries over what is considered *work*, *community* and *home* at a number of events. Over the years of the dinner dance, I had seen how organisers had come to fervently discourage each other from giving out their personal numbers. These numbers were used to help on the night with the flow of friends who wanted to explain why they did not have a ticket. Being flexible with official protocol was increasingly seen to jeopardise proper process and was discouraged among organisers. This created a clearer sense of what can be shared with others and under what grounds. Throughout her interview, Vanessa, the community development worker of Sierra Leonean background, provided other examples of how the institution of new boundaries impacted on sharing. She recounted how not long after she started working for her local council she had to speak to her family about changing the home phone because of the amount of calls she would receive at home regarding what was formally her *community work* and was now her *paid work*. At social events, she also began setting new boundaries, deciding when, where and how she would acknowledge community members at social events. Vanessa expressed the exasperation she felt when a community member called her at home to tell her the truth of what was happening with an organisation that she was trying to establish. The community member had called her at home because they did not want to talk about it in a public work place. She responded, "Well that is the forum that I should know!" and throwing her arms up in the air. Vanessa's experience suggests that the delineation between work and community or home space plays a significant role in changing social distances among women.

An unintended consequence of the new boundaries instated between communities and community workers, is that a new division of labour, time and *trust* is also imparted. The institution of a boundary between work and community changes how something as simple as stories, can be shared. New social distances form as women transition from unemployed to employed enacting new boundaries to learn the language and habits of their work places. The work individual brokers do to fit into the institution creates new social distances and divisions among those communities who are less acquainted with institutional norms. Professional spaces increasingly figure as sites where individuals try and reframe how they are positioned as the *cultural other*, impacting on collective processes of inclusion. The judgments, discrimination, inclusionary and exclusionary boundary work that takes place is the effect of the anxiety generated by entering work places as black African women. While it is clear that class, educational and language differences exist among many women who broker between institutionalised forms of sharing and informal community spaces, pre-

existing differences are exacerbated by the work that these women need to do to fit into and learn the new roles and responsibilities of the workplace. Changing class, work and professional identities contribute to how community is moralised as a site of change. The next section will extend the material dimension of this argument. It will suggest that for those charged with finding the funds to run events, the requirements of the competitive funding environment contribute to an account of community that is palatable and attractive to funders.

The Form and Content of Begging

From the beginning of our initial discussion about Africultures, Aasiya provided a vivid insight into the difficulties of accessing reliable funding. She had carefully figured out the pockets of available short-term funds but lamented that in the long term, "There is no money! Even for organisations, seriously, it is so sad, isn't it?" Bemoaning just how persistent and on-the-ball she had to be to get funding, she regarded it as: "Begging!" she exclaimed, "a lot of begging, a lot of twisting people's arm." Her interest lies in the creative aspect of organising events, the art and cultural aspects of engagement but she felt that:

> My creative side is *so* shrinking it is more of just being administrator and you know, just doing the paperwork. My life turned to become paperwork and trying to talk people into giving us money, or talk people into ... just full time begging, that is what life is about! It is very sad but you got to do it otherwise it doesn't happen.

The full-time begging involved with the funding and grant system consumes organisers like Aasiya and gives them less time to work on the aspects of their events that make them attractive and engaging to communities. However, it is not only the begging for money, but learning the language through which to beg, that is the most laborious and divisive aspect of organising large scale events. Aasiya vividly expressed some of her frustration with funding by drawing on the initial decisions she had to make when incorporating an organisation:

> Oh my god there is all of this ... it is just the system that *does you in*. Which is too many forms, too many bureaucracy, too many. So we had to change our constitution for that and the reason being, okay you either had to be a welfare *or* a cultural organisation. Because we are both, which one of two do you want to be? Somali welfare and culture? Which one? Which one do you strongly? But we both strongly. We want the culture to be there and we do a lot of welfare.

Her frustration lies in the seemingly abstract, bureaucratic rules that determine how she should account for the community work she partakes in. For Aassiya, Mary, Fathia and all of the women who organise community events, the distinction between welfare and culture is an arbitrary one. Sharing time, space and information with one another is a culturally inflected practice of providing welfare. The reproduction of culture goes hand in hand with the care and support necessary to ensure welfare for their communities. New governance formations challenge the understanding that community organisers have about why and how they run events. Organisers not only have to provide a prior account of their organisational identity, they have to account for their practices in increasingly nuanced ways.

To receive funding organisers must be able to discursively frame their activities in language that celebrates harmony and down plays issues of welfare, inequality and racism. The assumptions underlying this discursive repertoire is that providing services that are culturally specific or aim to build the capacity and infrastructure of a particular community, can undermine societal social cohesion. It is important to note that the many African community groups that are present in Sydney are examples of how culturally specific or ethno-specific groups are in practice, porous. Brokers do their brokering on multiple social and cultural fronts. When service providers reflect on the early 2000s, they refer to it as a time when the African community was considered a new and emerging community for funding bodies. Despite the language of the "African community" being used, the groups arriving were from significantly different cultural, ethnic or tribal backgrounds. While the term *African community* continued to hold resonance for Aasiya and other organisers aiming for large scale events, in practice these events continued to include many different communities. Brokers navigate assumptions about ethno-specificity while trying to increase the visibility of African communities and create African community spaces. Their attempt to discursively reframe and market the image of an African community to funding bodies has significant impacts on how the community is imagined and practiced.

The political consequences of the funding regime do not go unnoticed by those on the forefront of service provision. One migrant resource centre worker who helped smaller groups apply for funding suggested that funding is a mechanism through which the federal government can exercise its political power over ethnic communities. This is not a new critique (Tabar et al., 2003), but his testimony draws attention to how socially divisive funding categories can be for those that broker between funders and their communities:

> I have a community leader, he came to me and he said he was ridiculed by his own community because when most of the people didn't have a job, they didn't have housing and their community elders were going around and trying to organise community harmony festivals and they thought he was crazy. But that is the reality, that is a good reflection of the reality. They don't give a big project, they don't give big funding which gives them infrastructure system, no. So you end up running around but no skills or no real infrastructure remain after the project.

In this case, an emphasis on harmony and celebratory festivals sits in stark contrast to the actual needs of the community. In fact, the funding process rendered these needs invisible in favour of making visible an image of multicultural harmony. A consequence of conforming to funding categories is that new forms of conflict arise within communities. Leaders are understood to have a responsibility to broker new forms of visibility and respect for their communities but only if the *material* needs of the members are being met. However, funding categories force community organisers away from addressing welfare. Instead of funding smaller often ethno-specific groups, state funding is increasingly channelled to the non-profit or religious organisations who provide settlement support on a far larger scale. Community sector workers understand that these larger pockets of funding are often aimed at getting communities involved in mainstream service provision. It is also assumed that it will be more economically viable to give big sums of money to the larger settlement organisations. They have more fully developed administrative capacity and can more easily account for and be efficient, with funds. However, regardless of the scarcity of funds available for smaller groups, the logic of economic efficiency also filters through to small grant recipients. The necessity of economising and measuring the inputs and outputs of activities creates a new language that brokers need to learn. I will turn to look at some of the difficulties they face learning this language.

When first applying for funds, smaller community groups are confronted with the need to communicate in measurable, definable outputs and inputs. While for many service providers this is a taken for granted process to ensure accountability for funds, this process has material implications for how communities organise. In one training session for small predominantly ethno-specific organisations, the service providers running the training devised a potential project and took participants through the steps to apply for funding. With a choice of organising a fictitious multicultural festival or a community event on intergenerational conflict, the group chose the intergenerational conflict. Very quickly, the difficulty quantifying what an appropriate output and the necessary inputs became apparent.

How to measure the success of the project stumped the group, "They talk more?" said one woman while another passionately interjected, "Greater family relationships are the outcome!" The trainer replied, "But what can be an indicator of that?". One man suggested that, "They feel more connected to each other?" The trainer replied, "But what evidence could we use for this?" Around the room many attempts to evidence the success of the program were given; "They take them to school more!" eventually was offered. Rumbles around the room suggested that the festival would have been a better option. As I asked the trainer for permission to use this anecdote she agreed and also commented, more to herself than to me, "Yes, it is a good reminder, we should always use a festival example ..."

The whole experience and her parting comment, suggests that the work involved with properly accounting for funds, simply makes some projects more viable than others. While brokers come to learn the language of the system, many other community members are forced to beg when they do not understand the terms upon which they are meant to represent their activities. New norms of behaviour, action and acceptability are difficult to learn. Skills in economising and essentialising cultural activities have consequences for the emotional labour involved with trying to be accountable to funding bodies and communities. If we briefly return to Giddens's (1984) definition of accountability, that to be "accountable" for one's activities is also to supply the normative grounds whereby they may be "justified" (Giddens, 1984, p. 30), then we can see small scale funding requirements as one part of the institutional management of difference. There is an institutional preference for events that align with a celebratory multiculturalism, down play issues of welfare and racism and prioritise economic efficiency and mainstream service provision. In particular, the consistent emphasis on accounting for activities in relation to *harmony* is indicative of a fear that organised and politicised forms of difference can undermine societal cohesion and solidarity. In direct contrast with this assumption, the next section will argue that competitive funding regimes, together with an increasing moralisation of community and the upward mobility of brokers, narrows the opportunity for solidarities to form across differences.

The Consequences of Competition

As brokers learn to inhabit the institution with increasing knowledge about what is shareable, they simultaneously learn how to represent their communities as deserving of funding. A new discursive repertoire of community forms among organisers. This repertoire shifts how they share with one another and how they share with those who are less able to reciprocate.

My interview with Fatu, a Sierra Leonean service provider, suggests that organisers are emotionally invested in positioning African communities in the right way. Creating an engaging repertoire is their way to ensure access to resources and opportunities in the future.

When Fatu was younger she spent a great deal of her time helping other newly arrived Sierra Leonean families in the area she settled in. As she progressively learnt English and the systems of social services available in the area, she was offered a job in the local migrant resource centre. For her, being on the agenda for local governments was a key way that they could ensure a good future for themselves and their children. She conveyed a sense of the emotion attached to getting African communities into the public discourse:

> Say for example if they are doing a planning, right, they will only consider what they know, you know, like okay, this is our priority. And how do you get into that agenda? That priority... You have to be visible, you have to, you know, that's how it is. If you have an issue and it is not there, it is not their fault. We have to participate and be able to bring ... to take as well. So, we want to be in the agenda, we want to be here, we are going to have our children here. How do we pave that way for the children, grandchildren to come so that we can be recognised? And people will say "Oh yes there were some active ... just some historical thing I guess!" [Laughing] I don't know, I try to think big!

For Fatu, being on the agenda is important to raise the policy profile of African communities. She suggested that receiving funding for events is not just about receiving but about being able to give back to a new home, to engage in a reciprocal relationship with institutions of the state, to be able to bring and take. Like many brokers, being visible had a strong affective dimension as participation had implications for belonging; not only for Fata's and her peers but for their children and grandchildren. Emotional connections to community come to the fore when workers like Fatu try and articulate a sense of the responsibility they feel to ease the struggle for future generations. Interwoven into arguments about the need for collective visibility at the institutional scale, is the accumulation of erratic, painful and individualising experiences of being exposed as visible. The statement about "thinking big" or "creating some historical thing" were reminiscent of the exchanges about the grand dreams of the African Village Market or the breaking of barriers that Africultures tried to initiate. For Mary, Aasiya and Fatu, brokering between their community and funding bodies leaves them with a sense of responsibility to account for their communities in the *right* way to ensure their presence is acknowledged. The *right way* seems to sit somewhere

between Aasiya's reference to begging in the last section and Fatu's big thoughts. Providing the right account involves awkwardly straddling a line between a needs and a strengths based approach. To beg implies presenting yourself solely to get the object of desire from the other, to think big suggests being an active participant in your own image construction. In practice, those employed by service providers and who work informally with African communities, sit somewhere in the middle. They are strategic and creative in how they justify their account of the community. This creativity suggests that the exchange of values, meanings and priorities of *community* are mediated by funding pressures. One service provider of non-African decent provided an example of the kinds of creative licence that funding applications require:

> I don't like the word, need. If you ask your community, "What do you want to do?" It is more of *want* they express rather than need. Say if they are Sudanese, they want to do Dinka language class and Dinka dance. Do you think the Australian Government would prioritise them as a need? Probably not. But for them, very important, it is very important, very significant, that is their urgent need actually. That is something that can put their communities together. Whereas we see it is just very exotic performance they want to practice. Government will never fund, but that is what community wants to do. So the funny thing is, we collate translation so that there are ways to get around it. In the application that I wrote here [holds up physical copy] I play along to service by my funding body, as a way to describe: "Oh my African communities are at risk, they may turn into very violent people, they may turn into people who depend on drug and alcohol" and then I receive money in order to get closer to what the community wants to do.

This service provider indicates that the way funding is organised can force providers to provide an account of community that plays into assumptions about the danger and disorder of the cultural other. In this respect, brokers learn to provide a script of disadvantage in order to receive funds. The amount of energy that is expended trying to be accountable to the rules and regulations of funding bodies and increase the visibility of African communities has social consequences.

Debates about inclusion and solidarity are difficult to have when short-term funding and visibility are such key preoccupations. In one small, albeit powerful, moment in an organising meeting for the dinner dance, there was disagreement about the reservation of a table for Aboriginal attendees. While one woman argued about the expense of reserving and paying for a whole table, another confidently asserted: "But we are on their land! I do a lot of

fundraising and this is part of the reason." Feeling slightly perturbed by the strength of the response the first woman joked: "I never knew they were so important", her slight sarcasm greeted by the solemn nods of women around the table. Such comments could be dismissed as ignorance. However, the relentless struggle for funding that organisers face influences their attitude towards sharing with those deemed different, those outside their immediate circle, those who cannot reciprocate or when the outcome of sharing is undetermined. In this context, such anecdotes provide an insight into how competition over resources influences the forms of trust and reciprocity sharing is based upon. It becomes increasingly difficult to sustain a solidarity across differences when resources are viewed through a scarcity rather than plenitude approach. Competitive funding and a decline in funding for ethno-specific community organisations create a discordant relationship between informal and formal practices of sharing. Where once, the *hospitable encounter* would have allowed for openness to engage with difference, funding pressures narrow the opportunity for solidarity to grow through formalised community work. The growth in scale and preoccupation with representing community also creates new social divisions between key community organisers. For example, one argued about the African Women's Dinner Dance:

> I just walked away from it because they were just going too broad for the destination. Like in, when it was set up, it was meant for isolated women, to bring isolated women together for a night where they can just relax, no kids, just themselves ... ah it was supposed to be for isolated women, they invite ambassadors! As one woman said to me, I have run away from the Zimbabwean Government, why would they want to bring Zimbabwean Ambassador to this function?

The quote above was referring to one of the dances when the Zimbabwean Ambassador was invited to attend. The ambassador's presence was a sign of prestige for many women who organised and attended the event. I recall overhearing many women commenting on what a great example she set for other women, she had learnt and mastered the system, what an example of empowerment. Admittedly, I was also wooed by her strong stage presence and arresting manifesto for change. Yet this interviewee raised a pertinent point and in many ways, I had also been seduced by the grandeur of the event. The disagreement between organisers pointed to the competing ways that community was being imagined and actualised in the institutional context. When the scale and publicity of an event plays such an important role in the viability of an event, then the work of constructing a public image can surpass the

work involved with being sensitive to the needs of diverse communities. The social and material pressures of organising in the public leave little time for cultivating social spaces of welcome, spaces that remain open to those who cannot reciprocate.

Conclusion: The Competing Pressures of Entering the Public

I have argued that it is necessary to account for the banal, everyday work of accountability. When this work is accounted for, we can begin to map the competing institutional logics that influence the creation of inclusive and responsive community spaces. The voices and practices of community organisers throughout this chapter reiterate the point that institutional spaces are politicised spaces. The discursive and material shifts in funding that smaller culturally diverse groups face are the product of the political economy of multiculturalism. This economy is concerned with simultaneously managing difference and neoliberal imperatives of economic efficiency and competitive tendering. However, the lived experience of those who broker between being accountable to communities and to funding regimes suggest that there is a more complex convergence of institutional pressures that map onto their individual lives. As community events become more visible, expanding into public space and using public funds, these organisers are not only confronting neoliberalism in the abstract, but institutional processes related to the regulation of public spaces, the professionalisation of community work, shifting class positions, and the pressure to create individual and collective public identities. On top of these pressures, competitive funding regimes change the time, space and norms of sharing with one another. Brokering between funding bodies and diverse communities, organisers must learn a new institutional language that involves measuring and economising the often-intangible outcome of sharing social space with others. Behind this language; the measuring, evaluating, translating of everything into tradable binaries, is the agenda of capital (Moore, 2015). From accounts of organising the Africultures festival to the shift to paid community work, we can see that the introduction of commodity exchange shifts the social flexibility of relationships of sharing. Responsive community spaces are difficult to foster when economic imperatives come to the fore. Women are charged with balancing between these institutional imperatives and the diverse communities they are working with. As these women move between their roles as paid welfare providers and unpaid community organisers, their movements begin to re-map the social dynamics of community. Activities that were previously mapped as private, primarily taking place in home-spaces and through informal practices of sharing are mapped as public,

entering public spaces and becoming a form of community work. The shift from private to public creates new social distances and exacerbates already existing divisions. What is clear from their shifting visions and practices is that working with public funds and in regulated public spaces, makes difference difficult to account for. But the notion of an "African community" has always been imagined and practiced through differences in class, educational background, language proficiency and so on. Competitive funding exacerbates and makes salient those differences, creating the conditions for shifting involvement in community spaces. Consequently, working in an institutional capacity and being accountable to funding bodies, can take women further from the horizontal relationships of solidarity and towards measurable, efficient and hierarchical forms of community support.

As practices of sharing change, the term African community gains salience in the public. With new organisational infrastructures and identities instituted, the underlying problem of how culturally diverse and migrant women are allowed to enter the public becomes evident. Chapter Seven will turn to look at the structural positioning of the organisations that evolve amongst African women, questioning where exactly they sit in relation to the larger service providers that receive the majority of the state's competitively tendered contracts to work with migrants and refugee communities. In a context where relationships of sharing are sought after, essential to the effective delivery of services but lack material recognition, what can we learn from continued acts of sharing?

Chapter Seven

Sharing the Burden: Between the Middle Men of Resettlement and a Retreating State

On my way to interview Manar I found myself in a suburban maze of redbrick houses that confused my sense of where we were meeting. As the houses thickened I was no longer sure if we were meeting in her house or the premises of the organisation that she founded. When I arrived, she greeted me at the front door, smiling and kissed me on both cheeks. It turned out that the house was both her home and the headquarters of her organisation: Angels of Mercy Welfare Service (AOM). I was led into the kitchen where Randa, one of Manar's friends, who also worked for AOM, was sitting at a sizeable dinner table, surrounded by piles of paper that she was sifting through. I looked out through the kitchen window onto a large paved area where plastic tables and chairs lined a backyard fence. The fence was decorated with colourful painted images of groups of congregating men, women and children.

As Manar later explained, it was a multipurpose space reserved for an array of community events. On the weekend that had just passed she had catered for 25 women from different African groups. They had barbequed, played games and then she said that they all went around the group and shared something that they were grateful for and shared their experiences of searching for work in Australia. Without elaborating any further she continued, commenting on the fact that AOM does have access to a larger centre for functions, as well as occasional access to Blacktown Town Hall, but "it is just something I gave to AOM, it is my personal house". She suggested that there was also some payment required for the other premises and continued:

> We use my house as a cottage when we don't have anything that is where we do the training for the workers, the training for the leaders, the training for the service

> providers, the sessions for the community leaders. The African Women's Group, all the women they came for dinner last week.

I knew that Manar was busy with community events almost seven days a week, whether organising events in her home or outside at the local church or service provider, where there would be meetings during the week as well as community events on the weekend.

After the interview, we sat and had tea. As we were talking she asked me whether I knew any students that would be interested in renting a room in her house. She casually explained that the organisation could do with the extra money that would come from the rent but that the need to rent out the spare room was also a pity. Currently, the room was being used as an emergency bedroom for women in the community who were facing violence at home and would call her to come and stay. I spoke to her about potential students at western Sydney University and then the conversation went on to something else. But the decision to rent the room seemed to be a stark example of the private sacrifices women make in their homes. These sacrifices are made to ensure they have enough funds to continue providing what should be publicly funded by support services.

At the same time as we sat and talked in Manar's house, the NSW Government made the decision to roll out a sector reform agenda called Going Home Staying Home (Family and Community Services, 2014). First announced in 2012, the punitively titled policy represented a significant attack on the provision of specialist homelessness services that would have a particular impact on the existence of women and migrant women's shelters, services and drop-in spaces.[18] The existence of the room, as well as Manar's decision to rent the room, needs to be understood in the context of a decline in funding for the small ethno-specific groups and organisations (ESOs). In concert with a push to rationalise and mainstream the provision of a range of community services, the infrastructure of support for migrant women increasingly relies on the existence of bedrooms such as Manar's — bedrooms that have always existed, but are increasingly left to provide a home for women in otherwise unhomely homes (Gedalof, 2003, p. 107).

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[18] Under the policy, 336 individual services were subsequently consolidated into 149 packages and instead of direct funding for small organisations, they were required to compete with larger organisations for tendering. While some shelters closed the doors, others started to operate under the generalist, often religious NGOs such as St Vincent de Paul (KPMG, 2015).

Scholars argue that in the last 30 years, in the context of a crisis in the post-World War Two capitalist order and advent of neoliberalism that the state has "abandoned, reduced, or reconfigured many of its prior responsibilities for social reproduction ..." (Mitchell, Marston, & Katz, 2004, p. 16). In this chapter I focus attention on the role of small ethno-specific and women's groups within the NGO sector to question who, exactly, is taking on the state's integrative functions. Ethnic and culturally diverse organisations have always played a key role in the lives of migrant women. However, this has remained relatively invisible in analysis of the proliferation of umbrella NGOs in the community sector and the welfare state more broadly. Small, highly feminised ESOs face a particularly precarious entrance into the public provision of welfare. Despite often being registered as incorporated organisations, they face a lack of resources, infrastructure and autonomy which limits the extent that they can be public providers of support. However, while excluded from the public, members of these groups often experience the intrusion of public risk, financial decision making and rationalisation into the dynamics of their everyday life and homes. The choices they make in lieu of this entrance, reveal the structural marginalisation of small groups and organisations as well as the collective strategies women employ to ensure the survival of their families and communities.

I map the relationship between the structural marginalisation of communities and community groups as well as being sensitive to the spaces where women can claim (and reclaim) their power. Traversing tensions between bottom-up and top-down approaches, it demonstrates how the feminised, affective labour of community work takes on a disproportionate role in managing the social, political and economic restructuring of social services under neoliberalism. Most of the literature on the topic deals with the restructuring of community-based organisations as either a process of co-option or resistance (see Elwood, 2006; Newman, 2013). Feminism, in this context, can provide the grounds for women to enact their power as economic agents. It has been suggested that feminism has an "elective affinity" (Fraser, 2009) with neoliberal projects and can open the way for new forms of flexible accumulation (Newman, 2013). Yet, critical welfare scholars examining the nexus between feminism and community organisations have tried to move away from such binaries. In this vein, they draw attention to the fact that the rhetoric and practice of welfare restructuring makes room for, and prefigures, a heightened role for local community or the role of informal economies of sharing (Trudeau, 2012). This is especially the case for new forms of social governance based on partnerships, trust and collaboration (Larner & Craig, 2005; Clarke & Glendinning, 2002). These debates open the question of whether the inclusion of local community organisations in the delivery of public services can in theory

provide "an opportunity for local communities to shape processes of citizenship and belonging" (Trudeau, 2012, p. 442). I argue that community organisations shape these processes in spite of, and not because of, their incorporation. ESOs are routinely excluded from using public funds and public decision making spaces, despite their work being extensively utilised by larger state funded providers. The work they do is critical to achieving effective outcomes in migrant communities. ESOs act as institutional bridges to support, providing the welcome and invitation necessary to engage, particularly, newly arrived communities and women isolated from other sources of support.

I start by looking at the predominantly unpaid, face-to-face labour that women do to connect and engage new communities. The work involved with maintaining community relationships is compounded by the everyday financial decisions that need to be made about funds and volunteers. I will then turn to look at the larger settlement providers through the eyes of key community organisers. These organisations are understood to be the 'middle men of resettlement', through which the funding for migrant and refugee services are increasingly channelled. Despite the fact that they also face increasingly precarious and often short-term funds, these organisations continue to rely on the labour that women like Manar do because they are able to find and then generate the comfort necessary to access communities. As a result, the burden of connecting with participants is disproportionately held by groups such as AOM and women like Manar. Drawing on the story of Congolese refugee, Vanne, I argue that the denial of this burden results in feelings of exploitation. Many organisers receive awards and accolades, that provide a symbolic recognition that helps them continue their work. However, the denial of material recognition had a cumulative effect of giving organisers a sense that the government is undermining their attempts to be active and at most sinister, stealing the labour of their community work. Despite the pervasive structural antagonism of labour being capitalised upon but undervalued, women routinely move through the precarity of work, community and home life. I conclude with an attempt to capture the *unruly mobility* that women portray when moving from private to public spaces, and from informal to formal spaces. The term *unruly mobility* is often used in relation to the movements of irregular migrants. I use the term to capture their movements through institutional spaces to continue to share with one another, collectively pool risk and struggle to retain self-definition and autonomy.

The Un-paid Labour of Community

After I got up to leave and we all said a warm goodbye, Manar and Randa offered to help in any way that they could and suggested I come and visit again. "We should also have you in our management committee, a new victim!" they shrieked, slapping their hands down laughing. "Who talked about mercy? Angels of Mercy? We have no mercy! Abuse 24/7" both laughed loudly. As I left the house, I looked around at the other houses for some sign of what was taking place in this hot suburban stillness. Home spaces such as Manar's are key to generating the safety and comfort required to provide a retreat for women in need. For migrant women, these safe spaces are particularly important as violence in the home is compounded by a distinct set of compounding circumstances. Often having arrived in Australia on a spouse visa, their housing, income and networks are bound up with their partner (Ghafournia, 2011). Without the confidence or language to navigate available services, particularly in the face of an experience of racism or cultural insensitivity, their safety, comfort and sense of belonging is routinely threatened. Specialist services reduce the anxiety of this process and as such, these spaces are bridges to support, and provide the welcome and invitation necessary for engagement, especially so among newly arrived communities.

In interviews and conversations with community organisers the trope of the "isolated woman" emerges as a key focus and a motivating factor for creating informal community spaces. In a similar vein, interviews and focus groups with service providers from a range of government and non-government organisations focused on the best methods to access and engage isolated women. Information was shared about how we can know where they live, how we can respectfully engage them, what are the best times of the day to get women to attend services, how to provide childcare and what activities would make them receptive to help. In these attempts at access and engagement, ESOs become vital intermediaries between larger service providers and communities. Manar articulated this position clearly:

> I always call AOM a bridge between people and the other services. Sometimes governments think that people can go straight to the MRCs [migrant resource centres]. No way in the world without existing services like our service where we go and get people from their own shells and introduce them to the services, no way in the world that these people will reach MRCs because it will be extremely scary experience for them. So without that bridge no way people can reach out to services.

> So ethno-specific organisations should be always encouraged because this is the only resource which we can guarantee that they will get people where they want to reach.

The metaphor of a bridge that Manar draws upon suggests a structure that facilitates the connection of two disconnected locations. A bridge safely connects one bank to the other and provides safety without impedance. ESOs are able to invite those who need to pass over at their own pace. To do this, Manar argued that you must meet communities where they are at:

> We go to people at their level. We initiative things that they will understand. We create activities at their level of understanding and then we take them to the upper levels if it is training or education we take it from there after we build the trust and their friendship.

She described that at "their level" they have *Dardasha*, which is when a group meet together just talking, without restrictions, without formality and always with either food, games, music or dance. As part of this process, Manar said that "they initiate the topics themselves and I initiate at the end of the things [the music, dance and games] what will be educated from that topic of discussion". Manar outlined a particular pedagogy surrounding her community work whereby she teaches women about different facets of life in Australia, but only after they have initiated their areas of interest. Through this face-to-face labour and the effort to adopt a bottom-up approach, women working within ESOs work to create a sense of connectedness. Maintaining this connectedness involves constant emersion in the worlds of these women.

Manar carefully detailed how much work that she was involved in through AOM. She began by looking at Randa across the table and saying that the other women on the management committee were always giving her a hard time because even without the relaxed *Dardasha* groups:

> We are always on the run, night and day. For example, the leader's meetings, they want to meet after six when they finish work. You cannot say to them, 'In the morning', you will not get the Sudanese leaders for example, so we meet Friday night, okay. The Anglican Church women leaders we meet on Saturday morning, now they are coming, and management is coming, Sunday at 4pm.

The time and energy to resource events and run them are not contained within distinctive *work* and *non-work* times. Manar's labour and that of the other women is compounded by the trials of the competitive funding system. The papers piled across the table in Manar's kitchen were preparations for the end of the financial year. The work involved with searching for funds is arduous and a full-time job in itself. The pockets of funding that she can apply for are primarily spread across the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and the Department of Social Services. She spoke about the precarity of running an organisation that has around 160 volunteers, only one paid worker, and hundreds of clients dotted around the western Sydney region. Turning away from me to look at Randa she went on to tell me that management know that she does all her funding submissions around four o'clock in the morning. With 20 pages to fill here and 100 words here, they are struggling to get the declining funds that are available. She sighed:

> This is where it is a big challenge for us so really we don't know what the future is holding for us. As I said it is sad because the projects are getting bigger and then the people are there who need the services, but then the money allocations are not there. So how can we solve this quiz?

There was a concerted effort on behalf of all the women involved in this small organisation to manage their time with communities and to struggle to find funds for the present and future. This unceasing movement takes hold of the personal lives of these women. They do not only emotionally invest in their communities, but in their efforts to obtain grants, have to be on top of new government processes and arrange suitable spaces to organise events in.

At many of the community events, organisers such as Manar, Mary, Assiya could be seen weaving their social ties across the room. Community work is embodied work. The emotional connections and the need for a regular physical presence at events is an essential part of the labour involved with being socially connected. The administrative and emotional labour that women partake in, suggests that parts of the social and financial risk associated with community work has been transferred from the state to the community. The additional strategies required for funding, the increased clientele and the reliance on volunteer labour are all examples of this shift from the state to community. And yet Manar's experience suggests that there is more to it than a simple transfer of responsibility to the community and specifically, to the smaller ESOs where community work is pooled.

As the three of us sat around her dinner table we did not realise that AOM would not be refunded as part of the 2015 Settlement Grants Program and that there would be a concerted effort to transfer funding away from smaller community groups to larger service providers. The withdrawal of funding for smaller ESOs, suggests that there is a complex reconfiguration of the state functions. Community groups are not just given the responsibility to provide welfare for their own communities. They are denied funding for this purpose and instead, funds are channelled into the larger settlement organisations. Consequently, the transfer of state responsibility does not involve a complete outsourcing of integrative functions of the state to community organisations. Instead, larger organisations, that are encouraged to increasingly focus on mainstream or generalist service provision are given expanded power to influence provision of services for migrant, refugee and to some extent, culturally diverse communities more generally.

The Middle Men of Resettlement

The larger religious and non-profit organisations that receive most of the government's competitively tendered funds, run programs that span community engagement, casework services and community development activities. The funds that are channelled through these organisations are often tied to the provision of generalist multicultural services that focus on all communities rather than the specific needs of one ethnic, cultural or linguistic community. The structural positioning of these larger organisations has implications for the labour in which African women partake, to provide for their communities. Larger organisations continue to rely on the labour that women like Manar do, because cultural knowledge and connectedness create the comfort that is necessary to engage communities.

Many workers who are employed with the larger settlement providers are open about the dynamics and impacts of what they see as an inequitable funding regime. One migrant resource centre worker elaborated on the structural dynamics that influence the distance between funders and community needs:

> The role of the service like the settlement service- we are kind of middle men between the funding body and client. They don't get to see each other at all, at all. They always rely on us for the feedback and for the client needs. In the competitive environment where we have to, as a contracted organisation, follow whatever our funding body instructs, are we necessarily going to put our client's interest above our organisational interest? A lot of policy makers when they give money, they think it is

> for the client need. No, it is our need, represented because they don't know ... they never get to see it. We are as a middle men assumed to have this knowledge. But that is not true, there are many issues ...

This quote draws attention to the structural inequity that characterises the system of settlement services. In particular, this worker draws attention to the distance between bodies that redistribute funds and the communities who are meant to be the recipients. This quote suggests that the organisational dynamics and narratives of the *middle men* can obscure the voices of those in need. The lack of long-term funding for these organisations means that services must be marketable and generate specific outputs that will demonstrate their relevance and ensure refunding for the following year. One council worker hinted at how this works when she critiqued what she refers to as a kind of *logo wars*, where larger services vie to have their logo placed on the bottom of community flyers about events or programs to evidence their involvement. However, it is not only these organisations who do the work of making the events a success and the logo wars risk services becoming further removed from the communities they wish to engage with.

There was a common understanding among staff employed in the larger service providers and community members working in smaller ESOs that "you can't just get funding and then find the community!" Yet the mode of funding appears to turn this arrangement into the rule rather than the exception. To address this barrier to service provision, staff intensively consult with ESOs to give legitimacy to the programs and to obtain knowledge of the location and needs of communities. As a result, the burden of connecting with participants is disproportionately loaded onto groups such as AOM and women like Manar — groups that predominantly remain without stable funding or employment for members. Although they are highly valued by the large services, the ways in which these women are funded by the state point to the contradictions inherent in the current system of support. The labour of connectedness that these women partake in gains a new value in a system focused on economic efficiency and mainstreaming service provision. Community work is commodified in relation to the integrative work that it does for the state. But these women overwhelmingly remain in unpaid positions or navigate precarious short-term contracts with larger service providers. The structural positioning of smaller migrant women's groups in relation to larger service providers, points to a relation of exploitation.

However, how women make meaning of their relationship with other services, funding bodies and the state is far more complicated. Unlike many other women who broker

between multiple institutional roles, Manar refrained from criticising the larger organisations. Many of her friends were employed in these organisations and they were also important avenues for partnerships to be developed. She reflects not only a pragmatic awareness about working across different institutional settings but a potential wariness about alienating potential funding sources. It was clear that she would aim to work with whoever provided help for communities and even saw our interview as a source of visibility and future connection. Her impartiality was influenced by her access to secure, seemingly stable housing and established networks built through her continued employment in the sector over many years. In many ways she had learnt how to successfully inhabit the institution and was invested in using whatever means she could to continue her community work. In contrast, community organisers who remained consistently unemployed and felt locked out of an increasingly professionalised sector, felt disillusioned and angry.

"Okay! Enough! I am Empowered!"

During one long afternoon of my time volunteering at the African Village Market, Vanne sauntered in, and began adjusting the table tops with a care obviously not only reserved for her own manicured appearance. She introduced herself as one of the original founders of The Market and asked that I interview her there and then. We spoke in between frequent interruptions, with her bragging about the proficiency of her sales techniques and me witnessing them in action. She told me of her experiences leaving the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the work she did to set up women's groups in the refugee camp in Kenya, and her initial arrival in Australia. She dismissed her friends' claims that owing to small numbers there was not really a Congolese community in Sydney, adamantly stating "No! You are two families, you can still start a community!" In 2003 she helped register and then ran for president of the Congolese organisation that she was involved with. While some friends encouraged her, others argued that there was no place for her as a woman of Rwandan and Congolese heritage and hence with the associated stigma of her so called "half-blood" status. Vanne navigated these challenges and helped register the organisation. She recounted going to local and state government meetings where politicians would be shocked to hear that a Congolese community existed in New South Wales. All the while trying to represent the many men and women who believed that a man should be in her place. A struggle that many women faced when starting to organise within their communities (Muchoki, 2013)

The most emphatic and powerful section of her narrative was her account of applying for funding for mental health programs for a Swahili women's group. She worked closely with a service provider in the local area helping to convey the specific needs of DRC women. The majority of these women had arrived in Australia between 2000-2005 where 95% of the 640 Congolese entrants were humanitarian refugees (Department of Social Services, 2013). These women had endured years of internal displacement, torture and trauma before arriving in Australia and Vanne was passionate about their need for help. When Vanne heard that the larger service provider had successfully received the funds to oversee the program that she had devised, she felt that it was at the expense of her own effort and expertise. Vanne could not understand why she had not been chosen as a worthy candidate to run the program given that it was her labour that had built the initial contacts and the relationships. Although the submission was written in consultation with Vanne, she was denied employment and the opportunity to oversee the work. Vanne's reaction to losing funding in favour of one of the larger service providers was that they stole her idea and that they were getting "profit from us". In her view an indisputable injustice had taken place and this had shaken her trust in the system. She remembered that at one time members of the Swahili women's group came to her and said that they "feel bad", that they would not attend anymore sessions because "we don't want you to struggle. How many people you train already, how many people you empower already?" The group wanted her work to be acknowledged.

A number of contradictions are apparent in Vanne's experience. While marketisation of the community sector is associated with a push towards individual responsibility, empowerment and active citizenship, the ability to act with autonomy or relative freedom is denied. Being denied the agency to enact change within institutional settings changes how women make meaning of their everyday acts of sharing. Rather than see their work as contributing to the betterment of a wider polity, they see their work as exploited. In this respect, denial of the autonomy to run their own community programs impacts on their sense that the state is interested in creating a safety net for all and raises questions about where it is they belong. However, the denial of funding affects women differently. For those who have families to provide for and who find themselves continually unemployed, homeless or in precarious housing situations these experiences heighten their sense of not belonging. In Vanne's case, remaining unemployed and without acknowledgement of her work is experienced as a denial of recognition of her value and worth (Honneth, 1995). Like the many women documented so far, Vanne experienced a form of invisibility that contributed to her belief that social,

community relationships are required in order to act with agency and autonomy. The collective narratives of these women suggest that their initial invisibility played a role in undermining the agency to act. As Rowe (2005, p. 30) said when arguing the case for a relational view of autonomy, "you cannot alter what you cannot see". However, as women build networks to reposition themselves in relation to the public provision of support, they are seen, listened to and yet still denied autonomy. This denial, in particular, the barriers they face to being employed for the work that they do, has significant consequences for their sense of belonging to the nation. Voicing her frustration with the system she stated, "OK, enough! I am empowered!" and then elaborated:

> I have 20 or 30 certificates at home. Now I am tired to be a volunteer for 7 years. Now I can smell money. I studied, I get my degree, I get my certificates I am already empowered, so I empower some people. Okay, I can be paid now. Cause I give a lot, so I want to receive now.

Vanne is one of many whose words are saturated with the frustration of not receiving material recognition in the form of external grants or employment despite their key role in the provision of public services to Swahili women in western Sydney. With a progressive professionalisation of the sector (Darcy et al., 2009), women like Vanne shoulder the burden of acquiring professional qualifications. With the help of other friends employed in settlement services they are left to navigate avenues of educational up-skilling without any clear sense of when and where employment will come. Vanne learnt English upon arrival in Australia and without the opportunity for prior education she faces extra barriers to employment. For some communities, the barriers to employment felt insurmountable. One woman from South Sudan reiterated how different the system of money, welfare and work was for some communities when they arrived in Australia: "we didn't learn business, our parents were farmers. With farmers, you put your crop in the stores and you get as much as you want out for the day ..." Refugees in particular, face many barriers to gaining employment in Australia. Community services remain one of the key areas where they can use their skills in relationship building and community work, activities they often engaged in prior to arriving in Australia.

For those who partake in unpaid community work, the cumulative effect of these experiences is a feeling that the government is undermining their attempts to be active and, at worst, stealing the labour of their community work. Vanne expresses this feeling more pointedly than other women. She decries what she sees as a false promise of upward

mobility in Australia. She worked through the cultural and gendered barriers to organising as a collective, she tried to learn how to inhabit the institutional norms as best she could and still, her value was not recognised. Unlike Vanne, those women who do manage to find employment, feel a sense of gratitude for life in Australia. The relative opportunities they believe are afforded help to mitigate the impact of their institutional marginalisation. However, how women differently respond to the recognition of their work also relies on the fact that the labour of community work is not entirely devalued. While they are denied redistribution of funds for the work they do, a number of community leaders are given symbolic recognition. They become emblematic of a celebratory multiculturalism that suggests the meeting of work, community and home is not solely an economic process of marketisation but one that is fundamentally intertwined in justifying Australia's identity as a multicultural nation.

Gifts Along the Way

Awards, accolades and public honours form an important part of the infrastructure of support for communities in western Sydney. Whether in the name of International Women's Day, Women of the West, Federation of Peace, NSW Census Ambassador, Citizen of the Year, Zest, the public praise lavished onto community organisers provides them with a key source of recognition and visibility. Many of the awards operate on the basis that the flows of resources into community services in western Sydney are severely limited and the region is in need of greater visibility. Zest awards state, "the impetus came from a growing awareness in the community sector that it was the image of western Sydney itself that was holding back the region" (Zest, 2017). From the first awards night in 2011, the "awards also changed how organisers have seen the community service sector and how it works at its best, with a high number of nominees being partnerships between collaborating organisations" (Zest, 2017).

The vibrancy and excitement of events provided a public platform to honour women that is otherwise lacking. They hold a promise that showcasing the otherwise invisible labour of community work, will bring positive changes. Awards have a significant affective impact on community organisers. For Manar, being invited into parliament and given an honorary gift for her facilitation of a Sudanese function that got 54 community leaders together, not only legitimised her work but made her "grateful for the love and trust she was given" by the community. With gratitude, comes responsibility. A responsibility to honour the trust that

communities have given her by continuing to share information and resources with them. The ceremonial aspects of the awards, help to ritualise the labour of community work, providing the encouragement needed to institutionally embed community organisers as providers of essential services. Consequently, invitations can have a more sinister function. Unlike invited spaces of sharing, where an ethic of solidarity and a sense of the common good guide the invitation, these ceremonies do not result in any extension of ownership over the work that the women do. Instead, they can function to legitimise current systems of governance and the denial of autonomy that women face.

Awards ceremonies can be conceptualised as sitting between *invited spaces of governance* and *popular spaces* whereby community groups can celebrate the service they provide, while also taking advantage of the opening up of public space for making their labour visible. Invited spaces of governance can both be transitory and opened up when political opportunity structures align, or take on a more durable role (for example, Ethnic Community Councils) (Barnes et al. as cited in Cornwall, 2004). While many awards ceremonies are run with the aim of facilitating flows of funding, particularly parliamentary ceremonies can be interpreted as spaces in which to "invite local elites" so that "potential local opposition can be disarmed" and community spaces can be "emptied of their political content" (Coelho as cited in Cornwall, 2004). However, this is not how women made meaning of these events. For them, these events were not about emptying political content but about making visible and politicising the welfare of their communities. Many times women hinted at a distinction between welfare and politics. Welfare was seen as a gendered domain of women's work and involved social justice struggles, while politics was seen as a more male dominated realm where visibility and power were sought in themselves, rather than as a means to a bettering of society. On the whole, the search for visibility was approached with suspicion, particularly when organisers enter invited spaces of politics that take them further from ground-up welfare provision. One woman critiqued those organisers who go to "Canberra to meet the Premier or whoever he is ... on a trip because she is the leader". But there was also an awareness that the system of governance creates these hierarchies, "it doesn't help that these politicians and governments ... want a leader and they want a chairperson, they don't talk to the community, do they?" The process of giving awards and inviting individual community leaders to speak in parliament is a process of acknowledgment and celebration that affirms only their *individual* initiatives. As such, symbolic recognition has the power to mute or erase the collective projects that are taking place.

Yet sometimes, awards were just the recognition that organisers wanted. However, the everyday reality is that, those *isolated women* or families would often be elusive, brash and with expectations that could confuse and exhaust the organisers. Strong emotions accompanied the receiving of grants and registering of organisations. Unpaid labour is validated and sustained as autonomy over the use of funds and the ability to self-define is withheld. Self-definition becomes a key plank in the struggle to maintain the women's groups despite their funding pressures. Yet, while many groups rise in visibility, the mechanisms for listening to their individual needs, become increasingly distorted. One service provider, compared the practice of consultation to public performances and suggested that they were both exercises in the government justifying their own governance. He suggested that symbolically celebrating groups played a role in celebrating the status quo. He went on to recount examples where groups were ostensibly given the opportunity to intervene in policy, but were instead used to add credibility to a project, while being denied the ability to speak or be present. To illustrate this he drew on the following example:

> The Sudanese African Women's Association (SAWA), they ran this Female Genital Mutilation campaign for a few years and it is quite a coincidence that there was an incident where a girl was circumcised in Australia. That sparked big media coverage and attention. Tanya Plibersek, the women's minister, she is spending a lot of money and now everyone wants to be friends with SAWA. SAWA had videos that we produced together as a part of a campaign, they asked SAWA for permission to use that video in their conference and they are having a big conference in Canberra where they decide how to spend money. SAWA wasn't even informed about the conference.

In the Australian parliamentary context, the conditionality of these invited spaces of government become clear. In this instance, SAWA is given visibility because they align with government agendas but they occupy only a fraction of the discursive space. They have no say over their voice, visibility and self-definition in the public arena. In these invited spaces of governance, culturally specific knowledge and difference can enter the public sphere and become part of a marketable image for Australian multiculturalism while at the same time women are denied ownership over their own image.

The dynamics of these invited spaces of governance point, dubiously, to the state's attempts to manage difference. The rhetoric of multicultural inclusion celebrates, the positive turn in public policy and erases the stain of racism, all in the name of a more positive "celebration

of difference" (Lentin, 2008, p. 313). Hage (1997) suggested that such celebrations of difference amount to a kind of 'multiculturalism without ethnics' where the cultural histories, the everyday inequalities and the histories of colonialism that communities face, are sidelined in favour of forms of difference that are easily digestible.

In this respect, ceremonies and large scale conferences can rely on a particular symbolism of women as mothers, carers and bearers of the nation. Women have long played a key role in sustaining the connections between culture, family and nation, as well as being understood as national symbols and biological and cultural reproducers of the nation (Conlon, 2007; Yuval-Davis, 1997a). Together with a rhetorical refocus away from the state onto the power of civil society, these motifs help normalise the role women's groups play in augmenting the social reproduction of migrant families and communities. The visibility of community workers also draws attention to the dominant role that migrant women play in shaping state interventions into parenting, childcare, domestic violence and other aspects of service provision that have historically been mapped as private lives (Newman, 2010). Yet, the denial of autonomy over resources and self-definition highlights that the state is also antagonistic to attempts to map the particular cultural needs of migrant women onto the public domain.

While individual initiative is encouraged, the lack of material funds propels collective community work back into the private spaces of the home. The home thus becomes a space opened to what were previously considered the public risks associated with service provision. The increased financialisation and micro managing that women face is indicative of the shift of responsibility from state to community. This shift encourages the labour of women on the condition that their activity does not challenge the boundaries of the state-funded services. The system of settlement services ensures that migrant groups cannot effectively present any substantial public challenge to an otherwise celebratory multiculturalism. A settlement service provider argued powerfully that the current system for working with informal networks of women means that "They remain as our client, they don't become our partners, they don't do their own capacity building – they are meant to stay as our client". While many workers noted how funding inhibits growth and change in communities, this worker goes further, suggesting that support is structured to ensure that a relationship of inequality remains. Blocked in their attempt to oversee the welfare and self-definition of their own communities, the movements of women like Manar and Vanne, within and outside their homes, reflects the lived experience of a greater structural inequity embedded within the institutional apparatus.

Continuing to Share the Burden

Even though they must endure the pervasive, and antagonistic, structural capitalisation and undervaluation of their labour, community organisers remain committed to the idea that sharing with one another can create social change. Their conversations also belie an understanding of the good intentions of the government and its efforts to improve the social and material conditions for all citizens. The institutional hurdles they face are increasingly interpreted as a lack of reciprocity. Returning again to Mary's reaction about the lack of funding she faced organising the African Village Market, she stated:

> I don't know how the system works, sometimes I don't understand. Like if I will be able to get ten people out of Centrelink that is helping the government, they are supposed to come and support me so that I can have more [resources] ...

Mary continues to express her confusion, knowing that if she "has got somebody engaged" and is "helping the system" then the government "are supposed to come and help us. Yeah but I don't see them doing that." As a result of the denial of reciprocity experienced in the public, there is a lack of trust in the state's ability to provide for the wellbeing of African communities. A consequence of this is that women display a sceptical pragmatism in their movements within and outside the institutions of resettlement, often knowingly dismissing the power of institutional forces. I witnessed this directly as I sat at the kitchen table with Manar. While we talked about the rationalisation and mainstreaming of service provision, I enquired about the language she used to apply for grants. She replied almost dismissing my question:

> To be honest with you Claire I don't really bother on these things. We have our own world. You know? Really ... cause if we waited until they changed the jargon and the names ... I say, I will be stupid if I have the clientele and I have the volunteers and I don't use those resources. So we are not using funding as a restriction to our activities, although it is. But I rather spend on it personally and really use the resource of the volunteers and of the existing cliental, because today they are here and you don't know where they are tomorrow.

In this gentle rebuttal, Manar reminded me that her commitment to the ebbs and flows of community was independent of the ebbs and flows of government policy. Her faith in the spaces of sharing that she has worked to establish meant that she trusted her ability to find resources through the community. This was regardless of whether her individual position

was funded or not. Her dismissal of my question is indicative of the fact that managerial discourses about economic efficiency do not always have the same consequences for institutions as they do for persons (Newman, 2013). If anything, her border work between organisations and communities reveals that ESOs function as institutional buffers, shielding communities from the sharp edges of economisation. Consequently, in her house, she tries to retain a comfortable space of relative freedom, continuing to cultivate a unique spatiality and temporality that helps to mitigate the push to rationalise service delivery (Singh, 2016). In contesting the pressure to rationalise her work, Manar displays a faith in community as a site of action and a source of resources and collective care. Crucially this faith is manifested in her refusal to focus on the institutional denial of funding and her reliance instead on the pooling of resources across institutional settings. Therefore, while the denial of reciprocity has consequences for the faith women have that the government will help them, they also refuse to let government policy dictate their activities. I will turn now to look at some of the ways that women continue to share in light of the institutional barriers they face. How can continued practices of sharing be understood in light of the structural antagonisms that organisers face in their everyday lives?

The Ambiguity of Sharing

Sharing of resources within and across communities was a key way that community events were organised. At the Intercultural Exchange discussed in Chapter Four, friends of friends were contacted to borrow a minivan to transport women from Sydney to their host locations. The houses women stayed in throughout regional NSW were found through informal community networks. To publicise the event organisers strategically deployed their access to larger service providers for printing and information regarding insurance and consent, while relying on friends and family to help with the organisation before and after the event. No money was required for accommodation or the use of facilities.

These events also drew on the supplementary resources of larger organisations. For example, larger churches began donating resources and private companies such as MoneyGram were also involved with sponsorship. Their involvement blurs the line between sharing as a form of gift giving and sharing as commodity exchange. For larger, organisations and corporations, sharing was also a marketable exercise and the provision of support was integrally bound up with a promise of extended networks or future profit. Regardless of the rationale behind the support, resources are fashioned out of all available public and private

landscapes, forming an "institutional bricolage" to reinscribe existing relationships and use "whatever is at hand" (Cornwall, 2004, p. 2). However, working with corporations or particular denominations can have consequences for the inclusivity of events. The use of private funds can influence the nature and aims of the event and the presence of large churches has the potential to undermine the inclusivity of the space for other religious communities. The negative consequences and political limits of this bricolage, did not appear to be an explicit concern of organisers. The search for resources was always seen in the context of the overriding goal of engaging and empowering more women. Indeed, for a number of tireless community workers I met, this attitude extended even to the funding of their own position. They seemed to pass over worries about whether their own role in various activities would be remunerated as paid work and continued in unpaid activities even when their positions were no longer funded.

Examples of resource sharing are testament to the precarity of community work as it is ambiguously embedded within the "sphere of market-based capital accumulation (the commodity economy)", and "that of non-market based social reproduction (the unpaid care economy)" (Razavi, 2007, p. 8). Yet it is not always clear how women experience and make sense of this ambiguity in their everyday life. This is because informal women's groups have their own trajectories that can diverge from the specificities of the economy and labour market. A multi-scalar analysis can help to illuminate the ways in which "organisations intersect, in geographic and temporally specific ways, with patterns of economic restructuring and downgrading of work"(Martin, 2010, p. 147). In an increasingly marketised welfare state, the flexible approach women have to resource sharing could be interpreted functionally as a service to economic restructuring. Indeed Newman (2013, p. 207) suggested that such feminist commitments can be viewed as functional supports for neoliberalism in two different and contradictory ways:

> In the first, the expanded role of female labor—more flexible, less unionized and more suited to the service economy—can be viewed as constitutive of a new economic order of flexible accumulation. In the second, women are viewed as integral to advanced neoliberal strategies of governing the social, sustaining the domestic economy that reproduces the conditions of capital accumulation.

Yet women like Manar do not experience the simultaneous need for flexibility and a stable presence of family, community and work, as contradictory. Their mobility across different spheres of activity and in collaboration with institutions of resettlement, reflects an

understanding that to struggle for group survival and self-definition requires institutions that will help you prevail (Collins, 1991, p. 219). While they realise the structural constraints of institutional assistance, they also realise that nothing is stopping them inhabiting both institutional and community spaces to continue to resource their communities. Taking into account the meaning they bring to their work, can provide a more potent analysis than cooperation versus co-option, functional versus resistant. One that redirects the voice and visibility that is denied to women in the public back to them. In these constraints that are placed on their mobility in the public, we see an *institutional bricolage* that ensures group survival and buttresses their ethic of solidarity in ways that are full of political significance (Collins, 1991, p. 125).

Sharing: From an Invitation to a Struggle for Self-definition

Patricia Hill Collins' *Black Feminist Thought* provides a framework for rethinking how the complexity of sharing practices can be conceptualised as a struggle for the right to self-define as African women. Her work reiterates the need to extend definitions of activism and resistance. In the same way that structural, disciplinary, hegemonic and interpersonal domains of power work together to produce particular patterns of domination, patterns of resistance require similarly complex responses (Collins, 1991, p. 218). However, the struggle for group survival and for spheres of influence within existing social structures, is also notably simple. The struggle is defined by refusing a push towards individual responsibility and continuing to define yourself in the context of family and community relations. This is not a narrow manifestation of identity politics, it is part of the ability to recognise one's self and one's continuity with a larger community (Collins, 1991, p. 159).

The continued attempt to situate the personal struggles of African women in relation to the Australian nation and in relation to transnational community connections, is notable. Many times I watched this non-territorially based ethic of solidarity put into practice. Activities, whether ethno-specific or not, were often focused and framed in regards to a larger collective good. The African Village Market may have held within it a dream of a unique African social space, but while I was volunteering at the African Village Market it became clear that their celebration of difference served a larger shared struggle that went beyond African communities. In The Market an attempt was made to share the space with other unemployed men and women in the local area. Likewise, a job seeker from the *Max Employment* service in Sydney, was invited to volunteer. This decision ensured that there

were enough volunteers for those times when regulars were busy or when newly arrived women left the scene after gaining employment. But it also showed that the space could be shared to assist those outside the African community who were also in need. There was an awareness by the founding women that sharing this space could provide individuals with access to opportunities and confidence. As Mary noted, albeit with a touch of idealism, "... within one month their confidence is back and they go and get a job, so this is more than a shop". Many women, mirrored these sentiments, their events purposely going beyond one specific function to foster a sense of a wider collective *we*.

Continuing to share across differences remains a key way that women resist would-be institutional transformations of their work. There is an understanding that different groups must work together to mitigate the social and material risks they face in Australia. It is notable that women recognised the importance of culturally specific services but did not use ethnicity or nationality as a marker for whom to work with. Continuing to share with those from a range of different backgrounds is one way that sharing practices challenged the social boundaries that funding bodies imposed on communities and resisted the underlying push towards competition and ownership that comes with a system of competitive tendering. There were many instances where sharing as a collective ethic prevailed over the push to compete for ownership of an individual share. For example, one community development worker noted how communities shared information about the complicated incorporation process:

> It was really beautiful to see last year ... the Tamil community will invite the Somali to come, it might not be the whole community but it would be like four or five people coming along to their event, they are learning more, they are making friendships and seeing how they support their communities and say "Oh maybe we should try that as well."

Similarly, groups work together to put energy into animating new spaces for communities to share. A council development worker noted that the cost associated with gaining a space to work is "ridiculous if you are a volunteer or community group" but that often groups will work with each other to ensure that everyone has some access: "You are not incorporated?... okay ... we will book it for you and our members will come anyway and share that". These particular examples of sharing across communities also suggest that women identify strongly with being part of a wider collective of migrants and refugees in Australia and do not narrowly identify only as either *Ethiopian*, *Black*, *African* or *women*. Across different groups

there is a refusal to be bounded by a static notion of home and belonging. Their practices of sharing cannot be easily contained by a politics of solidarity based on ethno-centrism or nationalism. Group activity was driven by a sense that anything that was gained in Australia should be shared across other communities in need and crucially, with those back home. Africa and the women of Africa, were never far from their minds.

Figure 12: Mother Africa struggling to hold herself up with the trauma of war. But the possibility of new life lies within her and in all the women in Africa.
Courtesy of Sydney based Sudanese artist, Fathia Bella.

Commitment to a politics of empowerment that transcends the borders of the nation state becomes a refusal to let the state determine their parameters of political involvement. This refusal is increasingly policed as surveillance of the flows of ideas, resources and funds from groups within Australia to those outside has gradually increased post-9/11. Institutionally, the presence of the border is marked with a lack of information that might facilitate the transnational activity of ESOs. Regardless of the increased security measures at the border and the increasingly punitive policies towards refugees, all interactions spoke to the fact that the imposed container of the nation state was in practice, notoriously porous. Despite the lack of scholarship regarding the transnational activities of African communities in Australia, their travel back and forth, the sending of gifts and remittances occurs extensively among humanitarian refugees and migrants alike. Similarly, discussion surrounding the social, political and economic systems in respective nations in Africa was commonplace. Despite a scepticism about the government's commitment to welfare, it is notable that there was a sense that the Australian political system could be used to advocate for a better life for families and friends in Africa. During *Iftar* celebrations that I attended, there was a call for everyone to sign a petition regarding the conflict that was taking place in Sudan, a petition that would gather more signatures in Melbourne before being sent to parliament. Many groups informally accounted for their activities with reference to the desire they had to change the plight of those in Africa as much as their families in Australia. Transnational activity points to more than a disregard for borders. It is a reminder that struggles to make social and material resources publicly available started long before their confrontation with the bureaucracy of Australian social service provision.

Australian citizenship provides a new opportunity to take action to help extended families, friends and communities back in Africa. In this sense, by inhabiting institutional norms, while limited in the structural transformation this can elicit, women can forward a larger project of empowerment for their communities within and beyond the purview of the nation.

Conclusion: Sharing: An Unruly Repertoire of Action

The community work that migrant women are involved in holds an ambiguous position in relation to the nation. State funded service providers rely on the work they do, yet deny them the resources and autonomy necessary for them to flourish. The structural antagonisms that women face in their everyday lives force them to manoeuvre through the public and private, the informal and formal, in order to provide for their communities. In this sense, the women

in this chapter provide an insight into the forms of mobility and immobility that culturally and ethnically diverse women face when working alongside institutionalised service delivery.

I started this chapter with an interest in the spaces where women can claim (and reclaim) their power. The stories of Manar and Vanne suggest that it is their ability to move across informal and formal spaces that plays a key role in how they enact their power. Moving through institutional and non-institutional settings helps them to sustain family and community relationships and access to services. Their mobility helps them and their communities to survive and in doing so, brings about wider material and discursive transformations in the work, home and community lives of African women in Sydney. These transformations do not take place through a linear movement up and down social hierarchies or across defined physical barriers. Instead, they manifest in emergent practices and performances of sharing. These practices and performances require women to be unruly and mobile, working together to sustain solidarities in the wake of misrecognition.

Unruly mobility is a term that has been used in relation to irregular migration flows and the "unruly" struggle that immigrants face fighting for their rights (Gupta, 2006). It has also been deployed as a concept that can capture the presence of mobile social groups that authorities try and exclude from secure urban spaces (Qian, 2015). In these cases, the movement of migrants is unruly because it is subject to strong exclusionary pressures. The women who figure in this chapter suggest that access to funds and spaces to organise are crucial to how women move through spheres of home, work and community. These movements require multiple norms of behaviour and action and a corresponding bricolage of formal and informal resources to be sustained. However, despite the role they play sustaining community, the experiences documented in this chapter suggest that institutional processes create barriers that capture and contain the unruly mobility of women. As Dan Swanton argues in relation to waste, unruly and disruptive mobilities often necessitate a similarly complex labour of ordering and organising (Swanton, 2014). Attempts to rationalise and restrict the activities of migrant women are one way that the labour of community work is ordered and governed. This governance has implications for the lines between paid and unpaid work, the meaning women bring to work and how work shapes their belonging at national and transnational scales.

I have argued in this chapter that despite barriers, women continue to move through more or less public or private spaces to continue to share with one another. Sharing is this context, can be situated as one part in a repertoire of activity whereby these women use the means available to them and the methods they are experts in, to claim their right to provide for their

communities on their own terms (Tilly, 2006). The social flexibility of sharing and its potential to create a common pool of resources, is a key part of how they claim a sense of belonging in the public. Patterns of mobility open up the social world of African women in Sydney in subtle and powerful ways. While as individuals women are constrained in their movements, when they work collectively, their mobility opens up new avenues for agency and participation. As I have argued, unruly mobility opens up the possibility for a struggle for group survival and self-definition; a struggle that emerges while women navigate the blurry lines between paid and unpaid work. The struggle for self-definition is one that overwhelmingly takes place in the "unofficial, private and seemingly invisible sphere of life and organisation" where otherwise ignored forms of political resistance take place among migrant women (Newman, 2010, p. 720).

It is within homes like Manar's, that sharing as an informal practice of support, connectedness and comfort, becomes clear. But it is also in these homes that sharing as an institutionalised form of unpaid, precarious work reveals itself. In the spaces of the home, the disjuncture between sharing as a commodity and sharing as a source of support, is made all the more obvious. ESO's like Manar's play a particular role in bridging private and public forms of support for African women in western Sydney and demonstrate the centrality of ESOs in the public distribution of welfare. Within a resettlement system defined by mounting competition for fewer funds, a significant degree of labour that used to be funded is now completed in the homes of community members. The denial of any steady material recognition for the labour they provide, forces women to make sacrifices that have the potential to undermine the very relationships that are of value. This makes for an uncomfortable meeting of home, work and community.

While anger and distrust form in the wake of this structural positioning, community remains a constant motivating factor for continuing to share with one another. The connectedness that results from sharing, points to the fundamentally antagonistic relationship the state has with migrants, refugees and difference more broadly. In this context, community social spaces become sites to resist the economising and delegitimising move to assimilate difference into mainstream service provision. The call for attention to appropriate governance structures, rules and regulations, inputs and outputs is loud. As Chapter Six attests, this call muffles the voices of different communities and makes it more difficult to forge an inclusive solidarity across differences. However, whether out of necessity or a critical awareness of the institutional process, many organisers continue to use their own resources to ensure that they have the time and space to hear the warning silences in the

community. Social spaces of the home remerge here as pivotal sites where self-definition is forged among African women. While confronting institutional barriers in the public, home-spaces provide a less regulated, flexible space of sharing. However, the entrance of public risk, financialisation and work into the home also strengthens the push to enter public institutions on their own terms as African women. As part of this push, the community work that they engage in is not viewed as a commodity only gained by the individual, but a resource to be shared with all. While struggling for employment and material recognition of their work there is a simultaneous refusal to commodify and individualise the information, spaces and relationships that they have built. These instances do not just point to a commitment to community but speak to the risks that are placed on community members. Risks that women endeavour to collectivise by sustaining groups and organisations and struggling to self-define regardless of the institutional barriers they face.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion: From the Local to the Global: Tracing Unruly Mobility

One day I received a text from Fathia inviting me to a special picnic she was having. She told me I was invited to her Karama. Karama was a celebration to say thank you for a prayer or wish that had been granted. Upon entering the park, I could see the large gathering of women around the barbeque shelters. I waved and walked towards them. I looked around at Tongan family groups, Vietnamese barbeques and many other family or community groups spread throughout the park, animated in their own pockets of grass. We did not discuss the plans for her organisation that day but sat and talked, rolling and skewering about fifty kofta meat rolls for the barbeque and drinking coffee while others danced around the beautiful central altar they made earlier that day.

Figure 13: Creating a celebration in the park. Preparing a coffee ritual to give thanks.

On that day, what was going on with the progress of funding applications or incorporation did not figure. Women came and went at their own time with ease, celebrating with Fathia and perhaps also giving their own thanks. The sense that there was something larger than individual responsibility translated into moments of solidarity — moments where the institution was not present, seemingly irrelevant. It was clear, even if I was only present for a fraction of the community events that these women were involved in, that they were firmly embedded within the social spaces through which they also gained meaning and purpose, regardless of their institutional involvement.

Figure 14: Relaxing under the barbeque shelter
Photo courtesy of Fathia Bella.

I began this discussion with the grand imagining of community in a small non-descript shop in Parramatta. In 2016 the African Village Market closed. The shop had been originally set up as part of an urban revitalisation project which saw empty shops leased out at subsidised prices. Some of the original founders had moved in the years previous and newer figures could no longer regularly attend. African communities in Sydney have significantly changed from the time when many of the women in this study first arrived. The notion of an African community has changed with growing numbers and a more developed infrastructure of

support, within and across communities. How the infrastructure of support has been resourced and governed continues to have implications for the visions and practices of community that are shared today. I have argued that social spaces are key sites for ethnographic description and analysis that allow for a situated and located account of how community is mobilised through struggles for recognition and redistribution. The sharing that happens in social spaces such as The Market and the meaning women bring to sharing with one another, changes over time. It is through observing changing practices and spaces, that I have been able to capture some of the processes that influence the social dynamics of African women's community groups in Sydney. From this vantage point, it is clear that access to institutional resources changes the conditions for when, where and with whom a sense of community and belonging forms.

I have taken as a starting point to this study that the women who figure throughout these pages are the experts in their own settlement. Collectively, their stories suggest that culturally sensitive services, run by the community, are critical for accessing and engaging with migrant communities. Far more goes on behind the scenes of culturally diverse collectives and they can adopt a number of organisational forms at any given time. For these groups, the current resettlement system is characterised by an increasing competition over fewer funds. While larger service providers receive the majority of the competitively tendered funds, a significant degree of labour involved with working with communities falls in the liminal spaces that these organisations and collectives occupy. I suggest that the labour of connectedness is an essential, obvious, but overlooked component of community work. This labour cannot be easily quantified. It cannot be captured by using "capital" as the main unit of analysis and relies on an analysis that considers the substance, rather than number, of social relationships. I have recast the collective, and collective social spaces, as key sites for observing the impact of competing forms of accountability, labour and value. On a micro level, the value of these community groups lie in how they facilitate the sharing of intangible, immaterial forms of trust, connectedness and comfort. On a macro level, this labour is valued for what it contributes to the integrative functions of the welfare state, but remains unpaid and subject to a system of competitive tendering and top-down service provision.

By using sharing as a concept that can sensitise us to a scaled distribution of support, this thesis has tried to map the relationship between micro-level and macro-level processes and focus on the messy collective terrain in between. Mapping some of the tensions that are present for women of African background in western Sydney presents a modest intervention

into the role of migrant community groups and the political economies and institutional processes of multiculturalism in Australia. A ground-up perspective helps to unpack the dynamics of the local level development of affinities, the role that inclusion in public institutions plays in forging collectives and the ways in which the state tries to contain difference and outsource risk. I will conclude with a brief discussion of the key interventions that were made to these three points of analysis.

Contesting the Boundaries of the Collective

In political discourse, organised difference, in the form of ethnic or cultural organisation, continues to be seen as a threat to the social cohesion of the nation. Functional theories of social solidarity and social capital, if not explicitly, implicitly posit diversity as a threat the creation of shared norms and common belonging. The starting point of these approaches to social capital is not inequality, but the question of social solidarity and what it is that binds us together. In this thesis, I have redirected the focus onto how these communities fluidly bind together as the result of their experiences of inequality. I have suggested that in the social spaces that women frequent in this study, a framework of bonding and bridging tells us very little about the resources that flow between ties, the different kinds of relationships that develop between individuals and how they change over time (Anthias, 2007; Ryan, 2011). Nor does this dichotomy tell us about the social and material conditions that influence the creation of trust and comfort among different individuals as they form collectives.

A social space analysis and a practice approach, can sensitise us to the porosity of these collectives. Together this approach unpacks the assumed dynamics of intra and inter group association and situates the formation of collectives in the context of wider relations of power. My analysis of the role of social, cultural or political "brokers" challenges the assumption that individuals are equally able to cooperate for mutual benefit. Language ability, education and economic security all play a role in the different resources and recognition that women have access to within and across particular communities (Arneil, 2006). Women are not equally placed to move through institutional spaces. Differential access to mobility provides an insight into the influence that institutional processes have on collective affiliation and organisation. To reveal the subtle forms of inclusion/exclusion that migrants face in Australia, I unpacked the assumed neutrality of public spaces and public services. To this end, Chapter Two laid the foundation for understanding that the value migrants attribute to sharing space with one another is located in a far longer history of the

inclusion/exclusion of migrants. The social, material and discursive processes that situate the migrant as Other, provide the momentum for the creation of alternative social spaces of support. Who shares and where they share, is related to who belongs and where.

Chapter Three extends this argument by suggesting that the women who figure in this study move towards support not because of assumptions of "being in common" or even "being uncommon" (Ahmed & Fortier, 2003, p. 254). It is a combination of shared experiences of non-belonging and phenotypical recognition, which provides the basis for the development of affinities. However, these affinities form through everyday practices in social spaces where those of non-African background continue to figure prominently. I maintained focus on the growth of relationships among different African communities, but home was imagined and practiced in such a way as to include the multicultural diversity that Australia was seen to offer. Chapter Four suggests that community comes to resonate, not in spite of difference, but because community is practiced and envisaged in such a way as to include difference. A wish to create comfort in the however transitory spaces where women found themselves, anchored their practices of sharing. While the dynamics of comfort was not the focus of this thesis, it is comfort and not capital, that provides a more nuanced understanding of how new relationships can propel new forms of activity for migrants. Comfort and discomfort are taken for granted, but often overlooked, facets of how we interact with difference through our everyday practices and movements through the world.

An increasing academic focus on super diversity and post-racial states has had the effect of sidelining comfort as parochial. Notions of comfort, home and community are associated with communitarian notions of boundedness and fixity. Studies of community that focus on face-to-face social relationships seem to appeal to overly romantic notions of *fixed*, *strong* and ultimately *inflexible*, social ties. Community has come to be associated with a conservative revival of a yearning for social unity between people in close proximity (Amin, 2013a, p. 14). However, the way that women envisaged and practiced community could not be categorised as a yearning for strong ties that lies in opposition to a valuing of mobility and multiple ties (Cresswell, 2006). Their visions of community and everyday acts of sharing accrue a comfort that helps open the space to encounter difference. Differences, disagreement and inequality remain between women, but their collective presence also has its own momentum. It is collectively that they can resist the individualising pressures of life in Australia. Therefore, comfort plays a key role in forging porous community spaces.

Chapter Five suggests that these women recast comfort from its association with introspection and insularity by using it to expand their activities to a wider audience. They not only expand their practices of sharing but orient them to the imagined community of the nation. Comfort has its own collective, social momentum. Comfort is not static and plays a key role in forming relationships and imparting support. Understanding comfort has implications for how we understand the settlement of migrants and refugees. Isolated or marginalised communities are more receptive to support when they are comfortable in the spaces that they are meant to be receiving it. Community social spaces are sites where information and support become mobile and multidirectional not static and unidirectional. To understand these spaces, we need to understand the textured and nuanced labour that goes into providing care and support.

In this regard, it is the intangible aspects of social relationships that are the key focus of the work women do to engage communities. Taking account of this labour has implications for how we conceive of the settlement process from the perspective of academia and service providers. The efforts of these women to create home-like social spaces draws attention to the important role that the materiality of reception plays in the provision of support. The time and space to facilitate the affective, embodied aspects of sharing food, music and dance significantly matter in this process. In this time and space, a new pedagogy of support can be developed which takes into account pre-existing cultural scripts of support. For a number of groups there is no existing language for support. For example, a number of service providers have to rethink their notion of support when working with Dinka communities from Sudan. Ideas of support and what needs to be shared and when, need to be reconfigured in relation to giver and receiver, in particular spaces and through being attentive to pre-existing practices and scripts of support, or lack thereof.

Contesting what community boundaries mean and how they form has implications that reverberate beyond academia. A ground-up approach to account for when, where and with whom people feel comfortable is essential to the process of engagement. From the starting place of being accountable to communities and acknowledging that they are porous, we can progress to the question of what role intangibles play in the context of the wider distribution of support for culturally diverse groups.

Producing the Conditions for Struggle

What has been presented in this thesis is a necessarily fragmented snapshot of a community. Community is always short hand for far more complex, multidimensional and potentially antagonistic relationships. However, I have suggested that institutional processes play a defining role in how a community emerges in the form of a group or organisation. In this case, interactions with resettlement institutions have influenced how the notion of an African community has emerged in the public sphere of events and civil society organisations. Chapter Six suggests that the emergence into the public is the result of three interrelated factors. The discursive mobilisation of the term in funding applications, the way that community events are run in accordance with institutional roles, responsibilities, rules and regulations and through the changing way that sharing is practiced in lieu of the social, material and discursive pressures. I have focused on how these pressures manifest in the social worlds of women who broker between institutions and communities. Some of these women have a grasp of English and have educational skills that provide them with employment opportunities that many others are denied. Their visibility also facilitated my access to them. However, I endeavoured to remain attentive to the relationships and spaces that are rendered invisible when a community tries to gain visibility.

In focusing on those that are more visible and trying to work within institutional spaces, I suggest that many others are effectively excluded from organising in the public. Perhaps most importantly, Chapter Six and Seven suggest that the inclusion of migrant women into the public and their movements through institutional spaces, *produces* the conditions for their exclusion. In organising in the public these women come face-to-face with a system that fears the consequences of organised and politicised forms of difference. This system is evidenced by rigid governance structures that limit how when and where women can enact their solidarity and the imposition of routinized, measurable and efficient outcomes that reduce the complexity of social relationships. Despite calls for their active and productive citizenship, culturally and ethnically diverse women face institutional walls to their participation in the public. They learn to organise in line with the rhythms of grant applications, competitive funding and political decisions that are made on a national rather than a local level. Siloed in how, when and with whom they can act, the pressures they face have an economising and depoliticising tendency.

The denial of their institutional involvement in the provision of support for their own communities produces the experience of social injustice. Experience of social injustice elicits a corresponding struggle for the fair redistribution of resources. This struggle does not take the form of an organised opposition or engage with traditional political platforms. As I have argued, it takes place at the level of collective pooling of support and mobility within and across institutional boundaries. The meaning women bring to their continued acts of sharing indicate that experiences of social injustice form corresponding struggles for recognition. This study was inspired by what is characterised as a turn away from a politics of recognition towards a politics of the commons that is maintained by an expansion of the public sphere and a defence of its public spaces, services, communities and shared and indivisible (Amin, 2013a, p. 7). However, for these women, recognition as valid players in the provision of support, is a key part of their attempt to expand the public. For them, struggles for recognition and redistribution are inextricably linked and their practices of sharing at the interpersonal, collective and institutionalised level sensitise us to the lived experience of this struggle. As has been extensively argued, how, why and with whom women share is bound up with identity and experiences of racism. Yet, their everyday practices actually speak to a politics that extends beyond group identity. Despite the moral overtones, they speak to an attempt to make resources accessible for all. What their struggle suggests and what Deranty and Renault (2007, p. 107) surmise is that

> What individuals want to have recognized in the struggle for recognition is therefore, strictly speaking, not so much their positive identity, rather it is their identity as negative, their freedom to posit their own identity. Recognition is claimed as a right to self-empowerment, as the right to self-creativity and self-realization, not with the aim of entrenching fixed identities.

The expansion of activity into the public sphere is defined by a wish for self-creativity and self-realisation. However, here the *self* is better understood through the lens of a relational autonomy, where relations of mutual dependence, not independence provide the conditions for human flourishing. Women are not fixed in how they struggle against the institutional walls they face. They move between formalised and informal spaces and feelings of visibility/invisibility, inclusion and exclusion simultaneously. I have suggested that their mobility is *unruly* in that it engages in multiple norms of behaviour and action and a corresponding bricolage of formal and informal resources to continue to share with one another. Their unruly mobility forms a complex picture of the social spaces that African

women share. It suggests that their movement becomes a way to self-define and self-empower while struggling to maintain a vision of community spaces that allow different African communities and non-Africans to support one another. Key to this vision is access to resources. The difficulty some women face getting employment was not an explicit focus of the chapters but this difficulty is critical to understand why women work together and the struggle they face when they are denied funding. This has become particularly apparent in the last year with legislative changes to the provision of government supported family day care. Many women rely on the small income they receive from minding children from within their houses (again, crossing the boundaries between paid care and solidarity economies of just minding one another's children).

Therefore, questions remain about how we interpret the movement women do across spheres of unpaid work in informal community spaces and paid work with service provision. What is the relationship between these forms of labour? How should they relate to one another in order to capture the value of different spheres and in relation to the changing distribution patterns of the state? I suggest that the answer to this question lies in being attentive to the contradicting values attributed to the intangible and invisible aspects of social practices, social spaces and belonging.

The Commodification of Longing?

The consistent energy that is expended to maintain spaces where women can share with one another cannot be captured solely through attention to material factors. Behind the unruly mobility that these women display is a longing to belong. Belonging is a composite of being and longing. Migrants may *be* in one place, but *long* for another (Fozdar & Hartley, 2014a, p. 130). However, they also can *long* to be accepted in the current place that they are in. For the women in this study, a longing to create a new home propels their activity within and across communities. At the beginning of every chapter and throughout them, I have tried to unravel the multiple threads of longing, belonging and non-belonging that women experience upon arrival in Australia. Their belonging is about emotional attachment, about feeling at home and about safety and security (Yuval-Davis, 2011, p. 2). Their visions and practices of community also align with a vision of common belonging at the level of nation and polity. Parekh (2008) suggests that common belonging is a broadly shared feeling among citizens that they form part of the same community, belong together, share common interests, are bound to each other by a common system of rights and obligations. And importantly for

many of these women, that they can depend on each other and the wider community to create a life defined by well-being and peace. As a normative ideal, common belonging raises a number of questions that I have tried to touch upon through my discussion of solidarity and difference, but which extend beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet, it is a longing for belonging that propels their activity into public spaces and to apply for public funds. Longing forms the fabric of the emotional, embodied labour they do to inhabit institutional spaces and propels their unruly mobility into and out of the public.

However, the under resourced and highly regulated environment that community organisations work within, helps to contain the mobility of community groups and capitalise on their longing. This environment encourages the conversion of their intangible labour of care and support, into tangible and quantifiable outputs. The tensions that this conversion generate speak to a commodification of their longing. Institutionalising what were informal practices of sharing, allows the state to extract value from the activity of women in the community sector, while continuing to deny funds to culturally diverse organisations. While these organisations continue to run outside of the regulative institutional environment, there is a constant tension between the value of community work in the sphere of paid work and the value of sharing in informal community spaces. From a structural perspective, the relationship between community work and the wider infrastructure of social service provision, is fraught. Organisationally, community social spaces, within and outside the home, allow the under resourced staff of larger service providers to connect and engage with communities. Individually, women face precarious short-term contracts in advocacy or training or reconcile themselves to the impossibility of getting work in an increasingly professionalised arena. As a consequence, a structural analysis suggests that the emotional, intangible and immaterial work that women partake in, sits in an exploitative relationship with the wider infrastructure of social service provision. The rationale of this system — to maximise the economic gains of migration and minimise the social costs — is at odds with the intangible and time consuming labour that is involved with connecting with marginalised communities.

The lack of material resources and the precarious employment opportunities that women face significantly exacerbate the struggle women face to belong in Australia. The persistent tension between paid and unpaid work produces contradictions between the tangible and intangible labour of community work. These contradictions cannot be easily resolved. While appropriate remuneration for their activities is essential, it is important to note that the

labour of community work is never just *work* as we traditionally conceive of work. Their practices and longing cannot be fully commodified, depersonalised or separated from the women who perform community work. Their activities do not always fit the quintessential form of "work" as a wage-labour relation. Despite the efforts to impose rules and roles that allow for the neutral transferability of the labour women partake in, their work is embodied and intangible and remains inseparable from the women who perform it.

I introduced this thesis by suggesting that sharing provides a way to move beyond the fetishism of traditional economics. Moving beyond *capital* as the unit of study for the social helps to attend to the competing valuations of community work and the struggles around social norms that evolve under capitalism. These struggles demonstrate that capitalism does not always reproduce similar norms or effects (Knafo, 2007, p. 95). The unruly mobility that women display moving through and working within institutional frameworks cannot be captured through the dichotomy of resistant or as co-opted, paid or unpaid work. It occupies a messy terrain of contestation where their agency is not a synonym for their resistance to relations of exploitation, but a "capacity for action that specific relations of subordination create and enable" (Mahmood, 2001, p. 210). The tensions between the value of community work as a commodity and the intangible, emotional labour of community work as a common resource is not easily reconciled. However, as I have argued throughout this discussion, sharing can sensitise us to these tensions.

Sharing is a challenging sensitising concept. The agency of the idea on the one hand, and agency over the concept on the other, became a tension in this thesis that was never fully resolved (Latour, 1987). As a concept and as a practice, sharing tells us about localised, small scale efforts to create a common pool of resources. These efforts form in the wake of material tensions of informal/formal, paid/unpaid work and tangible/intangible forms of labour. The women who have figured in this study cannot count on the public sphere to validate their work and as a consequence, they struggle to redefine the public. Sharing as a form of commoning sits in uneasy alignment with the systems of competition and individual ownership. These systems increasingly characterise the provision of social services under neoliberalism. However, side by side with the individualising forces of private ownership and individual responsibility, is the collective force of communities. Sharing is a powerful reminder that the collective remains a key site for empowerment, change and distribution. Less optimistically, the collective is also a key site where new norms of neoliberal citizenship are imparted and where the state increasingly outsources the management of differences.

Through subtle means the state tries to restrict how migrants organise. In equally subtle ways, migrants resist these restrictions. These movements point to far more pervasive tensions between the accumulation of capital and the defence of public resources and joint ownership.

The Future of Unruly Mobility

I moved beyond the binary of paid and unpaid work in this thesis to allow for a more nuanced understanding of the meaning that women bring to their belonging at local, national and transnational scales. Their efforts to share do not only gain meaning through a struggle against exclusion. Their pragmatic negotiation or uncertainty and risk are also indicative of feelings of inclusion. Many times, it was reiterated that women will have their children and their families here and therefore they feel that they have a right and a responsibility to struggle for the recognition. Recognition of their communities and their collective value in relation to a wider Australian public. They are not just struggling for belonging, they are also struggling from a position of belonging. Their movements speak to the multiplicity of belongings that they experience living in Australia. It is difficult to capture, and contain, longing, regardless of its value to the social reproduction of communities. The visions and practices of community that I have traced in this thesis cannot be contained within the institution and nor within the nation state. While transnational activity has not been the focus of this thesis, it figures strongly in the background. I want to end with some brief comments on the potential for extending the current, locally based analysis, to encompass the social dynamics of transnational practices of support, care and solidarity.

The social spaces of sharing that I frequented for this study were replete with references to the sending of remittances, political advocacy and lobbying, the importation of goods, the running of small businesses and the transnational child care arrangements that are in place for some children to go back to Africa for periods of time. The community social spaces are also transnational social spaces (Faist, 2000). Internationally, a transnational lens would contribute significantly to our understanding of the intersections between international migration and care and the role of civil society organisations and welfare states. On a local level, a lens of transnational social spaces also adds an important dimension to our understanding of local community spaces. The analysis that has been presented in this study suggests that localised and area specific delivery of services is a key way that services can remain sensitised to the needs of local communities. A transnational lens would disentangle

the multiple attachments that people foster while they participate at the local level. If we expose the intimate and familiar in the global and the global in the local we can have a more nuanced understanding of participation, politics and belonging and one that goes beyond a strict local-cosmopolitan continuum (Amin, 2004; Olofsson & Öhman, 2007; Vertovec, 2003). How the borders and distances between Australia and African countries influence the social spaces that evolve would remain a key facet of this expanded area of study.

Similarly, further research is needed to unpack the relationship between the belonging and conceptions of racial politics within and outside Australia. Racialised politics, along the line of black and white, occupy a different status in Australia than in the US and the UK. In a number of conversations women positively commented on these differences. Despite the history of white Australia, for them Australia provided an arena for organisation that they felt would not be available to black African communities elsewhere. There was freedom in what they interpreted as the relative newness of black communities in Australia. The entrenched disadvantage that faces Aboriginal Australians did not figure in these comments, but this would be another area to follow, building on research that has already been done in Australia (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2008). Together, the intersection between race and transnationalism would contribute to our understanding of the global circulation of discourses of race and gender. In particular, how these discourses manifest at the level of local organisation and solidarities. Of pressing concern to this study, would be how ideas of race, gender and empowerment intersect with African feminisms, pan-African ideals and the imagining of African diasporas more generally.

On a final note, sharing with each other is only one part of the creative ways that migrants forge a sense of connectedness and home together. One day when I was with Mary she was frustrated about the fact she was going to get home late. She complained about missing the classic Australian TV series, *Home and Away* - "it reminds me of home" she said, "it is like the village...". *Home and Away* is the quintessential example of an Anglo, white Australia. A tight knit community of people, embroiled in drama, are bound together by the rhythms of the local beach. But sometimes the way that people find their way to feelings of home, are unexpected and seemingly incongruous. Tracing incongruity in such incongruous relationships, uses of space, visions and practices, can provide further insight into the creative ways that migrants form shared experiences out of unexpected and everyday encounters with difference. This study demonstrates that these encounters are generative and create new possibilities for how community can be imagined. However, we do not all get

a chance to enact our imagining equally and imagination itself can be unruly. The sharing that has been traced in this thesis helps to point to the gaps between the imaginary of multicultural Australia and the reality. The practices of sharing that have anchored this discussion, are not only evidence of an imagined vision. For those who find themselves on the margins, sharing time, space and support with one another, are also practices of survival. Through sharing with one another the women who figure in this study could collectively try and reconfigure the boundaries, spaces and terms upon which they enter and move through the world. These terms include the room for new imaginaries of community, social space, labour and borders. It is through the continual discovery and sharing of these different social imaginaries, that we can generate new knowledge about community and belonging.

Appendix A

Migration Categories and Associated Access to Support

Australia's migration program is made up of both a migrant and refugee component. Eligibility for institutional settlement support changes according to the status of your visa and the length of time you have resided in Australia. All Australian permanent residents are eligible for social security payments and access to Medicare. In selected cases, those on refugee and temporary protection visas are also eligible for social security payments and access to health services including Medicare and counselling services. Those who are granted a visa through Australia's refugee and humanitarian programme are eligible to a greater range of settlement support than those who arrive through skilled, student or family reunion streams.

Entrants under the Special Humanitarian Programme are eligible for support under the Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) program. The HSS is the first port of call for humanitarian entrants on arrival. The initial settlement period is considered the first six to 12 months and the HSS available throughout this period of time. According to the Department of Social Services (2017), the HSS and Settlement grants caseworkers can provide clients with information about mainstream Government employment services, including job active and Disability Employment Services; the job seeker assessment processes; and accompany clients to Centrelink, where job-ready clients may be referred to a Job Capacity Assessment. After this, the client may be referred to Australian Government employment service providers, who will assist them to find employment.

Service providers deliver the HSS program on behalf of the Australian Government and help humanitarian entrants to access other services or programs if needed. Participation in the HSS program is voluntary and support is provided on a needs basis. According to the Department of Social Services, on the 30th of August 2013, two groups of asylum seekers who were granted Protection visas were no longer eligible for services under the HSS program (Department of Social Services, 2017). These groups are: Illegal Maritime Arrivals who have been granted a Protection visa while living in the community on a Bridging visa E or in community detention and people who were not Illegal Maritime Arrivals, but have similarly been granted protection while living in the community, including in community

detention ('community grants'). In addition, those who are detained in offshore detention centres have little access to services (Department of Social Services, 2017).

The Australian Government provides selected services to Temporary Humanitarian Stay (449), Temporary Humanitarian Concern (786), Temporary Protection (785) (TPV) or Safe Haven Enterprise (790) (SHEV) visa holders. These services include some social security payments such as Special Benefit, Rent Assistance and family assistance payments, employment — including help finding a job and Disability Employment Services, health services, including Medicare, mental health and emotional wellbeing services (including counselling for torture and trauma), education for children of school age and CCS and free Translating and Interpreting Services. The majority of these programs are run by the Department of Social Services.

On a wider scale, Settlement Grants are available for organisations which deliver targeted services to communities and locations in greatest need of settlement assistance. The Settlement Grants Program delivers core settlement support for humanitarian entrants and other eligible migrants in their first five years of life in Australia. After being in Australia for five years migrants and refugees are encouraged to access mainstream services.

Additional Support is provided through access to the following programs:

The Australian Cultural Orientation Program (AUSCO) – AUSCO provides refugees over the age of five years pre-arrival advice, practical information and orientation to Australian life. It is delivered overseas by the International Organization for Migration.

Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) – provides up to 510 hours of English language tuition to eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants to help them learn foundation English language (administered by the Department of Education and Training).

Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) – provides language, literacy and numeracy training to eligible job seekers, to help them to participate more effectively in training or in the labour force (administered by the Department of Education and Training).

Job active – connects job seekers with employers and assists job seekers to develop a Job Plan and search for a job (administered by the Department of Employment).

Disability Employment Services – assists people with disability, injury or health condition to prepare for, find and keep a job (administered by the Department of Social Services).

Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma – provides specialised support services to eligible migrants who are experiencing psychological difficulties associated with surviving torture and trauma before coming to Australia (administered by the Department of Health).

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) – provides interpreting services 24 hours a day, seven days a week (administered by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection).

The Department of Social Services is responsible for the majority of settlement services. However, other support is available through the Departments of Immigration and Border Protection, Health, Human Services, Education and Training and Employment. Table 2 summarises the support available for six key migrant categories. However, it is important to note that visa categories and access to services is subject to consistent change. Table 2 should only be used as a guide for the services available in the period 2012-2016.

Table 2: Summary of migration category and associated access to institutional support prior to permanent residency status

Institutional Support	Skilled	Family stream*	Student	Offshore Refugee	Onshore Asylum Seeker**	Temporary Protection Visas
Social Security Payment	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Language Program	Yes (selected)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Health Services	No unless a reciprocal country agreement exists	Yes	No unless a reciprocal country agreement exists	Yes	Yes	Yes
Settlement Grants	No	Yes (selected)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes (selected visa categories)
Humanitarian Settlement Services	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Translating and Interpreting Services	No	Yes (selected visa categories)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes (selected visa categories)

* With low English proficiency
**Prior to 2017 and subject to available services on offshore detention centres

Appendix B

Final Ethics Approval Letter

Dear Dr Vasta,

Re: "Sharing to belong: how African women negotiate different structures of solidarity in Sydney" (Ethics Ref: 5201200839) This research meets the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). The following personnel are authorised to conduct this research:
Dr Ellie Vasta
Ms Claire Marie Farrugia

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1.The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).
2. Approval will be for a period of five (5) years subject to the provision of annual reports. Final Report Due: 29 January 2018
NB. If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. If the project has been discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are also required to submit a Final Report for the project. Progress reports and Final Reports are available at the following website:
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/forms
3. If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).4. All amendments to the project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee before implementation. Please complete and submit a Request for Amendment Form available at the following website:
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/
human_research_ethics/forms5.Please notify the Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.
6. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University.

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project it is your responsibility to provide the Macquarie University's Research Grants Management Assistant with a copy of this email as soon as possible. Internal and External funding agencies will not be informed that you have final approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Management Assistant has received a copy of this email.

Please retain a copy of this email as this is your official notification of final ethics approval.

Yours sincerely

Dr Karolyn White
Director of Research Ethics
Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee-- Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) Ethics Secretariat
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