# BORDER-SITUATIONS: HISTORICAL MEMORIES OF APARTHEID-ERA SWAZILAND

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Swaziland has a shadowed post-colonial history of race, bound up in intricate ways with culture. Writing a racial history of Swaziland represents a relatively new historiography (Nyeko 2005), one that is complicated but not impossible. Contemporary perceptions of ordinary Swazi citizens do not overtly register an enduring violent history of white racist colonial domination, especially in comparison to powder-keg cases like South Africa, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Kenya. Yet, like Jemima Pierre shows in her study of race in Ghana (2013), immaterial and profoundly transnational forms of race play out in everyday life in post-colonial places like Swaziland even if they are not always readily acknowledged or laid out in claims for global political and economic inclusion. This penumbral dynamism points to what Omi and Winant (1994, cited in Pierre 2013:4) refer to in their concept of racial formation or racialization, "a process that is always historically situated," and one "of racial categories and meanings as fluid, unstable, decentered, and constantly transformed by changing historical, social and political relationships." This points to the ever-shifting ways that race comes to subtly characterize ordinary lives.

This essay briefly considers how transnational and historical processes of race with regards to South African apartheid have played out in the memory of a few contemporary Swazi, and how for the majority of ordinary Swazi these memories are made opaque in the culture of their own ethno-national history. Indeed, to read and write a post-colonial ethnic and racial history of Swaziland that gives undue weight to South Africa's racial history would miss the complexity of this particular social world and its multiple global constitutions. This case speaks to me as one evincing a "border situation" for ordinary Swazis, one where the collective memory of apartheid traces toward a psychic, bodily, and geographic border, but one that pushes back against practices of mass reflection or reconciliation for South Africa and its place in Swazi history. Case material derives from my own ethnographic research, conversations, and experiences with ordinary yet cosmopolitan and mostly non-progressive Swazi (i.e., not actively involved in state protest or a quest for a political revolution) from 2008 onward, as well as documentation of a public roundtable called "Swaziland: A Place of Refuge from Apartheid" at House on Fire in Malkerns in July 2014 as part of the Johannesburg Workshop on Theory and Criticism's (JWTC) program "Archives of the Non-Racial."

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Karl Jaspers' (1919) notions of *die Grenze* and *grenzensituation* is useful to think about this conjuncture of geography, history, culture, and memory. Jaspers' philosophy of religion and humanism centers on the notion of "the limit" (*die Grenze*), that which presents itself as a phenomenological affront to our subjective flourishing which we come to recognize and over which we feel a sense of ambivalence. It is a limit we recognize that defines and curtails us when it becomes apparent that a particular situation in which we find ourselves is one for which we are unprepared (or "unconditioned" in his terms) to work through. However, this recognition of limit is one where new forms of self-consciousness and self–realization become possible. *Grenze* also translates as border, frontier, or edge, thus the psychic twins to the geographic when conceptualized on a broader, indeed transnational scope.

The border between Swaziland and South Africa in post-independence Swaziland represents diverse ambiguities and scales of self-other recognition that were simultaneously racial, sexual, gendered, national, and cultural. Membership and identification within these two groups—South African or non-Swazi and Swazi—is fluid, yet difference and distinctions rendered between them are marked by mutuality and circumspection. While siSwati is recognized as an official language of South Africa and the nation has many citizens, South Africans tend to see Swazis as country-bumpkin types. Majority Swazi perceive South Africa as a criminally dangerous place that is also resourceful for work opportunities and advanced healthcare (Simelane and Crush 2004). Historical, geopolitical-economic forces have structured peoples' movement or aspirations for movement across this border, largely pulling Swazis into South Africa in migratory systems of wage labor and pushing South Africans into Swaziland seeking alternative political, social, and moral livelihoods beyond the former apartheid state. While the border has been highly porous in practice throughout the twentieth century, for majority Swazi the collective memory of South Africa's apartheid regime and those moving into Swaziland because of it evoke conceptual ambivalence for this "border" or "limit" which also speaks

to a broader self-consciousness and realization as an ethno-nation.

Swaziland's socio-historical origins and further integration as an ethno-national polity unfolded from the mid-nineteenth century onward in collusive projects of the Dlamini, Ndwandwe, and Matsebula clans, amongst others, with the British against neighboring groups. This alliance was also continually remade in contradistinction to encroaching Dutch-Boer settlers. Passing subsequently through a violent period of expropriation in land concessions by these settlers at the turn of that century (Bonner 1983), the British negotiated colonial protectorate claims over the Swazi to prevent the polity's incorporation into the Transvaal and emerging Republic of South Africa. Through a cultural "triumph of tradition" (MacMillan 1985) cohered by in the political and economic tactics of the Dlamini royalists house, and riding the concurrent continent-wide wave of decolonization, Swaziland became an independent state as a "kingdom" under Sobhuza II in 1968. It was around this time also that racial discrimination was legally abolished by the state, "largely a diplomatic gesture necessitated by the local and contemporary political climate as well as changing international relations… including developments in the Union/Republic of South Africa" (N. Dlamini 2007). Race as a force and process continued (and continues) to structure the lives of ordinary Swazis from the mid twentieth century onward in overt and covert ways.

Across the border in South Africa at that same time, political, economic and educational life was difficult for ethnic Swazis in and around the eventual KaNgwane bantustan (MacMillan 1988) and of course for majority Africans who were classified as black and in all ways inferior by the Nationalist Party's apartheid system of racial domination. Scholars have shown the intensive mobility of Swazis in their movement across the border into South Africa due to extractive capitalist regimes of migrant labor up until the neoliberal present (Crush 1987, Simelane and Crush 2004, Hickel 2012). For many South African political oppositionists, including famous figures like Oliver Tambo, Ruth First, Desmond Tutu, Phindile Mfeti, Chris Hani, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela and Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki, and Jacob Zuma, their traffic over the border was done out of necessity and fear for of their own and families' lives as they engaged in the struggle against the state. In Swaziland they undertook underground military training, communication networks, and tactical operations. The private school in Mbabane, Waterford Kamhlaba, became a haven for elite oppositionists' children in education and social reproduction, and for many more less-famous activists' children, the Catholic Salesian school in Manzini.

The historiography of apartheid-era Swaziland has thus far privileged macro-level, progressivist, and statist perspectives on the role of Swaziland in the struggle, claiming that Sobhuza II, the interregnum *Liqoqo* (1982-1986), and his successor and son Mswati III willingly co-opted themselves and their police and military forces to the Nationalist Party as it snuffed out activists. It is unquestionable that the Swaziland Royal Police force under direction from several state figures engaged in concerted interrogations, abductions and assassinations of ANC operatives or sympathizers from the late 1960s-1980s (Simpson 2009, 2012, Masilela 2007, Daniel 1984 cited in Nyeko 2005). But according to eminent Swazi historian and bibliographer Balam Nyeko (2005: 25) "these evidently sour relations to which critics… drew attention were, however, largely a reflection of the interim Swazi state's hostility to the [ANC] rather than that of the ordinary Swazi." Indeed, Ellen Mary Magongo's (2009) magisterial overview of the kingship's transition period from the 1970s-1980s shows how state politics were the more immediate, consuming concern for the nation at large. The critical history of apartheid-era political mobility and memory from the perspective of "the ordinary" is only just emerging in public history forums like *South African History Online*, works like *Number 43 Trelawney Park: kwaMaGogo* (Masilela 2007), and in social media. Likewise, the ethnography of Swazi collective or personal memories about apartheid is inchoate.

My own ethnographic research in Swaziland has not explicitly focused on apartheid era memories, but I see there to be very little everyday conversation or public discourse about the political lives of exiled or underground South Africans in Swaziland between the 1960s and 1990s. In my collection of almost three years daily field-notes, a search for the word "apartheid" only turned up three times in unsolicited repartee. Two examples follow.

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*A Coca-cola can gets crushed under the weight of Vusi's foot on the accelerator. Wrappers, receipts and other trash jostle around on the dusty floor of the lorry, and he flashes an open-smile as we bottom out in a pothole on the paved roads of Matsapha. This 35-year old father of three daughters commutes 3-hours a day from his parental countryside home in the south to work as a welder on equipment used by the Ministry of Agriculture. "I don't remember much about apartheid. That was a South Africa thing. We didn't see much of that happening. I remember though when Sobhuza died. They made my mothers shave their heads. They had to wear the grass plaited hats and ropes around*

*their waists for one year in mourning." We drove on as Vusi further explained the national public mourning rites for the king of bodily comportment and the notable long-term suspension of national radio broadcasts and programming, supposedly out of silent deference for his death.* 4 May 2011

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*George is a white man from Canada who served as a volunteer in the late 1980s. "I liked Swaziland so much I came back after a year back home [1989]. That's where I met my wife Mavis. We were at a dance at Ngwane Teachers' College. They had many parties there in those days. Mavis is a colored woman, but you know it is not how we use the word colored in Canada. She is actually a Zulu. Her father was a colored man and her mother was a Zulu. They came here from South Africa because it was better here than there with that apartheid stuff. They came here and got some land around Nhlangano, so they were set up. I met her that night and the rest is history. We started out with nothing. At one point, she was baking sweets at home just over here next door to where we live, and I would walk out and delivery the sweets in boxes to different places in town. We didn't even have a car, not a cent. Then about 10 years ago or so, we had a calling. It was the word of God that led us to open this new business."* 6 April 2011

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Enveloped in the particular memories of ordinary Swazi (and or those who became ordinary citizens) are remnants of apartheid's influence. Not overtly registered in experience at the level of political discourse, nor directly felt on the felt surface of a body, the violence of apartheid is less concrete, an indirect line that winds into everyday livelihoods and concerns for local social reproduction. Indeed, George's in-laws' desire for interracial marriage and flight from the South African state's Immorality Act was a prevalent theme that came out three years later at the JWTC roundtable in Malkerns. The participants were carefully chosen for the event, being knowledgeable about political oppositionists and activists' movements across the border to this "place of refuge" or having been involved in the struggle on the Swaziland side themselves. In some sense then, these people were not "ordinary Swazis" given their progressivist pasts, but their memories and past actions are nonetheless constitute the broader social world in which both ordinary and extra-ordinary people dwell. Their narratives were meant to contribute to a public history event, and they did indeed provide a wealth of oral history data on apartheid-era Swaziland. Yet, in complex, fascinating, and agonistic ways, the narratives did not evince a uniform structure or storyline. Several lines of discussion amongst participants were uneasily accusatory or blameful across racial, biracial, and class lines. Questions about the essence, function, and manipulation of "culture" in history and memory came to the fore, which, I contend, point to an ambivalence and dynamic of self-consciousness characteristic of a "border-situation."

The following quotes and notes reflect the sporadic nature of the participants' publically narrated memory and are preserved in this way to shore up memory's geographic and historical situatedness, as well as to enrich the public archive of apartheid-era memory.

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*Ray Berman is 73 years old, a self proclaimed hippie who laughingly admitted he didn't know much about this whole apartheid affair on the Swazi side from smoking a lot of dagga and otherwise just enjoying life in a "peaceful" country. He came to Swaziland in self-exile in 1966, as "a refugee from jazz," "a beatnik" who was musically active at the time, and hence with people of the "wrong color." Previously harassed and arrested for performances and leisure with black South Africans in and around District 6, he left when he saw the neighborhood destroyed. He moved to Swaziland nearby Lobamba, not knowing it was an area of royal residencies. One day while high on dagga, he ventured down from the place he stayed and was caught up with several warriors who initiated him into the emabutfo regiments through butseka rites and renamed him Mahlekahlatsini, "laughing in the bush," a colloquialism for a man with a beard. There he saw also Sobhuza. "I was naïve," he laughed in retelling this story. "1966 was the eve of Swazi independence, but blacks were still not allowed in Mbabane social clubs," which became "beneficiaries of the South African cultural boycott" by hosting artists like Thelonius Monk, Eartha Kitt, Eric Clapton. It was a lively scene.*

*"Some young people sometimes came by my place near Mlilwane in the 1960s and 1970s" who were involved with the ANC. "They rented my cottage, and at night they would shovel up and hide their guns. Those kids went on to blow up SASOL and rail-way lines in Orlando East, and then eventually got blown up themselves." "I was a person of interest of the Royal Swazi Police" who came to inspect his place, but felt his overall experience was benign. Rounding off his introduction, he said he met one of the early Peace Corps Volunteers in the 1960s who had done a study*

*on prostitutes in Swaziland. He laughed and agreed with what she wrote as a conclusion: that these women deemed "prostitutes" were actually in love with the men they went with at the time. "They gave each other things man, they loved each other."*

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*Peter George is another older white man who came from England at Swazi independence to find a friendly country to live in and stay as a farmer. "The Swazi were very welcoming to strangers. Because of apartheid, people came to Swaziland to do what they couldn't do or what they were forced to do. People were fleeing political oppression and immorality act. I was never an activist and never actively involved in helping anyone. If people came, I didn't ask why they were here nor where they went. Some went on to Mozambique. There were respectable females coming from South Africa into Swaziland who were harassed by the South African police and would be put in jail for several nights. I remember once [trade union activist] Alex Moumbaris and two whites escaped from prison in Pretoria, the [Swazi] army mistook me for Moumbaris. They came with bayonets, asking me who I was, and I was later called by the Swazi police and interrogated about him when he had had actually fled to Botswana. Another time, a man came with a khombi came asking to park his car once or twice a month at my farm. I said okay, and he would park it there regularly, like other ANC probably did. The South African police moved freely in Swaziland, socially but not officially, and they regularly drank with us at the bars.*

*"I came to Swaziland as a single man and went around to the pubs and central hotel. The most notorious was Mantenga Lodge, run by Mrs. Thash from Scotland. The bar man was Reuben and dressed traditionally. Jock was also Scottish served drinks dressed in a kilt. The Swazi girls there spoke German because they met the white South Africans and Europeans who came across the border to sleep with women here. There were less Afrikaners. "There was no peer pressure and things were very free and open. The girls might be taken to jail for a night and went back next week." I met and married a woman in Swaziland who was from Soweto. We went to get married at district office, but someone stopped us saying they needed permit from deputy prime minister. That was in 1980 and I think they were in collusion with the South Africans to stop interracial marriage. I dreamt the impossible dream with her, like Wopko Jensen says in his poetry.*

*"There were other memories too. I went to my mother-in-law's funeral in Soweto. We rode to funeral in my brother-in-law's car. There was a bakkie that appeared and white soldiers came out and infiltrated the funeral procession. My brother-in-law said it was intimidation. I was once at another funeral in Alexandra outside Johannesburg for one of my wife's distant relatives. I went there with my wife and children where it was held at a church. At the point where the coffin was carried out, someone there called me called me a family member. I'll never forget how I was the only white man at that funeral. Once, while travelling in Tanzania, I ended up in prison. It was a German prison. I demanded to see high commissioner so as to get out. I was lying in there on a doormat. Someone came up to me and took my hand, which felt special. Europeans don't do that. The man was a senior prisoner from the war, and you know there were PNC and ANC training camps there. He told me "don't speak Afrikaans if you can." If other prisoners or people heard that, they might beat him. That was when I felt humanity. I met my wife in the Johannesburger, a hotel that had people from all over who intermix among races. I was seeing a show called Iphi Intombi. My wife was in the first cast, and I met her at the cast party".*

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Swazi heritage specialist Bob Forrester notes that Sobhuza's traditionalism was coterminous with Pan-Africanism continentally, and Swaziland became an effective "haven of peace" for Southern Africans across color lines. The image of peacefulness combined with sexualized ecological fantasy of an idyllic, exotic African space, one that is heavily promulgated even today by the kingship and its parastatals that animates perceptions of the kingdom (Cook and Hardin 2013). This image, structured itself by white newcomers' prejudicial views and economic privilege, drew many people like Peter and Ray across the border. This mix included a large group of white hippies, vacationers, and visitors seeking apartheid-outlawed gambling and sex with African women. These two now-Swazi men's memories represent a particular gendered-sexualized experience of privileged white liberalism, but must not be read as inauthentic or disingenuous for they are born out their embeddedness in a localized, racialized, transnational history. Their consistent reaffirmations that sex with local women and penchant for local drug use was couched in a jovial laughter that spoke to realizations of interracial love and intimacy, and for many of the workshop participants the unequal mutualities of sex between white men and black women. I suggest it points too to what Herzfeld (2005:3) calls as "cultural

intimacy," a "recognition of those aspects of a cultural identity that are considered a source of external embarrassment but nevertheless provide insiders with their assurance of common sociality."

South African anti-apartheid activists both white and black were also part of this influx, including, by the mid 1970s, whites from Mozambique fleeing the civil war. In Swaziland they would meet a small group of extra-ordinary Swazis originally born in the kingdom who were sympathetic to and aided the struggle. The two panelists speaking from this vantage point, both women, were Glenda Stephens and Dolores Godeffroy.

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*Glenda Stephens was born in Swaziland, as was her mother. "Swazis are peaceful and this is known as a peaceful country. I joined the Swaziland Broadcasting Service in 1973 as a journalist. I've worked with Parks [Mangena] here too. With that job I wrote the English bulletin for the morning new service. You had to come in and update it at 3AM before the morning reading, so we would stay up all night at a spot called the Penguin Club." Tying into the mentioned musical interests of Ray, "there were local artists there too like Mara Louw and Thandi Klaasens. It closed at 3AM and then we'd go down to the Royal Swazi Casino and ate at Planters restaurant. We'd have eggs, bacon and wine and then go back to do the morning news reading. I'll tell you that a sip of Bailey's sorts the voice out for the morning news reading! In Swaziland, I was unaware of most of what happened during apartheid." "We were here and we were Swazi." "We lived in an atmosphere of ignorance and suspicion. If you weren't outwardly racist, it was more tricky, and you always had to be conscious of who you were talking to." "As a voice in the media, and one who was not overtly aligned with apartheid ideals, the late 1970s and early 1980s became a difficult time for me. Chris DuToit and Dirk Coetzee once burst into my home in the middle of the night and hauled me out of bed. They talked me up and tried to get me to spy for South Africa. I was terrified. I never told anyone about it until much later." I saw one of them later on in South Africa and thought he recognized me as I did him.*

*"In the 1980s I started a magazine called Swazi Life. The atmosphere then was tricky because of the change in national leadership. There were palace coups going on at the same time as the escalation of conflict in Mozambique and South Africa. The Komati Accord started kicking some people out of Mozambique too. At the Swazi Life team we had a graphic artist named Daniel Schneider from Switzerland. We had regular raids at the magazine offices on Thursday nights. Peoples' houses were shot up. The local authorities were unwilling or unable to intervene. One day, one of our advertising ladies who was also an ANC cadre came in and told us that Dani had been raided. We went there and found the place a total wreck. These tips the police were going on about safe houses in Swaziland were sometimes two years old! Dani was held in Pretoria with his fiancée for 3 weeks and we had had no information on their whereabouts. I was threatened again not to publish anything about the raid and anything else seemingly circumspect or about being spied on. I was targeted for being a sympathizer with activist South Africans. I was a wreck in being followed by unmarked cars and the continual office break-ins. I eventually went to the head of Swaziland's security forces to complain about this pressure. They assured me that they would look out for me. Three days later, I went to work and from the office window I saw men spying on us from the rooftop of the building across the street. I was terrified, but when I contacted Swaziland security again and looked more closely, I saw it was Titus [Msibi, the police commissioner]!"*

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*Dolores Godeffroy is restauranteur, businesswoman, and indigenous knowledge specialist. "I have heavy stuff with the British, and a lot of it. You've got to know that the Royal Swazi Police was in support of apartheid in a very big way. Freedom fighters were picked up and carried across the border by the police. I was born in southern Swaziland. The British never allowed mixed marriages here in Swaziland and that only came about during independence. The 1960s and 1970s were hell for people involved in anything with apartheid." The South African government constantly advised the Swaziland government. Sobhuza was a member of the ANC, but when the chips were down he had to go with the apartheid plans. The local police were totally pro-apartheid.*

*"I used to run a restaurant called Ekhwezi. The white people called it "ANC headquarters." Eugene DeKock even came into my place once demanding to see these ANC people. I've had 13 police raids on my place. In one of those raids they burned all of my books. The police put out a warrant for my arrest once, but I had gone on holiday. I married an American man, and when they did turn up to arrest me, my husband helped. He put them up to the law saying that because I was a married woman to him, I was his legal minor. They were unable to arrest me then. I protected lots of people involved in Umkhonto weSizwe and who dealt in arms, and the Swazi police gave me hell for it.*

*“There is no freedom in this place. We can’t be superficial. There is no peace in this place. Just look at this claim made here tonight about the rights of a black woman to sleep with a white man. From abroad, Judge David Cohen from South African ordered that half-racial Swazi children should be identified as non-residents.” The South Africans had a hard time trying to nail down these freedom fighters. The South African government had a hard time trying to differentiate people based on their surnames, like Nxumalo. “I knew cadres who died in jail because of the police. I knew one man who was taken from Pine Valley to the Gege police station. When the Swiss government got involved, they dumped him naked in the woods. DeKock should stay in jail because people have suffered. We cannot walk around being angelic when people have been evil. People must pray for what they’ve done. Racism is a culture that still exists here. When it is a white woman sleeping with a black man, it is sacrilege, the ultimate of all evil. I know how a few children of mixed race from a white woman and a black man had to put their hands on the bible of the Dutch Reformed Church and pray for themselves. This was the beginning of OVC [orphaned and vulnerable children] before HIV. You need dignity before economy and history gets buried. We Swazis are not like Sotho. We like to be happy rather than have historical dread. We have a king, but it’s like our cocaine or a tranquilizer. It makes us superficially happy.”*

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The women’s stories crossed against the narrative line of the first two panelists, and fly in the face of the idea of respite and the Bacchanalian. Both mention peacefulness as a characteristic of the people and place, something echoed in the first panelists’ stories. This was also what most Swazis tell non-Swazi visitors and what I’ve been told too on many occasions. But the women then powerfully contradict this characterization in their stories of violence. Glenda appeared more ambivalent about this contradiction than Dolores, who was more than outright in her statement that happiness and peacefulness under king’s state were drug-like inductions. Peaceful cultural identity, cast down in the articulation of violent memory, presents itself as a border upon which a person perceives her or himself in history. This recognition of the border is a situation that shores up a sense of ambivalence, of contrasting value and polarity that both women spoke to. These women are not so ordinary for they eventually engaged in concerted efforts as part of the struggle in harboring activists or progressive sentiments, but that which would render them ordinary, namely their everyday practices of social reproduction—food preparation, consumption, leisure, friendship, routines of worklife, marriage, and sex—are pushed to the physical limits of possibility, indeed, to the limits of life and death.

The border-situation appears in this contradiction: why say it is a peaceful place of peaceful persons when it was not during apartheid? Why ensconce these memories in such a frame, only to subsequently unmoor them? What psychic, social and geographic limit is reached in such an articulation, and at this limit what is then construed in narrative about the self and nation?

Dolores likewise pushed the limits of the interracial question to the fore. Thus far the only person of color to speak, she shot back at Ray and Peter’s interracial sexual egalitarianism, saying that black men rather than black women, and white women rather than white men, faced great hostility from the social world at large: communities, churches, and the state in and

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outside of Swaziland. Collapsing an almost fifty year gulf in history, she tied the contemporary blight of children fostered or orphaned due to HIV/AIDS—defined by both local and global health, humanitarian and development entities in the nation as OVC or orphaned and vulnerable children—to the blight biracial Swazi children faced in a racialized society.

Her swelling criticism brought up a particular counterpoint from the audience, the “indigenous prophet,” lecturer, and author Joy Ndwandwe. Ndwandwe recently published a thick hermeneutic about Sobhuza’s religious and political philosophy based on many interviews with his advisors and confidents, and was quick to defend what was read as an unfair criticism of the late king. She took the microphone several times, and this narrative represents the whole of her public comments that evening.

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*For my book, I interviewed Pik Botha who was a former friend of Sobhuza. I asked him, “did Sobhuza sellout during struggle?” Very strongly, Pik says “no.” Sobhuza made sure Swazis had the economic benefits they did and were able to enjoy during they (sic?) apartheid struggle. There is no struggle without a sell out. Every struggle has sell outs, sex, and casualties. We are all casualties. If you are a Swazi child and went to school with colored children, you know*

*that there was a buffer system. There was definitely preferential treatment for some members of the community. I am an African and we all contributed to the struggle. The police did not do us justice, but the police have other stories about how people sold out. The South African National Heritage Council wanted to do Swaziland stories too for their projects, but of course it breaks down with egos and other matters. The struggle is collective.*

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Later in the session she reiterated the Pik Botha interview as evidence that Sobhuza's relations with the apartheid state was complex, a point developed elsewhere in the critical histories of apartheid-era Swaziland. Her comments steered the narrative line back to a singularity of a Swazi experience and memory of the past, and one that could easily re-align with the narratives of ethno-national singularity as ramped up by and identified with Sobhuza in the wake of colonialism. There was some validation of Joy's perspective in another speaker, faculty member in history at the University of Swaziland, Nhlanhla C. Dlamini.

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*There were various responses to apartheid in Swaziland, and of course there is anger for those who lost relatives in the struggle here. I interviewed a person from here who went to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to testify about the loss and that one said the family of the deceased felt mocked in the process. Swaziland's role is complex and there are a lot of contradictions. There is betrayal and there is selling out. That is a two-sided coin. The 1950s-1960s grabbed the world's attention, and the experience of some Southern African nations is not equivalent to others. The liberation of some is more traumatic than others. The conditions for Swaziland's involvement in the struggle started early on in the 1910s. Those were the early days of the ANC, then the SANNSC. Swazi leaders like Queen Mother Labotsibeni were involved. She contributed 3000£ sterling to the ANC to set up a printing press to publish The Bantu, which helped popularize the ANC message. Swaziland's involvement started in solidarity with black South Africans especially because they both experienced histories of land loss and were seeking restoration.*

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Dlamini's own research centers on racism in Swaziland, and, as always, was a font of rich personal experience and historical qualification. His point was in some ways a counterbalance to the more critical one, in the case of Dolores, but it was also a move toward nuance and toward a kind of historical, if not political redemption of the ordinary. Others have pointed to the longer history of support by members of the royal house to the ANC, (Simpson 2009, 2012, Nyeko 2005), but narratives that imbricate ordinary people are important because they do not overtly privilege a particular political ideology, class position, or gendered perspective. Of course, this is not to denounce the near salvific work of those involved in the struggle in Swaziland, but we are only now uncovering or documenting how this happens in the everyday and for the ordinary. How were mundane practices of ordinary women, children and older adults shaped by these indirect lines of apartheid in Swaziland, or how did these people shape these lines for their own purposes? If majority Swazis were (or are) not overt political progressives, what sorts of concerns and aspirations otherwise guided their actions in the apartheid-era social field?

One could conceptualize the "ignorance" of apartheid—mentioned by Glenda and evident otherwise in the non-articulation of apartheid-era memories—as fearfulness, in that speaking out against racist or statist policies would lead to self-compromise. I am not denying that this is not a reality, as political opposition to the state is effectively banned in Swaziland and violently so. Ignorance of these forces could also be seen as mindless idiocy. This potential line of thought, however, problematically parallels existing arguments that construe majority Swazis' own acceptance of or non-revolution against the statist powers of absolute monarchy as blind faith, a drug-induced or trance-like state, or near-total hegemony.

I advocate for something beside this line of thought, somewhere between the dichotomy of sheepish passivity or complicity and protest or political action, a place within a horizon of possibilities that accounts for socio-historical situatedness and work that sustains everyday life. This is an inclusive approach, one that shores up forms of relatedness and their contingencies, one that gives an account to a-political and political inter-subjectivities, and one that rethinks "ignorance" not as disavowal of racial politics but one of self-recognition. In such border-situations, one experiences the limits of actionable possibility, namely a limit of agency, but also recognition that one's place and sense of self in the world is particular and born out amongst others who have their own subjective range and limits. This is an approach I take to try to gives ethical weight to those who did not or could not know about know or act directly against apartheid, but whose memories are nonetheless continually productive of sociality,

culture, and history. It is an approach that accounts for a persons with subjectivity who are "at once a product and agent of history," sites "of experience, memory, storytelling and aesthetic judgment," and agents "of knowing as much as of action; and the conflicted site for moral acts and gestures amid impossibly immoral societies and institutions" (Biehl, Good, and Kleinman 2007: 14).

We glimpse this recognition of situatedness, with its ambiguities and ambivalence in Dlamini and Ndwandwe's narratives (also B. Dlamini 2007). Life during this time was a "two-sided coin," that there were good people who "sold out," and that "contradiction" was suffuse. Fundamental processes of social reproduction—sex, marriage, and education—occur in an historical field that is mutually shaped by underdetermined, yet overly racialized forces. These forces are indeed felt, directly or not, and cascade with other life processes to condition who one sees oneself to be and how they might act. They are contradictions that people themselves dwell in and of which they are not unreflexive about. These are contradictions that they attempt to make sense of and articulate in a way that is also shaped by their conditions of possibility. Fewer engage in broader public attempts to articulate these conditions, as an ethnographer or journalist. This was evident in the projects of veteran journalist and final JWTC roundtable participant, Parks Mangena.

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*"I am a journalist. I am 83-years old. I'm happy that there are journalists, historians and artists in the audience today, and I'm happy that there are also RSP officers too" he began, "but I'll stick to my subject of journalism. I took up a journalism career in South Africa among international folks, especially Zimbabweans and Zambians. BOLESWA [Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland] were British colonies, and they started a printing press for these places. We didn't have access to printers at that time. But the British got an agreement with the South African Press Association and they recruited people to bring local newspapers to Swaziland. Right away there was Izwe lamaSwazi. My first jobs were for Bantu World, The Star and some African language newspapers in Johannesburg. I used to meet other journalists as Central Hotel. Even the Times of Swaziland used to be printed in Johannesburg. I used to get lots of the first interviews. After independence, I went around the world on a tour with the first Prime Minister Prince Makhosini [Dlamini]. Sobhuza used to say, "50-50 representation." He wanted equal representation of voices in the press and "that was radical at that time. Some African leaders wanted the whole cake at that point in time" around decolonization and independence. "We Swazis are peaceful, but some were opposed to Sobhuza's stance, and that's natural. I don't want to get too political and talk about things.*

*

Eventually, when prompted by an audience member about "freedom of the press" reporting on apartheid in Swaziland, Mangena's remarks did turn political.

*

*We could not report about apartheid in the South African newspapers, but we could do some reporting in the Swaziland newspapers. In Johannesburg we had Bantu World, but that kind of reporting was banned. I myself was detained once in South Africa for not having my pass book. Freedom of the press at the Rand Daily Mail was also compromised by the white conservative government. I also wrote for Drum and before that one called Afrika, but that one was also not liked by the whites. Hugh Masekela and Miriam Makeba were once banned for performing here in Swaziland because some were worried that they would upset people in South Africa. Swaziland often wanted to please South Africans. In the local press here, some writers like Makhubu were not allowed to express themselves. Swazis are peaceful and we respect our thoughts and others' and this is a principle of human rights, no? You believe what you believe and I should not hate you for that. I still think there should be more creative and poetic expression in Swaziland. What has this place [House on Fire] and its Bushfire Festival done for freedom? There is no freedom of expression here in Swaziland today.*

*

In presenting a few ordinary and extra-ordinary Swazis' narratives about apartheid-era Swaziland, I aimed to rethink what memories of racialized violence mean, how they are produced, and to put forward a mode that accounts for the diverse, mundane, contradictory, and "ignorant" livelihoods that predominate in this particular "peaceful" Southern African historical field. "Peacefulness," "culture," and muted, ordinary forms of recognition I contend, do not indicate superficiality, blindness, or total complicity with systems of racial or state domination. Rather, they point to a situatedness within a particular social world, a situatedness that imbricates subjective concerns and everyday

practices with the vagaries of power that co-constitute ones' sense of a limit or border.

The almost "rueful self-recognition" (Herzfeld 2005) or ambivalence for these narratives are likewise not something found only in absolute monarchies, and yet to invoke Jaspers' idea of the border-situation, however, would be impartial in this case given his later views on society and politics. Having tutored and then been inspired by Hannah Arendt, Jaspers noted that "social atomization," perhaps indicative in some ways of the Swazi state's self-perpetuating exceptionalism as exotic African kingdom, "creates cultures in which totalitarianism is likely to flourish, and that only unregulated debate in the public sphere can offset this latent pathology of mass society" (Thornhill 2011).

The progressive left in Swaziland traffics in and aims for such a debate, and the state reacts violently to stifle it, often under the rubric of "the Swazi way" (Nyeko 2005) with a caricature of culture as an unchanging or conservative set of values and practices. Jasper's notion of a singular culture is congruent with this and what the left seeks to eschew in order to engender alternative modes of recognition that acknowledge politics and racialization. However, culture in this respect cannot be totally conceptualized as a dynamic of political involution or mode of complicity, even if it is partially co-opted by the state. Indeed, Sihlongonyane (2003), while being indirectly critical of previous anthropological-functionalist projects documenting culture in Swaziland, recognizes the salience of culture in diverse sociopolitical projects in the kingdom. Culture is in fact a key domain untapped by those seeking to engender debate and sociopolitical revolution:

"Effectively, the opposition does not recognize that *Tinkhundla* is not only a political construction but a cultural construction, and as well, a survival strategy for people seeking to affirm their national identity. As such, practical issues of kinship..., cultural practices..., rituals..., hierarchy, superstition and mythology which are traditionally articulated by the incumbent [royalist state] are not soberly interrogated by the opposition to guide the democratic yearnings of ordinary people." (Sihlongonyane 2003: 178).

Sihlongonyane's remarks are highly suggestive. Indeed, why do the oppositionists not consider Swazi "culture" to be a potentially powerful political tool that they can also exercise on their own accord? Culture is not (yet) totally copyrighted, although there are dramatic movements in this direction in the neoliberal era (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009). In the critical historiography of Swaziland and related accounts of extraordinary apartheid-era activism in the kingdom, culture has been construed as a type of ideological and or hegemonic limit itself. However, in the narratives of peacefulness and other themes by panelists, and certainly for majority Swazi as I see it, a more nuanced, dynamic notion of culture is prevalent. It seems relevant for scholars and activists to engage in understanding how people come to what they perceive to be their practical and ideological border-situations facing them in everyday life. It also seems relevant for enabling them to engage new modes of self- (and political-) consciousness and action that account for the conditions of contradictory, racialized past and present and the possibilities for a collective, desirable future.

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