

**Time in the Shelter, Time on the Street:
Refused Asylum Seekers and the Tragedy of
the Border**

Mark Justin Rainey

Goldsmiths College – University of London

Thesis Submitted for a PhD in Cultural Studies

Declaration

I, Mark Justin Rainey, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and that it has been generated by me as the result of my own original research. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Mark Justin Rainey

29 September 2016

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Abstract

This research articulates a dialectical theory of the border. It argues that the border should be viewed as a 'concrete abstraction' that is at once reified as an ideal object, and extends both spatially and temporally to bear down on the concrete experience of day-to-day life in divisive and often malign ways. The research explores the tragedy of the border for those on whom it bears down and pushes in to destitution, and attempts to challenge this injustice.

This is an ethnographic study, and particular focus is given to the experiences of destitute asylum seekers making use of a network of night shelters provided by the Boaz Trust in Manchester, UK. The Boaz Trust is a faith-based organisation that provides accommodation, support, and advocacy to refused asylum seekers in the city and aims to 'end asylum destitution'. Based on participant observation working in the shelters as a volunteer, time spent living in the shelters, and time alongside destitute asylum seekers on the streets of Manchester, I explore the simultaneous experience of inclusion and exclusion that characterises 'spaces of asylum' in the city, and of a 'weaponised time' marked by a bifurcated 'waiting'; where individuals see out each day without the right to work, access public funds, or remain in the UK while also caught up in a longer term, antagonistic, and dysfunctional bureaucratic temporality. I also examine the attempts of volunteers working in the shelters to press against such injustices, exploring these attempts within an understanding of justice as coming in to being through repetitive, arduous and often banal practices of care, and as speculative, fragile and always incomplete.

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Introduction

On 23 June 2016 the United Kingdom voted via a national referendum to leave the European Union. The referendum result, and the passionate debate leading up to it, exposed deep fractures within the UK. It exposed deep divisions between wealth and poverty, metropolitan centres and peripheral towns and the countryside, and it exposed regional divides and deep-seated divisions over internal nationalisms within the UK as Scotland and Northern Ireland voted overwhelmingly to remain in the EU while England and Wales voted overwhelmingly to leave. These fractures often overlapped with each other and, although they existed before the referendum, they were also exacerbated by it. Another dominant issue informing the EU referendum debate was that of immigration. It often dominated discourse, in sometimes violent ways. On the same day that Nigel Farage, then leader of the anti-EU United Kingdom Independence Party, unveiled a campaign poster depicting a long queue of mainly Middle Eastern and North African refugees entering Europe under the slogan 'Breaking Point', a neo-Nazi assassinated the pro-immigration Labour Member of Parliament Jo Cox on a street in the Yorkshire town of Batley after reportedly shouting the fascist slogan, 'Britain First!'. On that same day, 16 June 2016, footage also emerged of England football supporters openly mocking refugee street children on the streets of Lille, France, during the 2016 European Football Championship.

These incidents were all separate, but at the same time they were also all connected. They were all, in part, the product of years of anti-migrant rhetoric circulating within the UK and years of anti-immigration policies taken up by successive UK governments, both Labour and Conservative. 'Vote Leave' was the official campaign behind the drive to leave the EU in the lead up to the referendum. Their official slogan was 'Take Control', which was then applied to a range of issues including the UK border, under the assumption that the UK had somehow 'lost control' of its borders.¹ Yet, taking back 'control' of the border had been a persistent theme in political discourse long before the Vote Leave campaign. During the 2010 UK national elections David Cameron announced his policy to 'control' the border by promising to reduce net migration to the UK to under 100,000, while in the 2015 general election campaign the Labour Party issued coffee mugs promising 'Controls on Immigration'.² Over the course of his six years serving as UK Prime Minister David Cameron, among other things, oversaw the deployment of government sponsored vans in high immigrant areas of London which warned 'Illegal' migrants to 'Go Home or Face Arrest' and referred to migrants attempting to enter the UK from Calais as a 'swarm' threatening the nation's border.³ Like Nigel Farage's campaign billboard, the vans and comments were regarded as bordering on overt racism. The rhetoric about taking 'control' of the border has continued on past the EU referendum with the new Prime Minister

¹ http://www.voteleavetakecontrol.org/briefing_immigration.html [accessed 27 September 2016].

² Andrew Grice, 'David Cameron Immigration Pledge "Failed Spectacularly" as Figures Show Net Migration Almost Three Times as High as Tories Promised', *Independent*, 26 February 2015; Frances Perraudin, 'Diane Abbot: Labour's "Controls on Immigration" Mugs are Shameful', *The Guardian*, 29 March 2015.

³ Alan Travis, "'Go Home' Vans Resulted in 11 People Leaving Britain Says Report', *The Guardian*, 31 October 2013; Jessica Elgot and Matthew Taylor, 'Calais Crisis: Cameron Condemned for "Dehumanising" Description of Migrants', *The Guardian*, 30 July 2015.

Theresa May stating that restricting immigration will be a 'red line' in any negotiations with the EU.⁴

At the time of writing this introduction it remains possible that the UK may not exist as a political entity too far into the future. Another Scottish independence referendum may well be on the horizon following the EU referendum result. Yet, despite such deep internal fractures within the UK the notion of a national border continues to assert itself both politically and rhetorically. A key argument of this thesis is that the border can be understood as a 'concrete abstraction'.⁵ The 'concrete abstraction', in its most basic form, describes the relationship between reified concepts and everyday social life. In the public and political imagination the border has become detached from its social and historical conditions and is instead fetishized as an ideal object that represents the steadfast boundary of a nation state, a sheer limit demarcating inclusion and exclusion. The border is taken as fixed and natural, and it is taken as an object that needs to be defended, protected, and controlled. What is crucial to the 'concrete abstraction' is that the abstract can easily bear down on the concrete. In other words, a fixed and fetishized view of the border can become a malign and vicious force acting on everyday life. Étienne Balibar writes that borders are not just fixed lines demarcating the formal boundary of the nation state, but that they also cut through the very 'heart of civic space' where,

⁴ Anushka Asthana, 'Restricting Immigration will be at the Heart of Brexit Deal, Theresa May Says', *The Guardian*, 31 August 2016.

⁵ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p.27, p.101, p.405

they generate conflicts, hopes, and frustrations for all sorts of people, as well as inextricable administrative difficulties for states [...] whence proceed contradictory political strategies whose results are totally unpredictable.⁶

In this respect, the border can be understood as a process that operates through a regime of practices, institutions, and discourses. It is not just a crossing point from one spatial territory to another, but is also a set of regulations and legal impositions that extend both temporally and spatially and diffuse into day-to-day lived experience. The border is at once abstract and diffuse, and to understand the border as a concrete abstraction holds these two positions in a tense dialectical relation with each other.

In this thesis, I also argue that the border is a productive space that creates uneven social and legal statuses among individuals – from the citizen to the asylum seeker. To view the border as a productive space is to move away from viewing the border as a simple line demarcating formal inclusion and formal exclusion. Instead, at the border, inclusion and exclusion collapse together to create new forms of differential inclusion that serve to stratify and separate people. Taking into account the colonial histories behind the institution of the border, which continue to be active, the social stratifications produced by the border are often shaped along the lines of race, class, and nationality. The purpose of this thesis is to take these considerations – the border as concrete abstraction and productive space of differential inclusion – and shed light on the malign ways the border becomes

⁶ Étienne Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?: Reflections on Transnational Citizenship*, trans. by James Swenson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp.109-110.

activated and diffused in the lives of refused asylum seekers in the UK and on efforts to challenge this inclusion/exclusion.

This is an ethnographic study and particular focus is given to a network of seven emergency night shelters for refused and destitute male asylum seekers in Manchester, UK. These shelters are organised by the Boaz Trust, a Christian faith-based organisation [FBO] which provides accommodation, support, and advocacy to both female and male refused asylum seekers in the city. Although the Boaz Trust plays a co-ordinating role in the organisation of the night shelters, each particular venue is run by an individual church in Manchester who open their building one night a week and provide their own set of volunteers, food provision, transport, bedding, and supplies. Alongside the shelters are two drop-in centres which are also run by local churches, one of which opens every Saturday while the other opens every evening in the city centre between 6.00 pm and 9.00 pm as men wait for transportation to the next shelter for the night. Located throughout the city, from post-industrial working class areas to leafy, middle class suburbs, these shelters and drop-in centres are at once sites of displacement, on the fringes of public life and society, while also being focused points of community activity.

Greater Manchester is a dispersal area. Under the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, asylum seekers are dispersed across the UK on a no-choice basis to live in state-backed but privately operated National Asylum Support Service [NASS] accommodation while their claims for refugee status are processed. The supposed rationale behind dispersal is to ease service strain on London and the south east of England, however it is also linked to the availability of cheap housing and typically involves re-locating vulnerable populations to areas of the country high on the Local

Deprivation Index. The majority of asylum claims are refused in the first instance and, following their refusal, claimants must vacate their NASS accommodation within twenty-one days and are then expected to leave the country. Many are unwilling or unable to do so and end up destitute and homeless on the streets of cities such as Manchester. Those using the Boaz Trust night shelters are men who, following the refusal of their asylum claim, are simultaneously abandoned by the immigration system and trapped within it. Abandonment occurs through the stripping away of legal rights including the right to work, the right to remain in the UK, and the right to access public funds and support. Being trapped in the system means being caught up in a series of bureaucratic processes such as lodging an appeal, waiting for an appeal decision, waiting for refugee status to be granted (however temporary) or waiting for possible detention or deportation. These processes are often played out from a position of destitution, with the refused asylum seeker unable to meet basic needs such as food, water, shelter, warmth, and health, pushing them into dependency on charities like the Boaz Trust. The Boaz Trust serves as an important and localised point of support for people pushed into destitution by the UK asylum claims process. In this research the night shelters become a valuable arena to explore how the social-legal status of 'refused asylum seeker' creates a condition of destitution and uncertainty for individuals and how local volunteers, Boaz Trust employees, and communities can come together to form a response to the situation.

This ethnographic research took place over the course of two winter seasons between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 and involved participant observation as both a night shelter volunteer and a night shelter user. I primarily worked in the

Friday night shelter which was operated by the Longsight Community Church of the Nazarene [LCC] in Longsight, Manchester. Here I regularly served as a night shelter manager. I also spent a total of three weeks living in the night shelter network, moving between venues alongside the other men who were also staying in the shelters. The time spent living in the night shelters also extended out to days spent on the Manchester street. Both the night shelters and the street became crucial areas to build up an account of the conditions faced by men living on the edge of destitution and the volunteers and employees who worked to support them.

This is also an interdisciplinary study and the research draws on a diverse range of fields and sources including philosophy, sociology, literature, human geography, politics, film, and Greek tragedy and brings these different sources in contact with the wider issues of migration and borders as well as the more concrete situations experienced by those facing destitution on the streets of Manchester because of their social-legal status. There are seven chapters to this thesis that cover both theoretical and ethnographic approaches to the topic.

Chapter 1 brings together Sophocles' tragedy *Oedipus at Colonus* and an account of the 2013 Lampedusa disaster in which over 300 migrants perished off the coast of Italy.⁷ This juxtaposition of Greek tragedy and the events of in 2013 cross the ancient and the contemporary in order to draw out the decisive issues that will inform this research: the notion of the border as a productive space of protean legal statuses that lock the migrant in an uneven relation with the state, and the spatial and temporal power of borders to create new forms of social

⁷ Sophocles, 'Oedipus at Colonus', in *The Theban Plays*, trans. by E.F. Watling (London: Penguin, 1988), pp.71-124.

stratification and separation. The juxtaposition of Colonus and Lampedusa also connects 'tragedy' in its technical sense – as a dramatic form that portrays fundamental conflicts within the social life of a society – with tragedy in its everyday sense, as a dreadful situation or disaster. This recognition of the tragic, I will argue, has the capacity to disrupt our often taken-for-granted understanding of the world and demand deep decision and political action.

The remaining sections of this chapter turn to the British philosopher Gillian Rose as a means of navigating the questions of the border and the tragic questions of political action and justice. While Rose does not directly address the border or migration in her work, her understanding of 'ethical life' and 'justice', as well as her use of 'speculative dialectics' as a methodological tool, offer crucial theoretical and practical underpinnings to my account of the border and later ethnographic chapters which focus on the Boaz Trust's organisational and political aims, the ethical practices of the volunteers working in its night shelters, and the experiences of the men living in these shelters. Rose draws on the work of G.W.F. Hegel in order to provide an understanding of society, or what she terms 'ethical life', that recognises the fundamental social fractures and unevenness that we are situated in both institutionally and relationally.⁸ Crucially, Rose argues that 'law' and 'justice' cannot be regarded as fixed or static concepts, but rather fold together in 'ethical life' where they are continually shaped and reshaped by social relations. This account of 'law' and 'justice' is based on a critique of Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida and their respective uses of the transcendent 'Other' and

⁸ Gillian Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology* (London: Verso, 2009), p.74; G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A.V. Miller (OUP, 1977), §446-476.

transcendent ‘justice’ and ‘hospitality’. Instead of a transcendent justice, Rose argues for a situated justice that takes on political risk and is constantly revised, redefined, and concretised in practice. This notion of justice, and the dialectical method Rose articulates, is carried forward to my dialectical account of the border in chapter 2 and my more ethnographic account of the work of the Boaz Trust in Manchester in chapters 5 and 6.

In chapter 2 I develop a dialectical theory of bordering and argue that the notion of the border can best be understood as a process of bordering. In the opening sections of this chapter I lay out this view of the ‘border as process’. Drawing on the work of Étienne Balibar and Sandro Mezzadra and Mike Neilson, I argue that the border is not reducible to a static line that designates the boundary of a nation-state, but rather has a productive capacity as it actively creates different social and legal statuses among those who encounter it.⁹ The border is therefore not simply tied to specific sites, such as an airport passport control or boundary wall or fence, but is an ongoing process that extends both spatially and temporally into day-to-day life. The border is also a historical institution and a product of the legacies of colonialism and imperialism which continue to shape the productive capacity of the border and inform the differing social and legal statuses that it creates.

I also argue that the border operates through the collapse of the distinction between inclusion and exclusion and inside and outside. In approaching the border in this way, I bring together two rather different conceptual blocks – the border as a

⁹Étienne Balibar, ‘What is a Border?’, in *Politics and the Other Scene*, trans. by Christine Jones, James Swenson, and Chris Turner (London: Verso, 2002), 75-86; Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013).

‘concrete abstraction’ and the border as instituting a politics of abandonment. The term ‘concrete abstraction’ is drawn from the work of Henri Lefebvre and indicates the relation between a reified concept and everyday social practice. The abstract is taken to be ahistorical, fixed, and natural while the concrete is embedded in the contingencies of social practice, history, and time. While recognising that the border is historical and constantly being configured and reconfigured, as a ‘concrete abstraction’ the border also becomes fetishized as an ideal object. As a ‘concrete abstraction’ the abstract often bears down on the concrete and the vicious histories and contingencies of the border become concealed by the powerful and idealised fiction of ‘state thought’ where the border is reduced to a fixed line demarcating formal inclusion and exclusion from the nation state.

Following this, I draw on the work of Giorgio Agamben and argue that the border produces a form of ‘inclusive exclusion’, understood through Agamben’s notion of ‘bare life’.¹⁰ While Agamben’s account of ‘bare life’ is a useful explanatory tool for understanding processes of bordering that produce legal-social statuses such as the ‘refused asylum seeker’, I also link Agamben’s thought to a more concrete temporality, introducing the notion of the ‘weaponisation of time’ drawn from the writings of Nina Power.¹¹ The weaponisation of time denotes an antagonistic and uneven relationship between the individual and the state, where the state uses ‘time’ as a method of punishment. I refer this directly to the situation of refused and destitute asylum seekers as the ‘weaponisation of time’

¹⁰ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press).

¹¹ Nina Power, ‘Time Does not Always Heal: State Violence and Psychic Damage’, *Open Democracy*, 28 April 2014.

can take the form of prolonged periods of waiting, feelings of directionless stasis, and sudden, forced changes in circumstances. The 'weaponisation of time' underpins my discussions on waiting and temporal uncertainty that informs the later ethnographic chapters, and in particular the chapters 'Time on the Street' and 'Time in the Shelters' which give particular focus to the day-to-day experience of those living in the Boaz Trust night shelters.

Mustafa Dikeç draws together Agamben's political theory and critical legal geography to pose the question of the 'where' of asylum.¹² Following Dikeç's question I develop a notion of 'spaces of asylum'. This term marks out the tensions within processes of bordering that relate particularly to the concept of 'asylum' – tensions between control and care, abandonment and refuge, dignity and indignity, and movement and fixity. This notion of 'spaces of asylum' is carried through to my account of the Boaz Trust night shelters in chapters 5, 6 and 7 where I conceptualise the shelters as spaces that at once press against the perceived injustice of the border, and function as spaces of care and refuge, while at the same time being unable to escape the full force of bordering processes - as differences between host and guest, and forms of restriction and indignity, continue to emerge in day-to-day shelter life.

In the final sections of this chapter I turn these more theoretical notions of the 'border as process' and 'concrete abstraction' towards the categories of 'refugee', 'asylum seeker', and 'refused asylum seeker' as they are developed in UK asylum policy. I argue that the term 'asylum seeker' has become a pejorative

¹² Mustafa Dikeç, 'The "Where" of Asylum', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 27 (2009), 183-189.

political and rhetorical category that is tied in with an increasingly restrictive policy environment that actively pushes asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers into destitution in the UK. Like the more conceptual discussions of the border, these analyses of policy lay the ground work for the ethnographic chapters that follow.

Chapter 3 introduces my research practice and methodology and acts as a bridge between the two previous theoretical chapters and the four ethnographic chapters that follow. In this chapter I present an overview of my participant observation in the Boaz Trust night shelters over the course of two winter seasons, which included conducting semi-structured interviews with Boaz Trust employees, and night shelter volunteers, and extended periods of managing the Friday night shelter as well as living in the shelter network alongside other men who were accessing the emergency shelters. Although the Boaz Trust night shelters were the primary focus of this research, as the research progressed my ethnographic work also began to extend beyond the night shelters themselves and involved spending time on the Manchester streets with some of the men using the shelters, as well as time in public and private spaces around the city including Manchester Central Library, Chorlton Street Coach Station, and the Manchester Aquatics Centre. Expanding the research beyond the night shelters was crucial to my research. As I developed what Mitchell Duneier has termed an 'extended place method' and George E. Marcus a 'multi-sited ethnography', this allowed me to understand how the experience of shelter life connected to the broader day-to-day experiences of refused asylum seekers in Manchester.¹³

¹³ Mitchell Duneier, *Sidewalk* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1999), p.344; George E. Marcus, 'Ethnography In/Of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24 (1995) 95-117.

In this chapter I also critically reflect on the role that processes of bordering have had on the construction of my research. While drawing on my own experience as a migrant to the UK, I recognise that the border can produce stratified social and legal positions between migrants and that while my experiences as a migrant-become-citizen have afforded me the opportunity to conduct research in British universities, those living in the night shelters have had fundamentally different experiences of the same border which has stalled, delayed, or foreclosed future opportunities as well as pushed individuals into destitution. In view of this, I conclude the chapter by drawing on two particular moments that occurred during my fieldwork. The first involves the issue of conducting research in one's 'own' city where the boundaries between social life and fieldwork are fluid and rarely distinct. I discuss the moment I was invited to a friend and former colleague's company Christmas party before making my way to the night shelter for the evening. My passage between the two spaces was not only a reminder that my own position allowed me to pass between two social extremes in the name of research, but also that borders can become visible or invisible, malign or benign, depending on who you are and your particular social-legal status. The second moment occurred during my time living in the Boaz Trust night shelters and a pointed comment that was directed towards me by one of the other men staying in the shelter that briefly called into question my presence as a researcher in the shelters. I use this moment to critically reflect on the notions of 'respect' and 'uncertainty' within this research. I argue that while the topic of respect can be an important object of ethnographic study, it is rarely recognised that researchers have their own desire for 'respect' and the assurances of others as to the value and

integrity of their research. The ethnographer's desire to be respected and assured is also a desire to feel at ease while conducting fieldwork. However, I argue that moments of unease and uncertainty have a valuable role to play in research as they cause us to re-assess and continually re-work our own practices in the ongoing and changing contexts of fieldwork.

Chapter 4 is the first ethnographic chapter in this study. Based on participant-observation while living in the night shelters, and drawing on time spent on Manchester's streets with some of the men who were accessing the shelters, I return to the notion of 'weaponised time' and cast it as a form of bifurcated waiting. Offering an account of 'time on the street' that focuses in particular on walking the streets - to keep warm, keep busy, and to keep active, whilst waiting for the shelters to open - I construct an analysis of waiting as both the mundane and repetitive experience of seeing out each day from a position of destitution, while simultaneously being caught up in the vicious, antagonistic, and often dysfunctional bureaucratic processes of the border. This chapter also returns to the notion of 'spaces of asylum' developed in chapter 2. Examining the men's use of Manchester Central Library, Chorlton Street Coach Station, and Manchester Aquatics Centre, I examine these spaces as inscribed with a number of tensions - between abandonment and refuge, dignity and indignity - that characterise life on the streets for destitute refused asylum seekers. The chapter concludes with an extended discussion of 'shame', 'dignity', and 'indignity' in relation to destitution and time on the street, and argues that divisions between the 'deserving' and 'underserving' migrant that are often produced by processes of bordering, can also

be reproduced and re-activated in new ways by those living on the margins of society.

Chapters 5 and 6 shift away from the experiences of the men living in the Boaz Trust night shelters in order to examine the organisational aims and politics of the Boaz Trust itself, and the ethics and practices of the volunteers working in its night shelters. In the opening part of chapter 5 I place the Boaz Trust's emergence in historic, and ongoing, debates within Evangelical Christianity between the desire to 'evangelise', and the need for churches to become active in the social transformation of communities, and long-standing concerns – recently revisited in debates around the role of faith based organisations in neoliberal welfare restructuring - regarding the tendency of faith-based organisations to misrecognise the causes of poverty by focusing on individual morality rather than structural inequalities. I argue that the Boaz Trust constitutes an 'outsider' organisation that emerged in direct response to unjust government policies and aims not only to provide material support to destitute asylum seekers but to 'end asylum destitution'. I take this goal to end asylum destitution as an example of a 'utopian' political aim that carries a faith-based eschatological weight. This discussion connects the sacred and the secular to constitute an organisational faith-based motivation that is non-conciliatory, but not disengaged with present conditions. The chapter then moves on to a discussion of *agape* – a concept of love that has Christian, secular, and potentially politicised connotations. Beginning with Kierkegaard's account of *agape* as 'becoming neighbour', I present an overview of the concept resting on Žižek's view of *agape* as an arduous work of explicit

uncoupling from social stratifications.¹⁴ Alongside my account of ‘utopia’ and ‘eschatology’, this discussion of *agape* connects with Gillian Rose’s understanding of ‘ethical life’ and, in particular, her view of justice as an ongoing and continually revised work within the fragmented present. This discussion of the continual revision, messy and ambiguous practices of *agape* and justice prepares the ground for Chapter 6, where I explore the practices of Boaz Trust volunteers, and chapter 7 where I examine the experiences of those staying in the Boaz Trust shelters.

While I argue that the language of revolutionary Christian hope and utopia are exciting, in practice they are often underscored by the mundane day-to-day work necessary for operating spaces like the Boaz Trust night shelters. In chapter 6 I argue that the night shelters are spaces of constant adaptation and changing routines, as volunteers and churches work to meet the continuing needs of those they are serving. Particular focus is given to the Longsight Community Church shelter where I served as a manager on Friday nights throughout the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 winter seasons. I present an overview of the weekly practices within that shelter as a form of ‘doing justice’, and examine the motivation of the shelter volunteers for engaging in this work – returning to discussions in chapter 5 regarding the extent to which Evangelical churches in particular should focus on ‘witnessing’ or the ‘social gospel’. The concluding section of chapter 6 focuses directly on volunteer’s own understandings of justice and injustice, the relationship between these concepts and other terms such as ‘dignity’ and ‘respect’, and the extent to which volunteers felt their work in the shelters could challenge broader

¹⁴ Søren Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, trans. by Howard Hong and Edna Hong (New York: HarperCollins, 2009); Slavoj Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute: Or Why is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?* (London: Verso, 2000).

injustices in the UK asylum system. Whilst some volunteers understood their work as attempting to offer a form of justice within the space of the shelters themselves – articulated through the notion not of justice, but dignity – or recounted how their work in the shelters had provided them with the resources to challenge unjust and derogatory constructions of asylum seekers amongst a broader public, others rejected the possibility of justice within the shelter system; arguing instead the shelters offer only the ‘bare minimum’ and do little to challenge wider injustices. In line with my discussions in chapters 1 and 5, justice thus emerges as a speculative, fragile and always incomplete action, requiring constant, continued, and arduous work.

Chapter 7 is the final ethnographic chapter and returns to the experiences of refused asylum seekers. It relocates the issues of weaponised time, waiting, and dignity and indignity from the streets to the shelters. In doing so, it figures these accounts through three separate descriptions of shelter life: the shelter as ‘waiting room’, the shelter as a point of ‘arrival and departure’, and the shelter as a ‘locked room’. Importantly, these descriptions are as much bound up with the ‘social-legal’ status of the ‘refused asylum seeker’ as they are to the shelters as specific sites in themselves. The first section returns to the themes of ‘bifurcated waiting’ that was encountered in chapter 4 during my description of days spent on the Manchester streets. The shelters are spaces where men see out each night, over the course of days, weeks, or months, waiting for a change of circumstance or status. This first section leads in to the second as the shelters are seen as spaces of constant ‘arrival and departure’. They are points of transition from the street to the more stable, but still unsettled, experience of living in the night shelters. I argue that while

people may leave the night shelters for a variety of reasons, which include being offered Boaz Trust housing or accommodation and support through the state, these transitions do not necessarily mean a change in status and both arrival and departure are clouded in legal uncertainty. The final section, 'The Locked Room', is not a reference to the shelters in particular, but rather a description of the limited rights and possibilities available to the refused asylum seeker. 'The locked room' describes the meshing together of legal-social status and daily shelter life. This concluding chapter acts as a sobering compliment to the two previous chapters which focused on the politics and practice of the Boaz Trust and the motivations and work of the volunteers in the night shelters. Read together, these chapters reiterate that the Boaz Trust night shelters are fundamentally 'spaces of asylum' with all the tensions that this term entails. They are spaces of care and restriction, movement and fixity, dignity and indignity. Ultimately, even whilst they press against the vicious work of bordering processes, the shelters cannot escape these same processes.

1. The Tragedy of the Border: Towards a 'Good Enough Justice'

1. Introduction

This chapter begins by bringing together the Greek tragedy *Oedipus at Colonus* and an account of the 2013 Lampedusa disaster in which over 300 migrants perished off the coast of Italy. The juxtaposition of Sophocles' text and the events in 2013 cross the ancient and the contemporary in order to draw out the decisive issues that will inform this research: a notion of the border as a productive space of protean legal statuses that place the migrant in an uneven relation with the state, often with tragic and vicious consequences, the spatial and temporal power of borders, and the uncertainties over legal and social status they can create. The juxtaposition of *Colonus* and Lampedusa also connects 'tragedy' in its technical sense – as a dramatic form that portrays fundamental collisions within the social life of a community – with tragedy in its colloquial sense, as a dreadful situation or disaster. This recognition of the tragic, in both senses, has the capacity to disturb our often taken-for-granted understanding of the world, and demand deep decision and political action.

The remaining sections of this chapter turn to the British philosopher Gillian Rose as a means of navigating questions of the border, the tragic, and of ethics and justice. While Rose does not directly address the border and migration in her work, her understanding of 'ethical life', 'justice', and 'speculative dialectics' will offer crucial theoretical and practical underpinnings to my account of the border and

later ethnographic chapters which focus on the work of the Boaz Trust night shelters for refused and destitute, male asylum seekers in Manchester. Rose draws on the work of G.W.F. Hegel in order to provide an understanding of society, or what she terms 'ethical life', that recognises the fundamental social fractures and unevenness we are situated in both institutionally and relationally. Crucially, Rose argues that 'law' and 'justice' cannot be regarded as fixed or static concepts, but rather fold together in 'ethical life' where they are shaped and reshaped by social relations. This account is based on a fundamental critique of Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida, and of their respective notions of a transcendent 'Other' and transcendent 'justice' and 'hospitality'. Instead Rose argues for a situated justice that takes on political risk and is constantly revised and worked out in practice. This notion of justice, and the dialectical method Rose articulates, will be carried forward in my discussions of the border in chapter 2 and in my ethnographic account of the work of the Boaz Trust in Manchester in chapters 5 and 6.

2. Colonus and Lampedusa

'What is this place?', the dying Oedipus asks as he arrives in Colonus, on the outskirts of Athens.¹ Oedipus is the former king turned exile and wanderer. He had unwittingly fulfilled the prophecy of the Delphic Oracle by killing his own father and marrying his own mother, Queen Jocasta, as he took the throne at Thebes.

¹ Sophocles, 'Oedipus at Colonus', p.71.

Horrified at his own actions and the ill-fortune he now carried with him, Oedipus gouged out his own eyes. He was later banished from the city.² At Colonus, accompanied by his sister-daughter Antigone, Oedipus learns that according to a new prophecy he will be granted divine favour and his tomb will provide protection over the city that offers him a place of burial. The dying Oedipus also learns that Creon, King of Thebes, who is also aware of this new prophecy, wants Oedipus to return to Thebes, but is unwilling to allow Oedipus to be buried within the city and intends to leave his body exposed outside the city walls.³ Creon's plan is to maintain Oedipus' status as an exile from Thebes, even in death, while also keeping watch over his unburied corpse so that it cannot be entombed by a foreign power and used against the city. In death, Oedipus would remain a citizen in exile, suspended between inclusion and exclusion, as his body becomes a tool for Thebes. In response, Oedipus re-affirms his offer of blessings and divine protection to whoever provides him with a place of burial.⁴ Arriving at Colonus, on the frontier of Athens, Oedipus holds an ambiguous position. Living, he is still cursed by the gods, but in death he will be granted their favour. He is simultaneously cursed and consecrated, defiled and holy. He is both a potential threat and a potential gift. He is *apolis* – without a city – but to the city that receives him he guarantees the greatest blessings.⁵

² Sophocles, 'King Oedipus', in *The Theban Plays*, pp.25-68.

³ Sophocles, 'Oedipus at Colonus', pp.82-3.

⁴ *ibid*, p.85.

⁵ Jean-Pierre Vernant and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, trans. by Janet Lloyd (New York: Zone Books, 1990), pp.121-2.

Oedipus, a 'stranger on foreign soil', is offered sanctuary by Theseus, King of Athens, who holds authority over Colonus.⁶ Theseus then sees off Creon and his attempts to coerce Oedipus back to Thebes.⁷ In gratitude, Oedipus motions to kiss Theseus, but then hesitates. He is still tainted by his past transgressions of incest and murder and risks defiling those around him.⁸ In life Oedipus remains a threat. It is only in death that he will be realised as a gift for Athens.

On 3 October 2013, a boat carrying over 500 migrants sank off the coast of the Italian island of Lampedusa in the southern Mediterranean. Holiday makers and local fishermen were the first to arrive at the disaster, followed by the Italian coastguard. 366 people, mainly from Somalia and Eritrea, would perish less than half a kilometre from the shore. It was the worst maritime disaster in the Mediterranean Sea since the Second World War.⁹ The following day, Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta announced that 'the hundreds who lost their lives off Lampedusa yesterday are Italian citizens as of today'.¹⁰ However, 'while the dead were given honorary Italian citizenship, the survivors were automatically charged with the criminal offence of illegal entry, despite their eligibility to apply for asylum, and were detained in the island's holding centre'.¹¹ Both the living and the dead were caught up in the politics of border control and its competing, yet

⁶ Sophocles, 'Oedipus at Colonus', pp.77, 88-92.

⁷ *ibid*, pp.99-103.

⁸ *ibid*, p.106

⁹ Zed Nelson, 'Lampedusa Boat Tragedy: A Survivor's Story', *The Guardian*, 22 March 2014; Nick Dines, Nicola Montagna and Vincenzo Ruggerio, 'Thinking Lampedusa: Border Construction, the Spectacle of Bare Life and the Productivity of Migrants', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 38:3, 430-445 (p.430).

¹⁰ 'Letta Declares Lampedusa Shipwreck Victims Italian Citizens', *Ansa.it*, 4 October, 2013 http://www.ansa.it/web/notizie/rubriche/english/2013/10/04/Letta-declares-Lampedusa-shipwreck-victims-Italian-citizens_9410976.html [accessed 15 July 2016]

¹¹ Dines, Montagna and Ruggerio, 'Thinking Lampedusa: Border Construction, the Spectacle of Bare Life and the Productivity of Migrants', p.430.

complimentary discourses of humanitarianism and securitisation.¹² Here, any simple binary between inclusion and exclusion begins to break down in the face of far more complex forms of ‘differential inclusion’.¹³ The dead were declared to be citizens, serving to project an image of the welcoming and mourning nation-state, while the living were temporarily captured as bare life – foreign bodies to be detained, scrutinised, and criminalised – in order to project the image of a secure border. Like Creon’s plan for Oedipus’ body, the survivors of the 2013 Lampedusa disaster were suspended between inclusion and exclusion, prevented from gaining entry into Italy while also being held and maintained by the Italian state.

In Sophoclean tragedy, the city of Thebes served as a negative reflection of Athens.¹⁴ Thebes was the ‘anti-city’ and the ‘anti-Athens’.¹⁵ It was a locus for intra-family strife, poor governance, religious transgression, and violently competing notions of law and justice. On the tragic stage, Thebes functioned ‘as the paradigm of a divided city’ and offered a means for Athenians to act out questions crucial to the *polis* and society, through a city imagined to be the mirror opposite of Athens.¹⁶ Yet, in *Oedipus at Colonus* – Sophocles’ final work – Athens becomes directly

¹² Ibid, p.431.

¹³ I have taken this term directly from the writings of Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson. In their work *Border as Method*, Mezzadra and Nielson argue that, in the context of contemporary migration, the borders between inclusion and exclusion have become pressed and confused. The term ‘differential inclusion’ questions the widespread notion that ‘inclusion’ is always an unambiguous good as ‘inclusion in a sphere, society, or realm can be subject to varying degrees of subordination, rule, discrimination, and segmentation’. [Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, *Border as Method, or, The Multiplication of Labor* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), p.159]. I will build on this concept more directly in chapter 2.

¹⁴ Froma Zeitlin, ‘Thebes: Theater of Self and Society in Athenian Drama’, in *Greek Tragedy and Political Theory*, ed. by J. Peter Euben (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), pp.101-141 (pp.102, 117).

¹⁵ Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, p.334; Zeitlin, ‘Thebes: Theater of the Self and Society in Athenian Drama’, p.102.

¹⁶ Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, p.335; Zeitlin, ‘Thebes: Theater of the Self and Society in Athenian Drama’, pp.116-117.

involved in the narrative. Recognising that Oedipus is at the outskirts of the city, the Chorus initially pleads for him to leave as he is tainted by sin and may pollute the city with his presence.¹⁷ In response, Oedipus appeals to Athens as the 'City of Justice' where a suffering stranger can seek refuge and acceptance.¹⁸ Through his ambiguous state as a 'wandering foreigner', Oedipus presents an opportunity for the Athenians to make real their values of being an open, inclusive, and compassionate society.¹⁹ The city's political integrity, outward image, and self-definition are all at stake in how it responds to the arrival of Oedipus outside its walls.²⁰ It is King Theseus who appears to resolve the situation and, following his offer to protect Oedipus and 'house him within our city', he describes Athens, in distinction to Thebes, as 'a land that lives by justice and knows no rule but law'.²¹ Under the watch of King Theseus, Oedipus is then buried in a sacred grove at Colonus, just outside Athens, with his tomb providing divine protection over the city.

In Sophocles' text, the transformation of Oedipus from a wandering stranger into an Athenian hero serves to construct and consolidate the image of Athens as a just and hospitable city. Through this transition, Oedipus becomes what Bonnie Honig would critically term a 'model immigrant' as he refurbishes and solidifies the Athenian order by being incorporated into it.²² Such a transition also takes place

¹⁷ Sophocles, 'Oedipus at Colonus', p.78.

¹⁸ Ibid, p.79.

¹⁹ Sophocles, 'Oedipus at Colonus', p.75; Laura Slatkin, 'Oedipus at Colonus: Exile and Integration', in *Greek Tragedy and Political Theory*, pp.210-221 (p.217).

²⁰ Slatkin, 'Oedipus at Colonus: Exile and Integration', pp.216-217.

²¹ Sophocles, 'Oedipus at Colonus', p.91, p.99.

²² Bonnie Honig, 'Ruth, the Model Emigrée: Mourning and the Symbolic Politics of Immigration', *Political Theory*, 25:1 (1997), 112-136, (p.116). Honig introduces this term in relation to the Old Testament figure of Ruth who, according to the Book of Ruth, emigrates from Moab to Israel. Honig argues that certain interpretations of this story by Cynthia Ozick and Julia Kristeva portray Ruth as

under what Abdelmalek Sayad has called ‘state thought’.²³ Under state thought ‘migration is always discussed within the framework of the local unit’.²⁴ The categories through which we think about immigration, whether political, ethical, cultural, economic, or social, are objectively national. For Sayad they are framed nationally without our being aware of it, as the institution of the nation-state predetermines and organises our whole representation of the world. It sets limits on inclusion and demarcates between the ‘nationals’ through which it recognises itself and the ‘others’ with whom it deals only in instrumental terms.²⁵ Even the ‘model immigrant’ is locked into an uneven relationship with the state – whether the Athenian *polis*, where Oedipus only becomes a hero upon his death, or in the Lampedusa disaster where only the dead were viewed worthy of recognition – as citizens, as model immigrants – while the living were criminalised.

Yet, ‘state thought’ does not resolve underlying tragic ambiguities or difficult actualities. The stage-image of an ideal, just, and secure Athens, with its attendant ‘model immigrant’ in the figure of Oedipus, was being offered up at the very moment the actual city was in crisis. Sophocles likely composed the work shortly before his death in 406 BC, at a time when internal conflicts resulting from the Peloponnesian War engulfed the state. The tragedy was first performed in 401 BC, following Athens’ catastrophic defeat to the Spartan Empire. Athens, as the ‘Just City’, was a fantasy image floating above the fray of Athens, the actual city. An

the ‘model immigrant’ who refurbishes the Israelite order by converting to its monotheism and assimilating into its society. Honig argues that these celebrations of Ruth as the ‘model immigrant’ come at the expense of Ruth’s own voice, which is silenced in the ancient text.

²³ Abdelmalek Sayad, *The Suffering of the Immigrant*, trans. by David Macey (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004) p.278.

²⁴ *ibid.*

²⁵ *ibid.*, pp.278-9.

ambiguity also persists in the text with regards to the relationship between Oedipus and Athens. This uncertainty hinges on the term, '*empolin*' which means 'belongs to the city'. Theseus uses the term when he offers Oedipus protection. E.F. Watling translates this to mean, 'house him [Oedipus] within our city', while others directly translate it as 'citizen'.²⁶ The classicist Bernard Knox argues that the term refers to 'citizenship', but as Oedipus was dying, King Theseus was effectively offering citizenship to a corpse.²⁷ The parallels with Enrico Letta offering citizenship to those who died in the Lampedusa disaster are striking and emphasise the always uneven relationship between state and migrant as those that perished off the coast of Lampedusa were only offered citizenship at the very moment they could no longer act on the status.

Jean-Pierre Vernant and Pierre Vidal-Naquet push this uneven relationship between Oedipus and Athens even further, arguing that the term *empolin* takes on an ambiguous meaning in the text as Oedipus does not become a formal citizen and remains a marginal figure.²⁸ Oedipus becomes a benefactor to the city, a 'metic-hero' or privileged resident, but also remains an outsider.²⁹ There is an underlying ambiguity to Oedipus' precise status – he is neither fully included nor completely excluded – and his final resting place outside the city walls is testament to this. In answer to Oedipus' own question upon arrival – 'what is this place?' – Colonus is a frontier, a borderzone. It is a space of uncertainty and ambiguity. Oedipus is never completely inside nor outside the city. He is suspended in another form of

²⁶ Sophocles, 'Oedipus at Colonus', p.91; Slatkin, 'Oedipus at Colonus: Exile and Integration', p.219

²⁷ Bernard Knox, 'Sophocles and the *Polis*', in *Sophocle*, ed. by J. de Romilly, (Geneva: Foundation Hardt, 1983), pp. 1-37 (p.21).

²⁸ Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, 'Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece', p.354.

²⁹ *Ibid*, p.355.

differential inclusion - not as the exposed corpse under guard outside the gates of Thebes, but as the entombed figure outside the gates of Athens where he provides security and protection over the city. The borderzone is uncertain, ambiguous, and tragic and this ambiguity is often weighted against the migrant.

In the week following the Lampedusa disaster, Enrico Letta and the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, arrived on the island to pay their respects to those who had died while also announcing new funds to support Italy as it faced an unfolding migrant crisis. The visiting politicians were greeted with shouts of 'shame!' and 'assassins!' by locals. Banners were raised and fishing boats sounded their sirens in protest at the perceived lack of support from Rome and Brussels for arriving migrants.³⁰ In the days following the disaster the offer of posthumous citizenship to the victims was quietly dropped. Instead, Letta announced that a state funeral would be held.³¹ This was later modified to a 'memorial ceremony', with the Mayor of Lampedusa, Giusi Nicolini, refusing to attend in protest against the national government's failure to keep its initial promise of a state funeral.³² The posthumous status of those who had died in the disaster eroded over time, with the declaration of citizenship rescinded once the initial shock of the disaster had faded. The status of the survivors was also uncertain. Among the delegation who visited the island in the week following the disaster was Angelino Alfano. Alfano had served as Justice Minister in the previous

³⁰ Michael Day, 'Lampedusa Disaster: EC President Jose Manuel Barroso and Italian PM Enrico Letta Jeered During Visit to Boat Disaster Mortuary', *The Independent*, 9 October 2013; Tom Kington, 'Lampedusa Shipwreck: Italy to Hold State Funeral for Drowned Migrants', *The Guardian*, 9 October 2013.

³¹ Tom Kington, 'Lampedusa Shipwreck: Italy to Hold State Funeral for Drowned Migrants'.

³² Lizzie Davis, 'Lampedusa Mayor Angered by failure to Give Boat Disaster Victims State Funeral', *The Guardian*, 18 October 2013.

administration that had introduced the controversial 'Bossi-Fini Law' which made 'illegal' migration and aiding 'illegal' migrants a criminal offense. The law had been blamed for deterring rescue efforts as the disaster unfolded and had directly led to survivors being automatically detained.³³ The survivors had no clear status as 'they were not immediately recognizable as either economic migrants or asylum seekers'.³⁴ Instead, they found themselves suspended in limbo on a small island with criminalisation and detention as the most immediate paths available.³⁵ Like the production of the image of Athens as a 'Just City' through the migrant figure of Oedipus, the separate treatment of both the living and the dead following the Lampedusa disaster became a form of 'public spectacle', organised along the lines of 'state thought', where, as Dines *et al* argue, a Janus-faced image of the migrant as both a threat and a victim is produced.³⁶ The border, as I will argue in the following chapter, is a form of 'concrete abstraction' – an imagined boundary that bears down on the real world with often tragic consequences.

The juxtaposition of Colonus and Lampedusa crosses the ancient and the contemporary. They are border zones where forms of inclusion and exclusion are played out and protean legal and social statuses are formed and reformed. This juxtaposition also acts as a primer for my discussions in the following chapters on the productive spatial and temporal power of borders, on uncertainties over legal and social status, and the deep tensions between refuge and abandonment, care

³³ Day, 'Lampedusa Disaster: EC President Jose Manuel Barroso and Italian PM Enrico Letta Jeered During Visit to Boat Disaster Mortuary'.

³⁴ Dines, Montagna and Ruggiero, 'Thinking Lampedusa: Border Construction, the Spectacle of Bare Life and the Productivity of Migrants', p.438.

³⁵ *ibid.*

³⁶ *ibid.*

and control, movement and fixity, when borders are considered as ‘spaces of asylum’. The juxtaposition of Colonus and Lampedusa also connects ‘tragedy’ in its technical sense – as an ancient art which portrays fundamental collisions between different spheres of law, social, and political life – and ‘tragedy’ in its everyday sense as a dreadful or fatal event or disaster.³⁷

The critical race and legal theorist, Vincent Lloyd, writes that,

The inertia of the ordinary sweeps us along, muting all but the most mundane worries. But in moments of tragedy, of deep decision, of disruption, of evil, in moments when we step out of the pull of the ordinary, we understand that something is amiss in the world.³⁸

The ‘ordinary’ can be seductive and enchanting according to Lloyd. It holds a ‘normative force’ – a soothing resignation in the face of tragedy that this is just how things are. Things are done as they are done. Tragic situations are normalised, naturalised, and taken for granted. The task of philosophy, for Lloyd, is to interrogate this ‘enchanted ordinary’. Yet, too often philosophy retreats into an abstract and transcendent register, divorced from actuality, where nothing in the empirical world can effect it.³⁹

I would argue that in order to interrogate this ‘enchanted ordinary’ we must first recognise that the ordinary itself can also be tragic. The Lampedusa disaster

³⁷ Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, p.141.

³⁸ Vincent Lloyd, *Law and Transcendence: On the Unfinished Project of Gillian Rose* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p.1.

³⁹ *ibid*, pp.1-3.

on 3 October 2013 was not an isolated incident. A week later another boat on the same route sank in Italian waters killing over 200 mainly Syrian nationals.⁴⁰ On 19 April 2015 an estimated 700 people perished in waters south of Lampedusa, and this was only days after an estimated 400 people had perished after a boat capsized in the Mediterranean Sea.⁴¹ The Missing Migrants Project estimates that over 3000 people have perished in the Mediterranean Sea each year between 2014 and 2016.⁴² Disasters on the Mediterranean Sea have become all-too-common and disturbingly routine. Yet, as Kate Schick writes, alongside such major traumatic events there are also everyday experiences of exclusion and oppression that may not garner the same attention. 'These more *mundane* experiences', she writes, 'are insidious and damaging on a wide scale, and they too require recognition and working through'.⁴³ The frustrations, ambiguities, and devastating legal uncertainties faced by migrants not only occur on the territorial edges of nation-states, but also within them. The ethnographic research of the later chapters of this thesis take place alongside men who have had their UK asylum claims rejected and are rendered destitute as a result. It focuses on the *mundane* day-to-day experience of living between temporary night shelters in Manchester without the right to work, access public funds, or the right to remain in the UK. It is here that the tragic – in both the technical sense of devastating legal uncertainty and the

⁴⁰ Dines, Montagna and Ruggerio, 'Thinking Lampedusa: Border Construction, the Spectacle of Bare Life and the Productivity of Migrants', p.430.

⁴¹ Patrick Kingsley, Alessandra Bonomolo and Stephanie Kirchgaessner, '700 Migrants Feared Dead in Mediterranean Shipwreck', *The Guardian*, 19 April 2015; Patrick Kingsley and Damien Gayle, 'Migrant Boat Disaster: Rescue Hopes led to Sinking in Mediterranean', *The Guardian*, 15 April 2015.

⁴² Missing Migrants Project, <<https://missingmigrants.iom.int/mediterranean>> [accessed 7 August, 2016].

⁴³ Kate Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), p.96.

everyday sense of a calamitous situation – merges with the mundane, the ordinary. In view of this, I wish to make a definitive break from Aristotle's therapeutic definition of tragedy as a staged-drama that purifies the emotions of the audience through the spectacle of violence, and instead recognise it as moments – in their calamity or in their mundaneness – that shake the 'enchanted ordinary' and demand deep decision and political action.⁴⁴

3. Gillian Rose: Law and Ethical Life

Vincent Lloyd writes about the 'enchanted ordinary', and the perceived failure of philosophy, in the introduction to his study on the British philosopher Gillian Rose. In his work, Lloyd emphasises the importance of law within her philosophy as 'it is only by understanding philosophy as jurisprudence that we can see the ordinary as it is: translucent'.⁴⁵ While the 'enchanted ordinary' mutes tragic ambiguity and the uneven stratifications of social life, the 'translucent' ordinary recognises them and makes them visible in order to change and transform them. In her work *Hegel Contra Sociology* Rose draws on the early writings of G.W.F. Hegel to define law as 'absolute ethical life'.⁴⁶ At first glance, such a phrase appears leaden, totalising, and even domineering. Yet it is just such a reading that Hegel, according to Rose, is set against. 'Ethical life', or *Sittlichkeit*, has the root noun of

⁴⁴ Aristotle, 'Poetics', in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. by Richard McKeon (New York: Modern Library, 2001), pp.1455-1487 (L 1449b, 20-30).

⁴⁵ Lloyd, *Law and Transcendence*, p.2.

⁴⁶ Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, p.74.

die Sitte or 'custom' and, for Hegel, should not be understood as an adherence to abstract principles or universal impositions, but should instead be seen as the deeply embedded, but also constantly changing, conflicting, and ongoing customs and practices of a community.⁴⁷ For Hegel, 'ethical life' can become a febrile site of clashing values, concerns, and laws that ultimately question the accepted fabric of social life, that question the 'enchanted ordinary'.⁴⁸ As Lloyd writes, 'Rose endorses the (Hegelian) notion that ethics starts with social practices and rejects any distinction between law and ethics'.⁴⁹ For Rose, law and ethics fold together in 'ethical life' which is a terrain that is continually worked and re-worked in practice.

'Law', taken in isolation from ethical life, is problematic for Rose. When law is understood as a set of ideal principles, as abstractions that bear down on everyday life, it becomes domineering, oppressive, and alienating. According to Rose, 'the ideal of law or social unity implies revenge. All aspects of social life which do not conform to the abstract ideal are injured, punished, suppressed'.⁵⁰ A purely abstract or ideal notion of law produces estrangement because 'all aspects of social life that are unacknowledged become criminal'.⁵¹ Rose takes Hegel's critique of bourgeois property law as an example.

⁴⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §446-476.

⁴⁸ In the section 'Ethical Order' in *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel re-tells Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*. In this tragedy Antigone challenges the authority of Creon, King of Thebes, over the burial rites of her dead brother. In Hegel's reading Antigone's action exposes a fundamental fracture within ancient Greek ethical life as Antigone positions the 'Divine Law' of kinship relations and burial rites against the 'Human Law' of the *polis*. [Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §444 - §476].

⁴⁹ Vincent Lloyd, 'The Secular Faith of Gillian Rose', *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 36:4 (2008), 683-705 (p.687).

⁵⁰ Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, p.73.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

At the time of Hegel's writing - the turn of the nineteenth century, not all individuals were regarded as capable of owning property.⁵² According to Rose, 'Hegel argues that to 'universalize' property is itself immoral, because it involves taking something *conditioned*, that is, determined by specific social relations, and transforming it into a spurious absolute'.⁵³ Such an idealising of property is grounded in a fundamental stratification between persons based on the capacity for 'ownership', and necessitates the exclusion and erasure of the propertyless in order to maintain the idea of 'ownership' as a norm. As Kate Schick writes, 'the law that guarantees abstract property rights is based upon a fundamental lack of identity, a fundamental inequality between persons. The equal right to property ownership comes hand-in-hand with the assumption that not all persons own property'.⁵⁴ Schick argues that this is also the case with the category of 'citizenship', which presupposes and necessitates the non-citizen, the person excluded from the rights of citizenship.⁵⁵ For Abdelmalek Sayad this is the operation of 'state thought' which, as discussed above, attempts to distinguish the national from the non-national. Sayad terms this fundamental inequality the 'original sin of immigration', where being an immigrant is a latent, camouflaged offence, 'an offence for which the subject in question bears no responsibility'.⁵⁶ Here Rose's claim that an abstract or ideal notion of law produces its own crimes is not as hyperbolic as it may first appear, considering that the survivors of the 2013 Lampedusa disaster were automatically criminalised for the act of migration under

⁵² Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.33.

⁵³ Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, p.61.

⁵⁴ Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.33.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p.85.

⁵⁶ Sayad, *The Suffering of the Immigrant*, p.282.

the Bossi-Fini Law. Rose's criticism of abstract notions of law will be crucial to my own understanding of the border. The border, as I have suggested in the previous section, is a productive space of differential inclusion and uncertain legal status and, as I will argue in the following chapter, is a conditioned and shifting historical institution that is too often abstracted and taken to be a natural, neutral, and fixed national boundary. In other words, the border too easily becomes part of the 'enchanted ordinary' that then bears down on everyday life in uneven and often vicious ways.

However, for Rose, law is not reducible to this impoverished, abstract understanding. As 'absolute ethical life' law and ethics fold together in an unfolding, historical, and ultimately conflicting set of social practices.⁵⁷ 'Absolute', in the sense that Rose uses it here, does not mean a static or complete totality, but rather indicates a fractured, uneven, and broken 'social whole' – it is the translucent ordinary rather than the enchanted ordinary.⁵⁸ Rose writes that,

What *Sittlichkeit* is cannot be pre-judged, but the morality of an action cannot be "judged" apart from the context of its possibility. It cannot be judged by separating its morality from its legality, by separating its meaning from the social whole.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, p.50.

⁵⁸ Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.27. For Hegel, the 'absolute' is riven with the active tensions and collisions of ethical life. It is neither totalising nor complete. While, for Rose, both Marxist and non-Marxists critics of Hegel abandon the term, either on the mistaken understanding that it is a totalitarian and conservative notion or by replacing it with an abstracted social object (such as the nation-state), Rose regards the 'absolute' as essential to the 'social import' of Hegel's thought. [Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §465; Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, p.45]

⁵⁹ Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, p.50.

As Kate Schick writes, for Rose, as ethical life, law ‘refers not merely to rules and regulations, but to “*what there is*”: to the web of social norms, practices and institutions that shape human experience and that are, in turn, shaped by human experience’.⁶⁰ The tragedy of law, of ethical life, is that it is fundamentally fractured. The ‘social whole’ holds no prior unity and cannot be fully mended because, as indicated above, the ‘imposition of ideals’ or ‘imaginary communities’, that is, the imposition of any abstract social unity, creates new fractures and new forms of social exclusion.⁶¹ As I will discuss in more detail below, the tragedy of law is also that there are often competing and conflicting forms of law and ethics that operate within wider ‘ethical life’. Yet this tragedy is also law’s possibility. As the web of social practices and institutions that we inhabit, law includes ‘our own implication in creating and sustaining these norms and the ways in which they foster recognition and misrecognition’.⁶² As such, law, as ethical life, is not ‘set in stone’, but is inherently contestable and revisable.⁶³ As Schick writes, ‘it is in the *plasticity* of law that transformation resides’.⁶⁴ Ethical life is the contested site that we are all implicated in, in different and uneven ways. It includes institutions, such as the border, that often become reified and taken-for-granted, that become part of the ‘enchanted ordinary’ which both creates and masks social stratifications and unevenness. Yet, ethical life also includes the possibility of challenging, pressing

⁶⁰ Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*; Gillian Rose, *The Broken Middle: Out of Our Ancient Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p.87.

⁶¹ Rose, *The Broken Middle*, p.xi.

⁶² Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.95.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

against, and re-working such institutions and social stratifications. As Schick explains,

Rose argues that we must “redraw *again and again*” the boundaries that define the way we live, acknowledging the impossibility of perfect arrangements in a contingent and changing world, but refusing to give up the attempt to shape and reshape our responses in the communities in which we are embedded.⁶⁵

Working and reworking the boundaries of social life involves potential risk and the possibility of mistakes as well as productive actions. Ethical life is fraught with anxiety, but also a refusal to ‘give up’. It is, as Rose writes in the final page of *The Broken Middle*, the struggle ‘to know, to misknow, and yet to grow’.⁶⁶ These considerations lay the foundations for Rose’s understanding of ‘justice’ which I will take up in the following section. Like law, justice is also folded into ethical life. Importantly, for Rose, this places her thought in critical difference to both ‘modern’ conceptions of law that separate it from the contingencies of everyday life, and ‘postmodern’ approaches to the ethical which separate ‘justice’ and ‘hospitality’ from the contingencies of everyday life. Rose designates these positions as ‘Old Athens’ and ‘New Jerusalem’ respectively, and through these terms develops a crucial critique of Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida.

⁶⁵ Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.51; Gillian Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law: Philosophy and Representation* (CUP, 1996), p.122.

⁶⁶ Rose, *The Broken Middle*, p.310.

4. The Third City: Between 'Old Athens' and 'New Jerusalem'

'Athens, the city of rational politics, has been abandoned', writes Gillian Rose,

'she is said to have proven that enlightenment is domination. Her former inhabitants have set off on a pilgrimage to the New Jerusalem, the imaginary community, where they seek to dedicate themselves to difference, to otherness, to love – to a new ethics which overcomes the fusion of knowledge and power in Old Athens'.⁶⁷

This pilgrimage from Old Athens to New Jerusalem has been partly staked out by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer and their recognition that 'enlightenment', understood in the widest sense as the advance of thought and reason aimed at liberating humanity from mysticism and fear, too often failed to examine 'the mismatch between its promises and the social-political actualities of domination, exclusion and suffering'.⁶⁸ Yet, for Rose, the substitution of Old Athens for New Jerusalem leads only to an 'exalted ethics' and 'otherworldly justice' that are similarly detached from social-political actualities.⁶⁹ Old Athens and New Jerusalem are shorthand for the one-sidedness of both modern and postmodern lines of

⁶⁷ Gillian Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law*, p.21.

⁶⁸ Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, trans. by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), pp. 1-34; Kate Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.2.

⁶⁹ Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law*, p.11; Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.2.

reasoning.⁷⁰ Grounded in the Kantian dualism between what is empirically knowable and what is not empirically knowable, or the *phenomenon* and the *noumenon*, Old Athens takes pride in abstract propositional reasoning, which provides *a priori* universally applicable principles on how we ought to live, act, and know, without any critical regard for particular social and historical contexts.⁷¹ This dualism is also expressed in the Kantian distinction between questions of ‘fact’ and questions of ‘right’ or ‘law’.⁷² The former relates to the acquisition of knowledge through experience, while the latter concerns questions of ‘objective validity’ where knowledge is authorised through an *a priori* relation to the world.⁷³ However, when questions of ‘right’ or ‘law’ are elevated over questions of ‘fact’, as Rose argues is the tendency in modern neo-Kantian thought, both philosophy and social theory attempt to legislate over experience and social life through an autonomous and pure rationality that is divorced from the very empirical life that it seeks to condition.⁷⁴ This is what Rose terms philosophy’s ‘pride in *Sollen*’ – or ‘ought’ – as it attempts to proscribe and prescribe, allow and prohibit, through the imposition of ideals.⁷⁵ It is, as I have discussed in the previous section, law abstracted from the variegated actuality of ethical life.

⁷⁰ Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.60, p.77.

⁷¹ Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, (London: Verso, 2009), pp.13-4, p.46; Rose, *The Broken Middle*, p.1; Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.6; Vincent Lloyd, *Law and Transcendence*, pp.16-7. In her work *Hegel Contra Sociology*, Rose argues specifically that Neo-Kantian philosophers such as Rickert and Cohen, ‘turn Kant’s critical method into an autonomous logic of validity based on an original, underivable unity which is not the unity of consciousness’. In other words, in trying to negotiate the Kantian dualisms, Neo-Kantian philosophy created a general logic divorced from experience. cf. Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, pp.13-14.

⁷² Lloyd, *Law and Transcendence*, pp.16-17.

⁷³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴ Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, pp.45-46. Here Rose also uses the labels ‘*canon*’ and ‘*organon*’ to mark out the perceived distinction between ‘fact’ and ‘right’.

⁷⁵ Rose, *The Broken Middle*, p.xi.

Yet, in reaction to the authoritarianism of Old Athens, the ‘imaginary community’ of the New Jerusalem only offers an ethics that is similarly disembedded from actuality. This ‘new ethics’, for Rose, is typified by the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida and their emphasis on ‘the Other’ – a notion that exceeds phenomenological description and rational calculation, and, for Rose, occupies a transcendent position divorced from our contingent and changing world.⁷⁶

Central to Levinas’ thought is the face-to-face encounter with the Other. Crucially, this is not so much a relation of material contact, but is rather a more fundamental ‘epiphany of infinity’, an encounter with an absolute and ‘irreducible distance’.⁷⁷ The face, or *visage*, is not an individual object with features, but is ‘primarily an example of *transcendence*’.⁷⁸ As Andrew Shanks writes, this encounter makes ‘an “infinite” claim upon one, quite independent from any knowledge of personal identity’.⁷⁹ Understood as a relation that is prior to any reflection, thought, intention, or activity, the face-to-face encounter renders both the self and Other as fundamentally passive and vulnerable.⁸⁰ As Levinas writes in his essay ‘Substitution’, it is a ‘passivity prior to all receptivity. It is transcendent’.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Vincent Lloyd, ‘The Secular Faith of Gillian Rose’, (p.685).

⁷⁷ Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. by Alphonso Lingis (London: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1979), p.199; Catherine Malabou, as quoted in Mark Rainey ‘Beyond Dialectics and Deconstruction: Interview with Catherine Malabou’, in *Nyx, a Nocturnal*, 9 (2013), 72-81 (p.78). In this interview, Catherine Malabou and I discussed, among other things, the notions of skin and contact in relation to the work of Emmanuel Levinas.

⁷⁸ Alain Renault, *The Era of the Individual: A Contribution to the History of Subjectivity*, trans. by M.B. DeBevoise and Franklin Philip (New Jersey, PUP, 1997), p.143-166; B.C. Hutchens, *Levinas: A Guide to the Perplexed* (London: Continuum, 2004), p.7.

⁷⁹ Andrew Shanks, *Against Innocence: Gillian Rose’s Reception and Gift of Faith* (London: SCM Press, 2008), p.118.

⁸⁰ Levinas, ‘Ethics as First Philosophy’, in *The Levinas Reader*, ed. by Seán Hand (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), pp.75-87.

⁸¹ Levinas, ‘Substitution’, in *The Levinas Reader*, pp.88-126 (p.112).

The Other, *par excellence*, for Levinas, falls under the abstract labels of ‘the weak, the poor, the widow, and the orphan’.⁸² Yet, in Rose’s view, such an ‘exclusive otherness’ disempowers actual individuals by fixing ‘the Other’ in a static state of passivity and vulnerability.⁸³ Read under Rose’s terms, the self and Other, as constituted in Levinas’ face-to-face encounter, are abstracted from the everyday actuality of ‘ethical life’ that they should otherwise necessarily and unescapably be situated in. Ultimately, according to Rose, ‘*new ethics*, which demands the overcoming of the subjectivity of the agent and denies the subjectivity of ‘the Other’, produces in this ‘Other’ the inflexible abstraction it sought to indict’.⁸⁴ While Old Athens indicates the problem of divorcing law from ethics-as-ethical life, New Jerusalem indicates the problem of divorcing ethics from law-as-ethical life.

Jacques Derrida continues this separation of law and ethics in his accounts of justice and hospitality. In his work *Specters of Marx* and his essay ‘Force of Law’, Derrida characterises justice as a messianic hope in a future-yet-to-come.⁸⁵ As an always deferred hope, justice remains an ‘experience of the impossible’.⁸⁶ It is, he writes, ‘absolute alterity’, or as Kate Schick states, ‘wholly Other’.⁸⁷ Justice is an impossible, and ultimately, unrealisable demand that remains outside or beyond the regime of rational calculations and rules that Derrida understands as law.⁸⁸

Derrida goes as far as to state that justice is ‘not deconstructable’, that it is located

⁸² Levinas, ‘Time and the Other’, in *The Levinas Reader*, pp.37-58 (p.48).

⁸³ Rose, *Judaism and Modernity: Philosophical Essays* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), pp.4-5.

⁸⁴ Rose, *Judaism and Modernity*, p.9.

⁸⁵ Jacques Derrida, ‘From *Spectres of Marx*’, in *The Derrida Reader: Writing Performances*, ed. by Julian Wolfreys, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), pp.140-168, (p.156); Derrida, ‘Force of Law: The “Mystical Foundation of Authority”’, trans. by M Quaintance, in *Cardozo Law Review*, 11 (1990), 921-1045 (p.945).

⁸⁶ Derrida, ‘Force of Law’, p.947.

⁸⁷ Derrida, ‘Force of Law’, p.971; Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.119.

⁸⁸ Derrida, ‘Force of Law’, p.945, p.965.

beyond criticism.⁸⁹ It is precisely from this transcendent and pure position that, for Derrida, justice can demand criticism and act as a condition of possibility for the casting and recasting of law and politics.⁹⁰ A similar structure exists with regards to hospitality, as Derrida makes a distinction between ‘absolute’ or ‘unconditional’ hospitality, and ‘ordinary’ or ‘conditioned’ hospitality.⁹¹ Ordinary hospitality is conditioned by laws, calculations, and reservations about the arriving guest, while ‘absolute’ hospitality presents an ‘unconditional’ welcome to the guest.⁹² Just as justice is placed in an elevated position over the law, for Derrida, absolute hospitality is elevated to a transcendent position beyond conditioned hospitality. ‘Absolute hospitality’ is an impossible ideal and impossible demand that acts as a condition of possibility for corrupted hospitality understood in ‘the ordinary sense’.⁹³ As Jonathan Darling writes, ‘justice, and like it, hospitality, can thus never be fully present; they, rather, act as unconditioned promises, they are “to come,” and, as such, they insert themselves into the decision of the present’.⁹⁴ For Rose, these particular understandings of hospitality and justice would simply produce more inflexible abstractions in the name of ethics. In fleeing Old Athens, the ‘new ethics’ of the New Jerusalem merely substitutes one transcendent concept for another; as ‘law’ or ‘right’ as a disembedded rationality is replaced by a ‘uncontaminated ethics’ under the labels of ‘Other’, ‘justice’, or ‘hospitality’, that are also divorced from everyday experience. According to Rose, ‘one perceived

⁸⁹ Ibid, p.945.

⁹⁰ Ibid, p.971.

⁹¹ Derrida, *Of Hospitality: Anne Dufourmantell Invites Derrida to Respond*, trans. by Rachel Bowlby (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p.25.

⁹² Ibid, p.135.

⁹³ Ibid, p.25, p.73.

⁹⁴ Jonathan Darling, ‘Becoming Bare Life: Asylum, Hospitality, and the Politics of Encampment’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 27 (2009), 649-665 (p.657).

mistake is replaced by another'.⁹⁵ Old Athens and New Jerusalem are both gated communities, barricaded from the actual world in order to preserve the purity and innocence of their respective theoretical positions.

However, between Old Athens and New Jerusalem there is another city, a Third City.⁹⁶ This is the city of actuality, 'the city in which we all live and with which we are all familiar'.⁹⁷ The Third City designates *every city* and is grounded in the often mundane and sometimes tragic struggles of everyday life. As Schick writes, it is 'a complex city about which simple stories cannot be told'.⁹⁸ The Third City is the city of ethical life in all its complexity, conflict, and tension. Rose introduces it as the city of 'modern legal status' in which formal categories serve to define and separate people and bear down on individuals in uneven and often severe ways. I have argued above that the border functions as a productive space of uncertain and ambiguous legal statuses and in the following chapters will explore how degraded legal categories such as 'asylum seeker' and 'refused asylum seeker' are assigned to individuals and condition their everyday life in severely restrictive ways. Yet, for Rose, the Third City also holds another meaning as the 'just city'.⁹⁹ This is not the 'just city' as a free-floating image above the fray of actuality, as was the case with Athens in Sophocles' text, but is rather the city of the 'translucent ordinary' where the uneven and often tragic stratifications of social life are recognised and laid bare so as to transform them. As Schick writes,

⁹⁵ Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law*, p.6.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p.19, p.21, p.26.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p.34.

⁹⁸ Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.60.

⁹⁹ Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law*, p.26.

Rose calls for a dogged acceptance of uncertainty and equivocation. Such uncertainty is not a radical uncertainty that would lead to political paralysis; she insists always upon the need to 'stake oneself', to take the risk of political action in pursuit of a 'good enough justice'.¹⁰⁰

This 'good enough justice' is not a settled or satisfied concept. Rather, it is a risk-filled journey towards comprehension of ourselves, our relations with others, and our situatedness in social-political structures.¹⁰¹ A 'good enough justice' does not seek recourse to pure and transcendent concepts, detached from the messiness of actuality, but is built from the ground up. As I will argue in chapter 5, via the theologian Gustavo Gutiérrez, justice is the building up of a better society, qualitatively different from the one that exists today. But this requires continually setting new goals for political action that must be revised and concretised constantly. A 'good enough justice' is always incomplete and always adapting to and risking itself in situations. Alongside law and ethics, justice folds into 'ethical life'. It unmask the 'enchanted ordinary' and sets to work within the 'translucent ordinary'. A good enough justice is a journey of political risk: 'it insists on the difficulty of negotiating actuality manifested in everyday experience, as well as institutions and law'.¹⁰²

Derrida's notions of 'hospitality' and 'justice' have been taken up as tools for engaging with questions of migration and the border, but have also, more recently,

¹⁰⁰ Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.8; Rose, *Love's Work* (London: Vintage, 1997), p.116; Rose, *The Broken Middle*, p.148.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p.8.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, p.13.

been subject to some criticism.¹⁰³ In their 2013 study of the City of Sanctuary movement in Sheffield, UK, Vicki Squire and Jonathan Darling question the ‘predominant “progressive” orientation toward hospitality as risking the perpetuation of relations of injustice rather than their resolution’.¹⁰⁴ The City of Sanctuary is a grassroots movement that seeks to affect subtle changes at a local level through community activities, workshops, and events that bring together local people and those seeking asylum in the UK and living in cities such as Sheffield. The activities and workshops offer volunteer positions to those categorised as ‘asylum seekers’ or ‘refused asylum seekers’ who are denied the right to work in the UK, and serve to enact an ‘equal participation in the life of the city for those seeking sanctuary’.¹⁰⁵ Squire and Darling argue that rather than being viewed through a ‘major’ concept such as ‘hospitality’, the City of Sanctuary movement can be better understood as engaging in a ‘minor’ politics of ‘rightful presence’.¹⁰⁶ This ‘minor’ politics includes everyday acts of sharing, engagement, and co-presence that make ‘present’ the injustices within the UK immigration and asylum system. Squire and Darling not only take issue with the notion of ‘hospitality’ as being grounded in a statist articulation of ‘host’ and ‘guest’, but also Derrida’s ‘relatively abstract notion of a justice “to come”’ which seems to be ‘decontextualized by its lack of temporal and spatial specificity and as such lacks the political edge that we conceive as crucial.’¹⁰⁷ In contrast, they argue for a justice that ‘brings to bear the fraught

¹⁰³ Yasmin Gunaratnam, *Death and the Migrant: Bodies, Borders and Care* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp.147-149; Vicki Squire and Jonathan Darling, ‘The “Minor” Politics of “Rightful Presence”’: Justice and Relationality in the *City of Sanctuary*, *International Political Sociology*, 7 (2013) 59-74.

¹⁰⁴ Squire and Darling, ‘The “Minor” Politics of “Rightful Presence”’, p.60.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p.61.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p.63-64.

histories and geographical disparities around which current struggles of sanctuary are played out as a means to articulate an account of justice which is both disruptive of a statist politics and grounded in concrete contexts'.¹⁰⁸

Squire and Darling's shift away from an 'abstract' justice-to-come and towards a concrete and contextualised justice, seems to align with Rose's understanding of justice that I have been arguing for and developing in this section. A 'good enough justice' does not seek recourse in a transcendent register, but is worked through and continually revised in concrete practice. Yet, just as Squire and Darling recognise that the City of Sanctuary movement is embedded in the statist structures of the immigration system that it seeks to resist and transform, so too a 'good enough justice' recognises its limitations in the face of the structures and institutions it is situated in. A 'good enough justice' is a hard and arduous work, yet it refuses to 'give up'. It is this understanding of justice that I wish to carry forward in my later analysis of the Boaz Trust and its network of emergency night shelters for refused and destitute asylum seekers.

5. Gillian Rose and Speculative Dialectics

Crucial for Rose's conception of justice, and her wider understanding of 'ethical life', is her method of speculative dialectics. It is a method that crosses theory and practice and is deeply rooted in her particular approach to the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p.64.

philosophy of Hegel. Rose offers her readers a 'radical Hegel' which, as already seen in her account of Hegel's *Sittlichkeit*, presents his thought as a non-totalising philosophy that avoids retreating to transcendent positions, whether in the name of law or in the name of ethics, and instead understands social life as an ongoing, conflicting, and often tragic set of institutional and situated relations.¹⁰⁹ *Sittlichkeit* reveals uneven social stratification while also offering the possibility of its transformation. As Schick writes, 'a speculative perspective asserts that we stay in the anxiety of living in a broken, fragile world, working through the existential and historical traumas this inevitably entails'.¹¹⁰ In this respect I have already begun to touch on what a 'speculative dialectics' means for Rose. Ethical Life is our situatedness in the present, in its social forms and institutions – institutions such as the border – that need to be constantly worked through and challenged in order to re-shape or dismantle them. A speculative perspective maintains that,

Political theorists must attend to particular experience, but that this cannot be done in isolation from socio-political structures and historical processes that facilitate particular experiences. Speculative political theory recognises that it is impossible to think a particular in isolation: even the very process of thinking one thing and not the other involves a relation to that Other that is not thought.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, p.viii.

¹¹⁰ Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.12.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, pp.66-67.

Central to speculative dialectics is the operation of ‘sublation’, or *Aufhebung*, which Hegel describes as ‘at once a *negating* and a *preserving*’.¹¹² Dialectics is a conflicting process of cancellation, preservation, and transformation. In his analysis of Hegel’s use of the term, Michael Inwood takes *Aufhebung* to mean ‘abolish’, ‘preserve’, and ‘raise up’. Importantly, he also suggests that the term has a mobility within Hegel’s writings as ‘Hegel does not give equal weight to each of its senses on all (or most) occasions of its use’.¹¹³ *Aufhebung* is not to be taken as a fixed schema but is active in different ways in different circumstances. Essentially, as Rose argues, the identity of a concept, subject, thing, or action is never immediately given or fixed, but gains meaning as a result of a series of conflicting and contradictory experiences.¹¹⁴ Speculative dialectics recognises that language and experience continually outstrip the fixed meanings we tend to attach to things, whether transcendent notions of law or justice, or as I will discuss in the following chapter, the institution of the border. A good enough justice is a speculative activity – it gains its meaning in practice and is continually revised and reworked in concrete circumstances. Speculative thought is needed for living in the Third City, understood as the everyday cities in which we live that are contoured by social stratifications and tragic unevenness, but that also carry the potential for political action and change. As Kate Schick writes, the speculative approach is ‘a struggle-filled approach, one that emphasises the need to work towards a greater

¹¹² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §113.

¹¹³ Michael Inwood, *A Hegel Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp.283-284.

¹¹⁴ Rose, *Hegel Contra Sociology*, pp.48-49.

comprehension of socio-political realities, to see how we are implicated in the challenges we face and to take the risk of acting politically'.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Schick, *Gillian Rose: A Good Enough Justice*, p.17.

2. The Dialectics of the Border: Abandonment and the Weaponisation of Time

1. Introduction

In this chapter I develop a dialectical theory of bordering and argue that the notion of the border can best be understood as a *process of bordering*. The border is not reducible to a fixed or continuous line that marks out the boundary of a nation-state, whether as cartographic inscription or in the form of a wall or fence. Borders have a ‘world-making function’. The border does not simply include and exclude by differentiating between wanted and unwanted migrants, but actively produces different social and legal statuses among those who encounter it. The border is not simply tied to specific sites, such as an airport passport control or boundary fence, but is an ongoing process that extends both spatially and temporally. It is a set of regulations and legal impositions that extend over space and time and become embedded in day-to-day life. The first section of this chapter therefore lays out this view of the *border as process*.

The border operates through the collapse of the distinction between inclusion and exclusion and inside and outside. In approaching the border in this way, I will bring together two rather different conceptual blocks – the border as a ‘concrete abstraction’ and the border as instituting a politics of abandonment. The term ‘concrete abstraction’ is drawn from the work of Henri Lefebvre and indicates the relation between a reified concept and everyday social practice. The abstract is taken to be ahistorical, fixed, and natural while the concrete is embedded in social

practice, history, and time. While recognising that the border is historical and constantly being configured and reconfigured, as a 'concrete abstraction' the border also becomes fetishized as an ideal object. The abstract bears down on the concrete, and the vicious histories and contingencies of the border become concealed by the powerful idealised fiction of 'state thought' where the border is reduced to a fixed line demarcating inclusion and exclusion. Following this, I also draw on the work of Giorgio Agamben and argue that the border produces a form of 'inclusive exclusion', understood through Agamben's notion of 'bare life'. I also introduce the notion of the 'weaponisation of time'. This denotes an antagonistic and uneven relationship between the individual and the state, where the state uses 'time' as a method of punishment. I refer this directly to the situation of asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers, as the 'weaponisation of time' can take the form of prolonged periods of waiting, directionless stasis, and sudden, forced changes in circumstances. The 'weaponisation of time' underpins discussions of waiting and transition that will inform later ethnographic chapters.

Mustafa Dikeç also brings these two theoretical strands together within the question of the 'where' of asylum. Here, I develop a notion of 'spaces of asylum'. This term marks out the tensions within the process of bordering that relate particularly to asylum – tensions between control and care, mobility and fixity, and abandonment and refuge. In the final sections of this chapter I turn these notions of the border as process and concrete abstraction and 'inclusive exclusion' towards the categories of the refugee, asylum seeker, and refused asylum seeker as they have been developed in UK asylum policy. An asylum seeker is someone who has crossed an international border in search of protection, but is still awaiting a

decision. In the UK asylum seekers are provided with accommodation and financial support while their claims are processed, but are prohibited from paid employment. A refused asylum seeker is someone who has had their claim rejected. In UK policy, refused asylum seekers must vacate their state-backed accommodation within 21 days and are no longer eligible for financial support. They no longer have the right to remain in the UK, and are also prohibited from working. In these final sections I also argue that the term 'asylum seeker' has become a pejorative political and rhetorical category that is tied in with an increasingly restrictive policy environment that actively pushes asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers into destitution in the UK. Like the more conceptual discussions of the border, these analyses of policy will lay the groundwork for the ethnographic chapters that follow.

2. The Border as Process

The concept of the border acts as a kind of prism, being viewed and studied from different angles, different sides, and different facets. The light from a prism bends at different angles too, producing different colours, through a process known as dispersion. The notion of the border serves as a disperser for a range of political colours, from hardened rhetoric over preserving national and ethnic identity, to regarding the border as an essential mechanism for managed migration and the separation of wanted and unwanted migrants and skilled and unskilled migrants, through to the softer rhetoric of 'welcoming the refugee' and viewing the border as

a transition point into spaces of safety and refuge. This process of dispersion also holds as a metaphor for the production of different legal and social statuses as the border materialises differently for different people – a point that will be crucial in the following analysis.¹

In his essay, 'What is a Border?', Étienne Balibar defines the border not as a fixed site, but as a shifting set of social relations that operate along race, class, and nationality.² For Balibar, borders have a 'polysemic character' as they 'never exist in the same way for different social groups'.³ In view of this, 'the border' is better understood as a process that operates through a regime of practices, institutions, discourses, and systems.⁴ It is acted out through law, regulation, and policy, and directly shapes everyday life whether in the workplace, the hospital, the classroom, the night shelter, or the street. As such, borders not only extend spatially, but also temporally, constituting 'an extraordinarily vicious spatial-temporal zone'⁵. Borders are not just crossing points from one spatial territory to another, but are a set of regulations and legal impositions that extend over time and become embedded in day-to-day lived experience. Bordering processes of filtration, selection, and classification, do not necessarily mean physical separation or removal from the nation-state, but can also become a set of restrictions and regulations that prevent full participation in social life. These restrictions might be the outright denial of rights, or the imposition of spatial and temporal restrictions on certain rights.

¹ Julia Schulze Wessel, 'On Border Subjects: Rethinking the Figure of the Refugee and the Undocumented Migrant', *Constellations*, 23:1 (2016), 46-57 (pp.51-2).

² Étienne Balibar, 'What is a Border?', in *Politics and the Other Scene*, trans. by Christine Jones, James Swenson, and Chris Turner (London: Verso, 2002), pp. 75-86.

³ *Ibid*, p.79.

⁴ Harsha Walia *Undoing Border Imperialism* (Chico, CA: AK Press, 2013), p.38.

⁵ *Ibid*, p.83

These may include temporary work visas, temporary refugee status, student visas that limit length of study and possible hours of employment, or the asylum seeker's lack of right to work, and the refused asylum seeker's lack of right to work, remain, and access public funds. As we will see in later sections of this chapter, in the case of asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers in the UK, it may also mean separation from society through detention in an Immigration Removal Centre [IRC] or displacement through a policy of forced dispersal around the UK.

To recognise the border as a process is to take issue with a static or fixed notion of the border. This necessitates moving away from understanding the border as merely an unambiguous line marking the edge of a territory and instead viewing the border as a series of shifting institutional, legal, and bureaucratic practices that, according to Balibar, shape the heart of civic and social space.⁶ In other words, the border is much more than a simple line conceived in Cartesian space.⁷ In their 2013 work, *Border as Method*, Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson challenge the 'traditional image' of the border as represented by physical walls or lines and colours that mark out discrete sovereign territories on maps.⁸ They term such traditional images of invariance as 'methodological nationalism'. Methodological nationalism takes for granted the bounded space of the nation-state as both a natural and neutral basis for understanding the border.⁹ It is the border imagined as a fixed and unequivocal outline of the nation-state, operating

⁶ Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?*, pp.109-110; Wessel, 'On Border Subjects: Rethinking the Figure of the Refugee and the Undocumented Migrant', p.49.

⁷ Harald Bauder, 'Perspectives of Open Borders and No Border', *Geography Compass*, 9:7 (2015), 395-405 (p.401).

⁸ Mezzadra and Neilson, *Border as Method*, p.3, p.5, p.9.

⁹ Mezzadra and Neilson, 'Between Inclusion and Exclusion: On the Topology of Global Space and Borders', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 29:4/5 (2012), 58-77 (pp.59-62).

according to a rigid distinction between inclusion and exclusion.¹⁰ In this respect, methodological nationalism can be viewed as a particular instance of ‘state thought’ – a term introduced in the previous chapter via Abdelmalek Sayad that indicates how the deeply ingrained notion of the nation-state predetermines and organises our understanding and representation of the world. Both methodological nationalism and state thought operate through rigid binaries, clearly demarcating between who belongs and who does not belong. Mezzadra and Neilson reject this static methodological nationalism in favour of a more nuanced account of the border. For Mezzadra and Neilson, borders have a topological function.¹¹ Rather than being a simple line that demarcates inclusion and exclusion, they act as parameters that produce unexpected forms of connection and continuity as well as partitioning and hierarchy. Borders enable the channelling of flows and ‘provide the coordinates within which flows can be joined or segmented, connected or disconnected’.¹² In this topological approach – named under the banner ‘border as method’ – borders do not simply separate existing territories or reflect already existing differences, but also actively create spaces and give birth to new and multiple differences. Crucially, for individuals, borders therefore play a constitutive role in the production and organisation of political subjectivity.¹³

To recognise that the border is a process is therefore also to recognise that the border has a productive capacity. According to Balibar borders have a ‘*world-configuring function*’, or what Mezzadra and Neilson also call a ‘world-making

¹⁰ Ibid, pp.59-60.

¹¹ Ibid, p.59.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Mezzadra and Neilson, *Border as Method*, p.xi; Bauder, ‘Perspectives of Open Borders and No Border’, p.401.

function'.¹⁴ Borders do not simply serve to include or exclude, but play a 'diversity of roles'.¹⁵ They actively produce and re-produce social space rather than marking out an already made world.¹⁶ They create forms of connectivity and continuity as well as forms of hierarchy, filtering, partition, acceptance and rejection, and social stratification.¹⁷ They actively produce and reproduce different social relations. As Balibar writes, borders serve to,

[...] perform precisely this task: not merely to give individuals from different classes different experiences of the law, the civil administration, the police and elementary rights, such as freedom of circulation and freedom of expertise, but actively *differentiate* between individuals in terms of social class.¹⁸

In other words, borders do not just differentiate between different subject positions, they also actively produce different subject positions. As Jonathan Darling writes,

Immigration controls might be understood not simply as taps designed to regulate flows, but also as moulds which shape and condition particular

¹⁴ Ibid, p.59; Balibar, 'What is a Border?', p.79.

¹⁵ Jonathan Darling, 'Domopolitics, Governmentality and the Regulation of Asylum Accommodation', *Political Geography*, 30 (2011), 263-271 (p.264).

¹⁶ Mezzadra and Neilson, 'Between Inclusion and Exclusion: On the Topology of Global Space and Borders', p.59; Darling, 'Domopolitics, Governmentality and the Regulation of Asylum Accommodation', p.264.

¹⁷ Mezzadra and Neilson, 'Between Inclusion and Exclusion: On the Topology of Global Space and Borders', p.59.

¹⁸ Balibar, 'What is a Border?', pp.81-2.

forms of legality and illegality and subject those positioned within such a system to differential modes of power, authority and control.¹⁹

Borders are processes that produce different legal statuses that are borne by individuals and shape individuals. As Julia Schulze Wessel argues, borders are often bound more tightly to individual migrants than to specific locations.²⁰ Differential modes of power and authority extend through the border, beyond concentrated sites of control such as an Immigration Removal Centres or airport passport control, and diffuse into everyday life. Nicholas De Genova has termed this the 'productivity of law' and it returns us to the examples of Colonus and Lampedusa that I set out in the opening sections of Chapter 1 - where the border served as a tragic space of legal ambiguity and incoherence as Oedipus' uncertain legal status meant that he was simultaneously included in and excluded from the Athenian order, and the survivors of the 2013 Lampedusa disaster were initially criminalised and detained, without recognition as being either asylum seekers or economic migrants, and faced destitution and uncertainty, while those who died were subject to ongoing debates over their posthumous honours and status.²¹ Law and policy serve to configure and reconfigure migrants in non-neutral ways. They structure migrant experience.²² According to Wessel, undocumented or irregular migrants encounter

¹⁹ Jonathan Darling, 'Domopolitics, Governmentality and the Regulation of Asylum Accommodation', p.265.

²⁰ Wessel, 'On Border Subjects: Rethinking the Figure of the Refugee and the Undocumented Migrant', p.51.

²¹ Nicholas De Genova, 'Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life', in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 31 (2002), 419-447 (p.425).

²² Nicholas de Genova, 'Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life', p.427; Susan Coutin, *Legalizing Move: Salvadorian Immigrant's Struggle for U.S. Residency*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 200), p.33.

the border 'everywhere'.²³ The border becomes 'omnipresent'.²⁴ As De Genova writes, 'everyday life for the undocumented has become more and more saturated by the regimes that receiving states impose through immigration laws'.²⁵ Immigration law defines the parameters of its own operations 'engendering the conditions of possibility for "legal" as well as "illegal" practices'.²⁶ For the irregular migrant, activities such as driving, travelling, accessing healthcare and education, may become illicit activities.²⁷ Law has a productive capacity and 'its material force, its instrumentality, and its productivity' concern some of the 'most meaningful and salient parameters of social-political life'.²⁸ The capacity of law and policy to produce differential and stratified subject positions, and to configure and reconfigure the status of the migrant, is at the heart of the world-making function of the border.

To recognise the border as a process is also to recognise it as contingent, changing, and historical. Borders evolve and are subject to birth and decay.²⁹ For Edward S. Casey the border is understood along a wider spectrum between 'boundaries' and 'border-lines'. Boundaries are natural spaces that are porous and malleable, while border-lines are defined by closure and exactitude.³⁰ A border-line is another term for a cartographic inscription that designates an unbroken and

²³ Wessel, 'On Border Subjects: Rethinking the Figure of the Refugee and the Undocumented Migrant', p.52.

²⁴ Ibid, p.51.

²⁵ De Genova, 'Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life', p.431.

²⁶ De Genova, 'Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life', p.424.

²⁷ Nicholas de Genova, 'Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life', p.427; Susan Coutin, *Legalizing Move: Salvadorian Immigrant's Struggle for U.S. Residency* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 200), p.33.

²⁸ De Genova, 'Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life', p.432.

²⁹ Edward S. Casey, 'Border versus Boundary at La Frontera', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 29 (2011), 384-398 (pp.390-91).

³⁰ Ibid, p.389.

continuous line of division.³¹ For Casey, borders are hybrid entities, between boundaries and borderlines. They are contingent in origin and in need of continuous support once established.³² Casey's focus is on *La Frontera* – the border between Mexico and the United States of America – which follows the natural course of the Rio Grande. Like other international borders it is 'a product of human history and its vicissitudes'.³³ Established during an 1848 treaty following the Mexican-American War, *La Frontera* has, over the past 170 years, escalated from being demarcated by stone markers to being demarcated by fences and, now, long sections of wall.³⁴ Casey identifies the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] and the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks as key moments in the recent re-organisation of *La Frontera*. The former raised issues over economic migration, as increasing numbers of Mexican farmers were forced off their lands following NAFTA and sought employment in the USA, while the latter emphasised 'questions of national security thanks to the fear of "foreign terrorists" that was so rampant in the immediate wake of 9/11' although *La Frontera* had no direct connection to that event.³⁵ The escalation of *La Frontera's* border apparatus, through the construction of fences, walls, and checkpoints and the increased deployment of border guards, patrols, and drones, was contingent on a perceived vulnerability surrounding security and economic issues, all of which were initially grounded in the territorial expansion of the USA in the mid-nineteenth century.³⁶

³¹ Ibid, p.394.

³² Ibid, p.393.

³³ Ibid, p.385.

³⁴ Ibid, p.386.

³⁵ Ibid, p.387.

³⁶ Ibid, pp.387-392, p.397.

In his study of the 'emerging borderlands' between Europe and Africa, Ruben Andersson begins by describing the tragic events of 7 October 2005 when at least fourteen people died after Moroccan and Spanish security forces opened fire on a crowd attempting to enter the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in north Africa.³⁷ As border controls surrounding Ceuta and Melilla were tightened following the massacre, including the clearance of migrant camps outside the enclaves, a 'new front' opened up in Europe's 'fight against illegal immigration'.³⁸ In 2006 more than 36,000 migrants arrived in the Canary Islands via boat journeys from Senegal. As controls were then tightened in the Canary Islands, including the opening of detention centres and increased sea patrols, Andersson describes how new migrant sea routes began to open up in the Mediterranean and in particular between Libya and Lampedusa, all of which led up to the disaster on 3 October 2013. Melilla, Ceuta, the Canary Islands, and Lampedusa together showed the ever-shifting and contingent patterns of irregular migration between North Africa and Southern Europe. Each also became a site of escalating border controls in response to these shifts which included the construction of fencing and walls, the construction of detention centres, increased policing of departure points and increased sea patrols, increased deportations and detentions at arrival sites, and negotiations between European states and North and West African states that had become points of departure. As Andersson has indicated, the Euro-African border has become a shifting set of routes, practices, and controls that were first shaped by irregular migrants and then, in turn, shaped them through detention,

³⁷ Ruben Andersson, *Illegality Inc: Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), pp.1-3.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p.2.

deportation, criminalisation, and even death. As Dines *et al* write, 'borders are continually refigured'.³⁹ In this context, Lampedusa is not simply an isolated Italian island off the north coast of the African continent, but has become a 'strategic node' along Europe's southern maritime border as European and Italian naval patrols intercept migrant boats who are then made to disembark on the island.⁴⁰ Today, Lampedusa is designated as one of eleven 'hotspots' along the Greek and Italian frontline of the EU.⁴¹ 'The main function of hotspots is the patrolling of migrant bodies and identities', write Glenda Garelli and Martina Tazzioli, through 'fingerprinting and identifying all incoming migrants, while assigning migratory profiles (economic migrants versus refugees) based on their nationality and on the scanty biographical information gathered during swift identification procedures'.⁴²

Borders are 'historical institutions', writes, Balibar, as their political and juridical definitions which determine the ways in which they are organised, recognised, and crossed have been transformed several times over the course of history.⁴³ This history is bound up with colonialism. Balibar and Mezzadra and Neilson have argued that the drawing up of national boundaries within Europe, particularly following the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, was 'also originally and principally a way to *divide up the earth*' among the emerging European colonial states.⁴⁴ In her 2013 study on borders, Harsha Walia develops the notion of 'border

³⁹ Dines, Montagna, Ruggiero, 'Thinking Lampedusa: Border Construction, the Spectacle of Bare Life and the Productivity of Migrants', p.442.

⁴⁰ Ibid, pp.431-433.

⁴¹ Glenda Garelli and Martina Tazzioli, 'The EU Hotspot Approach at Lampedusa', *Open Democracy*, 26 February 2016.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Balibar, 'We the People?', p.108.

⁴⁴ Balibar, 'We the People?', p.7; Mezzadra and Neilson, *Border as Method*, p.4.

imperialism'.⁴⁵ Borders are part and parcel of colonial history and continue to operate through an imperial lens into the present. Walia argues that narratives of empire, and the stratification of migrant labour through hierarchies of race, class, and gender, 'all operate in tandem to lay the foundation for border imperialism'.⁴⁶ Importantly for Walia, the productivity of the border is tied in with these aspects of border imperialism as the border manifests itself as a set of practices that reinforce physical and psychological barriers against racialised others. In the context of the UK, Teresa Hayter argues that the introduction of formal immigration controls at the beginning of the twentieth century were an attempt to appease the demands of a vocal and racist minority in the country.⁴⁷ In her historical overview, Hayter argues that the first immigration controls were introduced in 1905 in order to deter and regulate Jewish immigrants fleeing persecution in Eastern Europe. According to Hayter, immigration controls were then explicitly deployed against people of African and Asian origin, in an attempt to pressure and exclude migrants from formerly colonised areas apart from 'white', commonwealth citizens. For Hayter, the mainstreaming of border controls over the course of the twentieth century served to legitimate and institutionalise racism. Border controls were shaped by racism but also, in turn, came to shape racism as they became deeply embedded in and widely manifest in the rich nation-states of the West.⁴⁸ For Hayter, borders

⁴⁵ Walia, *Undoing Border Imperialism*, p.38.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p.39.

⁴⁷ Teresa Hayter, *Open Borders: The Case Against Immigration Controls*, 2nd Edition (London: Pluto Press, 2004), p.6.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p.21.

more generally serve as an instrument to maintain the myth and sanctity of the supposed superiority of Western civilisation.⁴⁹

3. The Border as Concrete Abstraction

From the above discussion, the notion of the border begins to emerge in all its bristling complexity. Borders are productive sites. They create connections, separations, and stratifications. They filter according to social and legal status and actively produce new statuses. Borders have certain static and fixed qualities, while also being contingent and hybrid. They are laden with histories of conflict and colonialism, while also continuing to be formed in the here and now. The border, as I have argued, is a *process of bordering*. Borders both produce, and are produced by, social relations. They are not only tied to place, but are also borne by individuals and actively shape everyday lived experience. As Balibar acknowledges, it is impossible to give a simple answer to the question ‘what is a border?’.⁵⁰ ‘If we are to understand the unstable world in which we live’, he writes, ‘we need complex notions – in other words, dialectical notions’.⁵¹ Mezzadra and Neilson’s topological approach to borders was based, in part, on a rejection of dialectics. Their border as method ‘questions binaries’ between transformation and invariance, and ‘does not obey the dialectic of inclusion and exclusion’.⁵² Yet,

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.40.

⁵⁰ Balibar, ‘What is a Border?’, p.75.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Mezzadra and Neilson, ‘Between Inclusion and Exclusion: On the Topology of Global Space and Borders’, pp.58-9.

however valuable the insights in their work may be, simplistic binary schemas are not how I have presented and developed dialectics in the previous chapter. As I have argued, understood through the term ‘sublation’, or *aufhebung*, dialectics is a speculative process of cancellation, preservation, and transformation. *Aufhebung* is not taken to be a fixed process or binary schema, but is active in different ways in different circumstances. Essentially, the identity of a concept, subject or thing – such as a ‘border’ – is not given or fixed, but gains meaning through a series of conflicting and contradictory experiences.⁵³ At its most basic, as I have argued via Gillian Rose, to think dialectically is to recognise that social reality is marked by tensions, by fractures, and by *aporias* and can only be understood through the comprehension of these tensions.

Understood dialectically, the border – or more precisely, the process of bordering – is an unstable and complex category that embodies tensions and misrecognitions. Henri Lefebvre’s use of the term ‘concrete abstraction’ in relation to his analysis of social space is useful here.⁵⁴ In its most basic form ‘concrete abstraction’ describes the relation between reified concepts and everyday social life. The abstract is that which is lifted out of social relations and is taken to be ahistorical, static, stable, simplified, and natural; while the concrete is that which is embedded in social relations, shaped by history, and is nuanced, changing, subtle, conflicting, and dynamic. In its abstract form the border becomes ‘fetishized as an

⁵³ Rose, ‘Hegel Contra Sociology’, p.49.

⁵⁴ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p.27, p.101, p.405; Łukasz Stanek, ‘Space as Concrete Abstraction: Hegel, Marx, and Modern Urbanism in Henri Lefebvre’, in *Space, Difference, Everyday Life: Reading Henri Lefebvre*, ed. by Kanishka Goonewardena et al (London: Routledge, 2008), pp.62-79.

object in itself'.⁵⁵ It is 'more an ideal object, an asymptote or regulative ideal, a sheer limit, than a material reality'.⁵⁶ It becomes the taken-for-granted methodological nationalism described by Mezzadra and Neilson. In their concreteness, however, processes of bordering are historically constructed, produced through conflicting social relations, while also producing multiple and conflicting spatial-temporalities through the creation of different legal and social statuses among those who encounter the border. What is crucial to this interaction is that within a 'concrete abstraction' the abstract can easily bear down on the concrete. Rather than everyday lived experience being used to constitute and reconstitute a notion such as the border, the abstract is taken to be, in the words of Karl Marx, 'true in practice'.⁵⁷ In other words, the fixed, fetishized, and ahistorical view of the border becomes a malign and active force in everyday life.

A foundational argument in Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* is that '(social) space is a (social) product'.⁵⁸ With this maxim Lefebvre takes issue with the idea that space is a neutral, innocent, and 'empty area' waiting to be filled with things and actions.⁵⁹ Space understood simply as an empty container is a symptom of the fragmentation of space within western culture between an 'ideal' or abstract mental space and the 'real' or lived space of social practice.⁶⁰ Instead, for Lefebvre, space is a social product that produces and is produced by social relations.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Casey, 'Border versus Boundary at La Frontera', p.387.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Karl Marx, as quoted in Stanek, 'Space as Concrete Abstraction', p.67.

⁵⁸ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp.26-7.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p.1.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.14.

⁶¹ More precisely, Lefebvre articulates social space through two inter-related vocabularies. This is social space as 'social practice, representations of space, and representational space' and also as the 'perceived, conceived, and lived'. According to Christian Schmid, the former is space understood through linguistics while the latter is space understood phenomenologically. Perceived space is

Accordingly, space does not exist universally, and can only be understood in the context of a specific society. As Christian Schmid writes, in this sense, space is not only relational, but fundamentally historical and ‘this calls for an analysis that would include the social constellations, power relations, and conflicts relevant in each situation’.⁶² Yet, for Lefebvre, the dominance of abstract space – understood as a neutral, innocent container – serves to conceal the conflicts within it and the social relations that produce it⁶³. ‘Concrete abstraction’ names this concealment.⁶⁴ Understood as a concrete abstraction, the fixation with the border as being a static, ahistorical, and taken-for-granted boundary of the nation-state serves to mask what I have termed the *border as process*. It serves to mask the colonial history of borders as well as their contingent status and their constant figuring, refiguring, and escalation.

space grasped directly by the senses, conceived space is conceptual space, and lived space is the world as it is experienced in the practice of everyday life. Importantly, these are not discrete or static distinctions, as they are in constant interaction with each other. As Andrew Merrifield writes, ‘relations between the conceived-perceived-lived spaces aren’t ever stable, nor should they be grasped artificially or linearly’. However, Edward Soja’s valorisation of ‘lived space’ as a privileged and transcendent ‘third space’ that incorporates the perceived and the conceived imposes a rigidity on Lefebvre’s understanding of space where there is none. As Stuart Elden argues, Lefebvre would have a problem with such a ‘tendency toward a linear, teleological picture of historical change’. My emphasis on ‘concrete abstraction’ within Lefebvre’s work indicates that there is no reified and politically pure ‘third space’ to retreat to. Social Space is instead understood as constant work and struggle. It is not just a place of conflict, but an object of struggle itself. [Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp.33-39; Christian Schmid, ‘Henri Lefebvre’s Theory of the Production of Space’, trans. by Bandulasena Goonewardena in *Space, Difference, and Everyday Life: Reading Henri Lefebvre*, pp.27-45 (pp.36-40, pp.183-4); Kipfer *et al*, ‘On the Production of Henri Lefebvre’, in *Space, Difference, Everyday Life: Reading Henri Lefebvre*, pp.1-23 (pp.9-10); Andrew Merrifield, *Henri Lefebvre: A Critical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2006), p.111; Edward Soja, *ThirdSpace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp.10-11; Stuart Elden, *Understanding Lefebvre: Theory and the Possible* (London: Continuum, 2004) p.37, pp.183-4.]

⁶² Schmid, ‘Henri Lefebvre’s Theory of the Production of Space’. p.29. As Schmid argues, space and time are not discrete categories for Lefebvre, but are mutually implicated. The same analysis also applies to ‘time’.

⁶³ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, pp.26-28.

⁶⁴ Lefebvre’s understanding of space as a ‘concrete abstraction’ draws heavily on Karl Marx’s account of the commodity. The commodity, fetishized as an abstract thing to be exchanged on the market, conceals the labour and the social relations behind its production. [Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, trans. by Ben Fowkes, vol. 1 (London: Penguin, 1976), p.165, pp.169-70; Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p.81, p.340.]

It also masks the productive capacity of the border and the uneven legal and social statuses that emerge between those who encounter the border. As a 'concrete abstraction' the border is perceived to be a natural emplacement that is lifted out of history and social relations, at the same time that it is actually diffused into everyday life. As a 'concrete abstraction' the border easily becomes the 'enchanted ordinary'. It holds a 'normative force' that can conceal the tragedy of the border or simply accept it as natural and necessary, as how things are done. Borders materialise differently for different people. As Julia Wessel writes, 'for some the border is not even visible, while for others it is a permanent presence'.⁶⁵ People can co-exist within the same spaces without recognising the damage and weight the border can place on some. As Wessel argues, the border becomes more and more significant for particular groups, such as 'undocumented' migrants, and more and more likely to determine and restrict their lives and goals.⁶⁶ This point is crucial to the ethnographic work alongside refused and destitute asylum seekers that I will present in the following chapters.

4. Differential Inclusion and the Community of Value

Over the past two sections I have argued that the border is best understood as a process of bordering, and that it is structured as a 'concrete abstraction' where the idea of the border as a static line demarcating inclusion and exclusion serves to

⁶⁵ Julia Schulze Wessel, 'On Border Subjects: Rethinking the Figure of the Refugee and the Undocumented Migrant', p.52.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

mask the complexity, history, and contingency of different borders. Crucial to both these discussions was the recognition of a border's capacity to produce different legal statuses, or what De Genova termed the 'productivity of law'. In view of my previous discussion on the tragedy *Oedipus at Colonus* and the 2013 Lampedusa disaster, the 'productivity of law' does not so much work along the lines of formal inclusion or exclusion, but instead folds the terms together in ambiguous and uncertain ways. Mezzadra and Neilson argue that, in the context of contemporary migration, distinctions between inclusion and exclusion become pressed and confused.⁶⁷ They introduce the term 'differential inclusion' to question the widespread notion that 'inclusion' is always an unambiguous good, as 'inclusion in a sphere, society, of realm can be subject to varying degrees of subordination, rule, discrimination, and segmentation'.⁶⁸ Differential inclusion involves the submission of migrant subjects to different parameters that purport to measure their worthiness and suitability to undertake certain activities (and for how long) such as employment, education, residency, healthcare, and accessing state support services. As Mezzadra and Neilson write, bordering processes 'tend to multiply and increasingly stratify the legal statuses of subjects inhabiting the same political space, while at the same time allowing an effective policing of the borders and boundaries between different subject positions'.⁶⁹ Differential inclusion can be seen as a critical take on the seemingly neutral and more widespread concept of 'managed migration'. For some, managed migration is a means to optimise the

⁶⁷ Mezzadra and Neilson, *Border as Method*, p.159.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Mezzadra and Neilson, 'Between Inclusion and Exclusion: On the Topology of Global Space and Borders', p.69.

border by separating unwanted migrants from wanted migrants, while also balancing concerns over ‘security’ and the preservation of national identity with the benefits of immigration, particularly the need for skilled labour.⁷⁰ In this respect, managed migration instrumentalises some of the conflicting values within bordering. However, for others, such managed migration is a ruse that employs an underlying logic of the deserving and undeserving with regards to migration.⁷¹ This deserving and undeserving distinction that informs managed migration is a shifting logic that bores through different forms of citizen and migrant, distinguishing the skilled and wanted migrant from the irregular migrant and asylum seeker, and distinguishing the ‘genuine’ asylum seeker from the so-called ‘bogus’ asylum seeker, ultimately conflating legal statuses with value-laden rhetorical labels.

Bridget Anderson’s notion of the ‘community of value’ is useful here.⁷² In the ‘community of value’ the deserving and undeserving distinction is not only related to the various legal statuses a person holds as a citizen or non-citizen, but is also related to holding and acting out shared common and exemplary values. Anderson writes, ‘the community of value is populated by “good citizens”, law-abiding and hard-working members of stable and respectable families’ and ‘part of being an outsider is not sharing the same values – which easily become not having

⁷⁰ Sarah Spencer, ‘Introduction’, in *The Politics of Migration: Managing Opportunity, Conflict and Change*, ed. by Sarah Spencer (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003) pp.1-24 (p.3).

⁷¹ Alice Bloch and Liza Schuster, ‘Asylum and Welfare: Contemporary Debates’, *Critical Social Policy*, 22 (2002), 393-414, (p.399); Jenny Phillimore and Lisa Goodson, ‘Problem or Opportunity? Asylum Seekers, Refugees, Employment and Social Exclusion in Deprived Urban Areas’, *Urban Studies*, 43:10 (2006), 1715-1736, (p.1716); Bridget Anderson, *Us and Them?: The Dangerous Politics of Immigration Control* (OUP, 2013), pp.48-9, p.69-70; Rosemary Sales, ‘The Deserving and Undeserving? Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Welfare in Britain’, *Critical Social Policy*, 22:3 (2002), 456-478 (p.471, 474).

⁷² Anderson, ‘Us and Them?’, p.2.

the “right values”⁷³ Importantly, the community of value is defined from both the inside and outside - with the ‘good citizen’ positioned against the ‘failed citizen’, or benefit claimant, as well as the migrant.⁷⁴ According to Anderson, ‘the community of value is defined from the outside by exclusion, and from the inside by failure, but the excluded also fail, and the failed are also excluded’.⁷⁵ Those on the edge of the community of value risk sliding even further from its centre. The benefit claimant is at risk of becoming the so-called ‘benefit scrounger’, and the non-citizen, whatever their immigration or residency status, can easily be ‘imagined as the “illegal” and thereby associated with the criminal’.⁷⁶ Anderson’s assertion that it is easy for non-citizens to be ‘imagined’ as ‘illegal’ indicates that the deserving and undeserving distinction operates through value-laden labels as much as precise legal statuses. More succinctly, legal status can also be a social status. For Anderson, this is particularly the case with the asylum seeker:

Terms like ‘asylum seeker’ are not simply descriptive of legal status, that is, formal membership, but they are value laden and negative. Immigration and citizenship are not simply about legal status, but fundamentally about status in the sense of worth and honour.⁷⁷

The asylum seeker is a bearer of both a legal status and a social status. Like other categories, they are mutually implicated – a legal-social status. This places the

⁷³ Ibid, pp.3-4.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p.5.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

asylum seeker in the UK in a particular bind. Without the right to work they are often dependent on state or charitable support, and cast as passive and helpless. The community of value is also acted upon them. They may gain refugee status, however temporary, and be taken up as examples of British 'fairness' and 'tolerance' which the community of value can use to reflect back on itself. However, most often asylum seekers are rejected and refused. They are held as examples of people 'abusing the system', and imagined as illegal and culpable. The refused asylum seeker, without the right to work or remain and without the right to access public support, is pushed to the extreme edge of the community of value. The community of value is a vortex that both draws people in and pushes them out depending on their legal-social status; it is a means of determining people as either deserving of recognition or not.

5. Spaces of Asylum

Mustafa Dikeç posed the question of the 'where' of asylum.⁷⁸ For Dikeç this question necessitated an 'engagement with the relationship between law and space', and 'the role that law and policy play in the production of space'.⁷⁹ The question of the where of asylum is therefore a question of the border. It is how the border, which is formed in the relation between law and space, acts as a mechanism for the production of spaces of asylum. 'Spaces of asylum' are where

⁷⁸ Mustafa Dikeç, 'The "Where" of Asylum', p.183.

⁷⁹ Ibid, pp.183-4.

the legal and social processes of asylum policy are played out. This definition is purposively broad as it allows the deep contradictions between refuge and abandonment that are contained within asylum policy to be brought to the fore. Spaces of asylum are spaces on which borders are enacted, bringing together a complex and often conflicting set of notions including movement and fixity, rationalities of care that are coupled with control, containment, and incarceration, and the multiple and conflicting temporalities that emerge when an individual is maintained in temporary status – whether as an asylum seeker, temporary refugee, or refused asylum seeker – over the long term. The ‘where’ of asylum depends not on a singular, narrowly defined border, but is the border as enacted across multiple sites and at multiple scales, and the border as borne by the legal-social status of individuals, both within and beyond the formal boundaries of the nation-state. These external and internal borders can include ports, pre-entry interceptions, extra-territorial processing centres, pre-entry controls such as carrier fines, inland Immigration Removal Centres [IRC], inland reporting-in controls, and in the UK, National Asylum Support Service accommodation [NASS]. According to Vicki Squire, the extension and escalation of the border, whether through external or internal controls, serves to ‘shrink the political space of asylum’.⁸⁰ As a political space, ‘spaces of asylum’ are spaces of refuge and sanctuary. They are spaces of agency and individual and collective potential. Yet, this political space of asylum is understood in distinction from more adverse meanings and actions that are also contained within the notion ‘spaces of asylum’. In this latter sense, ‘spaces of

⁸⁰ Vicki Squire, *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), p.116.

asylum' are sites of depreciating rights, restriction, indignity, immobility, and forced mobility.

There are tensions within my working notion of 'spaces of asylum' as contradictory and conflicting values and practices shift within it. These take place in practice, in policy, and in discourse. They include what Ruben Andersson refers to as 'the strange mix of visibility and invisibility, of neglect and attention, and of humanitarianism and violence that define Europe's anti-immigration efforts'.⁸¹ In his study of Swedish IRCs, Shahram Khosravi describes them as sites 'built on "hostile hospitality" [...] partly a site of hospitality, partly a site of hostility'.⁸² Such tensions are also found in state-backed asylum support structures such as the UK's National Asylum Support Service [NASS] which offers housing and financial support, but does so in a degraded form that is deliberately separated from mainstream welfare provision.⁸³ These contradictions also appear in political rhetoric, exemplified by former Prime Minister David Cameron's recent to-and-fro over the UK's approach to the European refugee crisis, at once describing the UK as a country of 'extra compassion' with a 'moral responsibility' to help those fleeing conflict in the Middle East, while also referring to migrants attempting to gain access to the UK via the port of Calais as a 'swarm' threatening the nation's borders.⁸⁴ These contradictions in rhetoric, policy, and practice, also refer back to

⁸¹ Andersson, *Illegality Inc.*, p.27.

⁸² Shahram Khosravi, 'Sweden: Detention and Deportation of Asylum Seekers', *Race and Class*, 50:4 (2009), 38-56 (p.53).

⁸³ Hayter, *Open Borders*, p.xv; Tom Vickers, *Refugees, Capitalism and the British State: Implications for Social Workers, Volunteers and Activists* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), p.1; Sales, 'The Deserving and Undeserving?'

⁸⁴ 'UK to Accept 20,00 Refugees from Syria by 2020', *BBC*, 7 September 2015; Jessica Elgot and Matthew Taylor, 'Calais Crisis: Cameron Condemned for "Dehumanising" Description of Migrants', *The Guardian*, 30 July 2015.

my earlier discussion on *Oedipus at Colonus* and the 2013 Lampedusa disaster. Sophocles declared Athens to be a 'Just City' at the same time that Oedipus was instrumentalised as a 'model immigrant' and never fully included in the Athenian order, while the Italian state's conflicting treatment of the survivors and fatalities of the 2013 Lampedusa disaster led to the former being criminalised and the latter honoured.

Yet, 'spaces of asylum' is a term that not only covers the conflicts within 'state thought' and its reduction of migrants to either threats or helpless victims, or as 'guests' in an uneven relation to the 'host' state; it also poses challenges to these statist binaries. Vicki Squire and Jonathan Darling have written about the 'City of Sanctuary' movement in the UK.⁸⁵ This movement originated in Sheffield and advocates a positive vision of 'sanctuary' by promoting relationships between established residents and people seeking asylum through a network of localised activities.⁸⁶ It includes collective engagements in projects such as conversation clubs and cafés in which asylum seekers are participants and volunteers and are invited to take positions of responsibility.⁸⁷ According to Squire and Darling such projects and activities promote a 'minor politics' that has the capacity to disrupt and exceed statist framings of migrants by momentarily levelling hierarchies of 'host' and 'guest'.⁸⁸ In this respect, 'spaces of asylum' can challenge certain

⁸⁵ Jonathan Darling, 'A City of Sanctuary: The Relational Re-imagining of Sheffield's Asylum Policies', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 35:1 (2009), 125-40; Vicki Squire, 'From Community Cohesion to Mobile Solidarities: The *City of Sanctuary* Network and the *Strangers into Citizens* Campaign', *Political Studies*, 59 (2011), 290-307; Squire and Darling, 'The "Minor" Politics of Rightful Presence: Justice and Relationality in *City of Sanctuary*'.

⁸⁶ Darling, 'A City of Sanctuary'; Squire, 'From Community Cohesion to Mobile Solidarities', p.295; Squire and Darling, 'The "Minor" Politics of Rightful Presence', p.61.

⁸⁷ Squire, 'From Community Cohesion to Mobile Solidarities', pp.297-8.

⁸⁸ Squire and Darling, 'The "Minor" Politics of Rightful Presence', p.71.

framings of migrants, while at the same time recognising the fact that statist rationalities remain prevalent.⁸⁹ It is such contradictions and tensions that shape and inform my account of ‘spaces of asylum’ and which will later be carried through to my more focused analysis of the Manchester street and the Boaz Trust night shelters.

Mustafa Dikeç located two theoretical strands within the question of the ‘where’ of asylum which he termed ‘spaces of law’ and ‘spaces of lawlessness’.⁹⁰ The former, rooted in critical legal geography is animated by a concern to see law as connected to social life, as shaping and shaped by social relations. It is constitutive of social relations and reflects my above discussion on the ‘productivity of law’ with reference to De Genova, Balibar, and Mezzadra and Neilson. ‘Spaces of lawlessness’, on the other hand, refers to the political philosophy of Giorgio Agamben and is ‘more concerned with the spatiality of law and sovereign power’.⁹¹ Law is active in constructing spaces of abandonment, which is not taken to mean the absence of law as such, but an exposure to the potential violence committed through law.⁹² Yet, for Dikeç, the distinction between spaces of law and spaces of lawlessness are not so clear cut. Asylum law and policy take on a variety of spatial (and temporal) manifestations – from detention centres to everyday life on city streets – and Dikeç argues that the question of the ‘where’ of asylum deserves attention from both perspectives.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Dikeç, ‘The “Where” of Asylum’, p.183.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid, pp.183-4.

The question of the ‘where’ of asylum therefore brings together the main conceptual blocks at work in this chapter. The first was viewing the border as a ‘concrete abstraction’ that underpinned my understanding of the border as a space that produces and is produced by social relations. Rather than being a single site built on the binary of exclusion and inclusion, I have argued that the border is a process of differential inclusion operating through a deserving and undeserving logic. This will now be followed by a section on the ‘Weaponisation of Time’ which uses Agamben’s politics of abandonment as a basis for understanding the antagonistic and multiple temporalities that shape the situation of asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers in the UK.

6. Before the Law: Abandonment and the Weaponisation of Time

In Franz Kafka’s *The Trial*, Josef K. is arrested in his home for undisclosed reasons by a powerful but inaccessible authority.⁹³ In his pursuit of the reasons for his arrest and his search for an understanding of the court’s operational logic and rationality, Josef K. is only confronted by a system whose ambiguities and seemingly arbitrary authority deny such manoeuvres.⁹⁴ Over the course of the novel the workings of the court begin to bear down on Josef K.’s personal, family and work life, and supposedly private spaces become sites of legal administration. Court hearings take place in tenement attics, floggings take place in Josef K.’s workplace,

⁹³ Franz Kafka, *The Trial*, trans. by Idris Parry (London: Penguin, 2000).

⁹⁴ Rolf J. Goebel, ‘The Exploration of the Modern City in *The Trial*’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Kafka*, ed. by Julian Preece (CUP, 2002), 42-60 (p.50).

and bedrooms become spaces dedicated to legal advocacy. As Patrick Bridgwater points out, the German title *Der Process* indicates not only a manifest legal process, but also an internalised mental process.⁹⁵ 'Josef K's 'Proceß' concerns his own existence' with an opaque and incoherent legal apparatus collapsing into his everyday life and *vice versa*.⁹⁶

Kafka includes an explanatory parable within the novel titled, 'Before the Law'. The parable tells of a man from the country who arrives at the door to the law. He asks to enter, but the door-keeper says that he cannot give permission yet. The man from the country waits outside the door 'for days and years'.⁹⁷ The man 'curses this unfortunate chance, loudly in the first years and later, as he grows old, he merely mumbles to himself. He becomes infantile'.⁹⁸ In his dying moments the man is informed by the door-keeper that the door to the law was meant only for the man. The door-keeper then motions to close the door.

Both the novel and the parable have served as touchstones for illustrating the situation of the refused asylum seeker, refugee, and migrant who are rendered 'illegal'. Like Josef K., the law is encountered as 'beguiling in its details' and without clear or consistent procedure.⁹⁹ The law is imposing but absent and – as for the man from the country - it is encountered as 'available but not accessible'.¹⁰⁰

Building on this, I wish to argue that for the asylum seeker and refused asylum

⁹⁵ Patrick Bridgwater, *Kafka's Novels: An Interpretation* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003), p.108.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p.119.

⁹⁷ Kafka, *The Trial*, p.166.

⁹⁸ Ibid, p.167.

⁹⁹ Aashti Bhartiya, 'Fictions of Law: The Trial of Sulaiman Oladokun or Reading Kafka in an Immigration Court', in *The Deportation Regime: Sovereignty, Space and the Freedom of Movement*, ed. by Nicholas De Genova and Nathalie Peutz (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2010), pp.329-49 (pp.329-30).

¹⁰⁰ Shahram Khosravi, *'Illegal' Traveller: An Auto-Ethnography of Borders* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.36.

seeker the law is known to the extent that it is experienced, and it is experienced through different forms of temporal uncertainty – from prolonged and mundane periods of ‘waiting’, to destabilising and frenzied moments of accelerated change. This temporal uncertainty takes the form of what Nina Power has termed the ‘weaponisation of time’ in which the state uses time as a method of punishment, prior to actually penalising someone.¹⁰¹ I also wish to argue that this weaponised time is underpinned by the politics of abandonment.

For Giorgio Agamben, Kafka’s parable ‘Before the Law’ is a succinct expression of ‘abandonment’.¹⁰² As the man from the country waits outside the door to the law, ‘law applies to him in no longer applying, and holds him in its ban in abandoning him outside itself. The open door destined only for him includes him in excluding him and excludes him in including him’.¹⁰³ Abandonment takes the paradoxical form of an inclusive exclusive which, for Agamben, is the foundation of western politics.

In the opening pages of his key work *Homo Sacer*, Agamben observes that the ancient Greeks had no single term for the word ‘life’.¹⁰⁴ Instead they had two terms, *zoē* and *bios*, that were ‘semantically and morphologically distinct’.¹⁰⁵ *Zoē* designated natural biological life common to all things, while *bios* indicated a qualified life in the form or way of living proper to an individual or group.¹⁰⁶ *Bios* was akin to Aristotle’s definition of the human being as a creature of the *polis*, who

¹⁰¹ Nina Power, ‘Time Does not Always Heal: State Violence and Psychic Damage’, *Open Democracy*, 28 April 2014.

¹⁰² Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.49.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, p.50.

¹⁰⁴ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.1.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*.

participates in the 'being-together' of the political community.¹⁰⁷ For Agamben, this early distinction between *zoē* and *bios* marks out a foundational political relation within the history of western politics. Turning to Aristotle, Agamben states that within this ancient Greek understanding of political community, *bios* can only ever be constituted through the exclusion of *zoē*.¹⁰⁸ The life of the political community is founded on this originary exclusion. It is Agamben's key term, 'bare life' that emerges from this exclusion. Bare life is produced whenever *zoē* is separated from *bios*, and as such is positioned at the limits of law in the form of an 'inclusive exclusion' - a positioning that is best articulated in the 'ban'. According to Agamben,

He who has been banned is not, in fact, simply set outside the law and made indifferent to it but rather *abandoned* by it, that is, exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside, become indistinguishable. It is literally not possible to say whether the one who has been banned is outside or inside the juridical order.¹⁰⁹

The paradoxical 'inclusive exclusion' of the ban places bare life at the threshold of the political community, as bare life constitutes it through its very exclusion. Yet, bare life is in fact more clearly positioned in relation to sovereignty. Bare life and the sovereign are the two figures that stand at polar ends of 'inclusive exclusion'. While bare life is captured within the law – structured as a ban – it is the sovereign

¹⁰⁷ Aristotle, 'Politics', in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, pp.1127-1324 (L 1253a).

¹⁰⁸ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.2.

¹⁰⁹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.29.

who decides who is placed in the ban.¹¹⁰ It is the sovereign who decides the exception, who is figured as bare life. In doing so the sovereign also exists in a paradox, albeit as an 'exclusive inclusion', as it is the sovereign who is positioned 'outside the law' but can also 'declare that there is nothing outside the law'.¹¹¹ Importantly, for Agamben, bare life and sovereignty are not historically static notions, but are continually refigured over the course of western political history. It is his modern figuring of the refugee as bare life and 'citizenship' as a more diffuse structure of sovereignty in modern liberal democracies that become pertinent to this study. As Jonathan Darling writes, the asylum seeker is produced as bare life as she is 'outside recourse to the law, but not outside its application and imposition'.¹¹² There has been some criticism levelled at Agamben in this construction of asylum seekers and refugees, as the 'refugee' is a bearer of legal rights in both international and national laws.¹¹³ Yet while this may indicate that no particular figure can be pinned to 'bare life' or the 'sovereign' as such, it also highlights that the asylum seeker and refused asylum seeker, who have been continually, but not completely, stripped of rights are on a slide towards bare life.

¹¹⁰ In his work *Political Theology* the fascist legal theorist Carl Schmitt also argued that the 'sovereign is he who decides on the exception'. [Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. by George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), p.5]. The state of exception is the suspension of the normal rule of law. As I discussed in the previous section 'Spaces of Asylum', it is what Mustafa Dikeç termed a 'space of lawlessness' which is not to be taken as the absence of law as such, but rather an exposure to the violent potential of the law through the suspension or depreciation of rights and liberties. Deciding on the exception is deciding who is to be placed under a 'ban'. Giorgio Agamben's politics of abandonment is deeply rooted in Schmitt's notion of sovereign power.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p.27, p.15.

¹¹² Jonathan Darling, 'Becoming Bare Life: Asylum, Hospitality, and the Politics of Encampment', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 27.4 (2009), 649-665 (p.651).

¹¹³ Lechte and Newman, *Agamben and the Politics of Human Rights*, p.105.

A crucial argument I wish to make in this study is that being subject to a 'ban' has a temporal impact. There is a critical link between 'bare life' and temporality. 'Waiting' is an essential, but often overlooked, feature of both Kafka's parable and the *The Trial* as a whole. In the parable, the man from the country waits his entire life 'before the law'. Being held in the ban is an infantilising process and the man is reduced to mumbling to himself in protest at being denied access to the law. In the novel, Josef K. is in a constant state of waiting, and this waiting takes place in the spaces of everyday life – his home, his work, the street and the living spaces of other characters. Significantly, the 'waiting room' of the secretive court, along with the court itself, is located in the attic of the tenement building.¹¹⁴ Waiting before the law collapses into the everyday so that 'in Kafka's village the empty potentiality of the law is so much in force as to become indistinguishable from life'.¹¹⁵ The 'weaponisation of time' is formed in this collapse of law and life in the form of abandonment. The question of the weaponisation of time is not only a question of whose time is given weight in the community of value, but also the way in which the state uses time as a 'method of punishing, even before it seeks to actually penalise you'.¹¹⁶ Power writes,

This stretching out of time is a central feature of what punishment *is*, from the slowness of bringing someone to trial, to the trial process itself, to

¹¹⁴ Kafka, 2000, pp.49-51.

¹¹⁵ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.53.

¹¹⁶ Power, 'Time Does not Always Heal: State Violence and Psychic Damage'.

prison, the purest manifestation of time used as a weapon, against the very nature of what it means to be human.¹¹⁷

The weaponisation of time is the individual entering what Lefebvre would term a conflicting 'arrhythmic' relation with the state.¹¹⁸ In other words, it is the uneven relationship between the individual and state – under Abdelmalek Sayad's banner of 'state thought' – expressed and lived temporally. Power's focus is on the criminal justice system, but this is also transferable to the context of asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers. As Bloch and Schuster write, 'because the determination process can be lengthy – in some cases taking years – asylum seekers can become marginalized on a long-term basis through legal and structural barriers that affect social and economic settlement'.¹¹⁹ In this respect, time amplifies the exclusions already faced by those in the asylum claims process and those who have been rejected by this process. For the refused asylum seeker, and the men in the Boaz Trust night shelters, time becomes bifurcated. It is 'waiting' as both a mundane activity and 'waiting' as an imposing and antagonistic bureaucratic process. It is a waiting shaped by destitution and dependency that is repeated on a daily basis. It is waiting for the shelters to open, waiting in the drop-in, waiting for transport to the shelters, waiting for meals and rest, waiting for the shelters to close and seeing out the day until the next shelter opens. It is also waiting as a long-term bordering process. It is waiting to lodge an asylum claim, waiting for an

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (London: Continuum, 2004), p.68.

¹¹⁹ Alice Bloch and Liza Schuster, 'Asylum and Welfare: Contemporary Debates', *Critical Social Policy*, 22:3 (2002), 393-414 (p.409).

initial decision, waiting for an appeal to be lodged and waiting for an appeal decision. It is waiting for Section 4 support. For the refused asylum seeker most of this bureaucratic waiting takes place from a position of destitution.

Melanie Griffiths has argued that the 'temporal uncertainties' experienced by refused asylum seekers have tended to be neglected in academic study.¹²⁰ Griffiths is drawing on Saulo B Cwerner's earlier and broader assertion that while both time and migration are crucial themes in the study of global processes, very little has been said about their relation.¹²¹ In his later analysis of the UK's 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act and 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act, Cwerner argued that a 'time politics' had emerged in which the state used speed as a major parameter for the temporal re-organisation of asylum politics in the UK.¹²² The imperative for speed became an instrument of deterrence by fast-tracking asylum claims through techniques that included reducing the period available for the submission of evidence after the initial interview, reducing the time allowed for submitting appeals and accelerating the appeals process. It also included the introduction of a list of 'safe countries' from which asylum claims would be considered unfounded (thereby reducing decision time to zero), as well as the introduction of reception centres in order to process claims in a matter of days, which limited the asylum seeker's ability to relate the full details of their case.¹²³

¹²⁰ Melanie Griffiths, 'Out of Time: The Temporal Uncertainties of Refused Asylum Seekers and Immigration Detainees', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 40:2 (2014), 1991-2009 (p.1991).

¹²¹ Saulo B. Cwerner, 'The Times of Migration', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 27:1 (2001), 7-36 (p.7).

¹²² Saulo B. Cwerner, 'Faster, Faster, Faster: The Time Politics of Asylum in the UK', *Time and Society*, 13:1 (2004), 71-88 (p.71, p.73); HM Government, *Immigration and Asylum Act* (1999); HM Government *Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act* (2002).

¹²³ Cwerner, 'Faster, Faster, Faster', pp. 74-8; Trine Lester, 'Access to Legal Services for Asylum-seekers in Britain: An Exploratory Research Study in Recent Developments' (Sussex Migration Working Paper No.1, Sussex Centre for Migration Research, 2000), p.17.

While Cwerner highlights particular governmental technologies based on acceleration, it is Griffiths' expanded account of the myriad temporalities faced by refused asylum seekers – from the *sticky time* of prolonged waiting to the *frenzied time* of sudden changes in situation – that will become crucial to this study.¹²⁴ For Griffiths, 'refused asylum seekers are subject to multiple temporal tensions' in which the 'systematic primacy of waiting' is emphasised but which also include antagonistic and accelerated bureaucratic processes, forming a 'dual uncertainty of time' characterised by the contradictory prospect of both imminent and absent change.¹²⁵ Following research based on formal interviews and informal conversations, Griffiths highlighted four temporalities encountered by refused asylum seekers that were often experienced simultaneously. *Sticky time*, or the slow time of waiting, is the imposition of waiting through bureaucratic procedures, always with the glimmer of hope for eventual change in status or situation. For Griffiths this 'waiting' is part of a technique of control that sustains the marginality and compliance of refused asylum seekers and undocumented migrants.¹²⁶ As I will argue with reference to the Boaz Trust night shelters, this slow time of waiting includes both functional and dysfunctional bureaucracy. *Suspended time* is the experience of 'directionless stasis' or the imposition of waiting without a goal.¹²⁷ It is the experience of an 'unproductive, endless present' marked by an inability to plan or believe in a future and typified by indefinite detention in an IRC, but in this

¹²⁴ Griffiths, 'Out of Time: The Temporal Uncertainties of Refused Asylum Seekers and Immigration Detainees', p.1996, p.1998.

¹²⁵ Ibid, p.1991. Griffith's study 'draws on the narratives of refused asylum seekers'. [Ibid, p.1992] The different temporalities she outlines are drawn from the experiences and descriptions provided by asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers themselves, rather than any explicitly stated policy outcomes.

¹²⁶ Ibid, p.1996.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

study it will also include the experience of prolonged stays in the Boaz Trust night shelter network.¹²⁸ 'Frenzied time' is an accelerated political and administrative 'frantic pace of change', experienced as a fast rushing out of control where developments can happen suddenly and without warning.¹²⁹ For Griffiths, this may include release from an IRC into the community without warning where an individual has no time to find accommodation and becomes destitute.¹³⁰

Connected to 'frenzied time' are 'temporal ruptures' which Griffiths defines as significant dislocations of temporal and geographical expectations.¹³¹ At their extreme ends 'temporal ruptures' are the products of 'involuntary mobility' implemented through deportations, transfers between IRCs or dispersals, and carry the 'potential to dramatically alter people's temporal patterns and imaginings'.¹³² Importantly for Griffiths, while 'temporal ruptures' may be experienced as disempowering and disruptive, they can also become positive experiences of change, particularly if they are the result of a successful appeal or release from detention.¹³³ As will be discussed in the following chapters, arrival and departure from the night shelter network constitutes a form of 'temporal rupture' and transition point for refused asylum seekers that includes both negative and positive experiences.

Significantly, for Griffiths, the experience of these four temporalities – both simultaneously and individually – form a 'temporal difference' or perceived

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, p.1998.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, pp.1998-1999.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p.1999.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, p.2000.

¹³² *Ibid*.

¹³³ *Ibid*, pp.1999-2000.

disjunction not only between refused asylum seekers and those around them, but also between expectations of progress and efficiency and the experience of the immigration and judicial system in practice.¹³⁴ As I will discuss in chapters 4 and 7, the primacy of waiting coupled with ‘frenzied time’ and forced mobility constitute a source of shame and oppression that entrenches alterity and constructs refused asylum seekers as different from those around them.¹³⁵

While not regarding Griffith’s account as a rigid framework, it does add precision to our understanding of the ‘weaponisation of time’, particularly in relation to refused asylum seekers and those using the Boaz Trust night shelters. It also serves a much wider aim of inserting temporality as a fundamental aspect of the concrete experience of the politics of abandonment. In view of this, in later chapters I will approach the night shelters as sites of ‘arrival and departure’ and as a form of ‘waiting room’. Building on Griffiths’ emphasis on the ‘primacy of waiting’, the night shelters are sites where refused asylum seekers are given emergency shelter provision as they ‘wait’, understood both as a mundane and repetitive set of daily activities and as a wider hostile bureaucratic process.

7. Asylum Policy in the UK

In this chapter, I have argued that the border can be best understood as a *process of bordering*. In framing the border in this way, I have brought together

¹³⁴ Ibid, p.1994.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p.1998.

two different conceptual blocks – the border as a ‘concrete abstraction’, and the border as a form of abandonment or what Mustafa Dikeç has also termed ‘spaces of law’ and ‘spaces of lawlessness’. As a concrete abstraction the border is understood as contingent and historical and producing stratified legal-social statuses while also, and at the same time, concealing these histories, contingencies, and stratifications behind a fetishized notion of the border. As a ‘space of lawlessness’ the border is understood as instituting a politics of the ‘ban’ in which the individual is placed under the authority of the law at the same time that they are removed from its protection. Both of these conceptual blocks are formed in the collapse of the binary between inclusion and exclusion. In the concluding two sections of this chapter I intend to relate these wider theoretical approaches to the specific context of asylum policy in the UK, arguing that the increasingly restrictive policies and practices within the UK place asylum claimants on a slide towards destitution and ‘bare life’, while also presenting these practices as natural and neutral to those not caught up in the system.

7.1 The Pejorative Construction of Asylum

‘Asylum seeker’ is a policy term for someone who has ‘crossed an international border in search of protection, but whose claim for refugee status has not yet been decided’.¹³⁶ The asylum seeker resides in limbo, in the precarious and

¹³⁶ Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 4th Edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p.189.

contingent position of a person awaiting a decision, a person who is no longer protected by his or her own state, but does not yet fit the exceptional status of a refugee who requires protection.¹³⁷ The asylum seeker is an ambiguous and transitional figure, caught up in a temporary form of 'inclusive exclusion' as the receiving state considers whether to accept or reject the individual, to either offer a more stable and protected status as a refugee or to further remove protections and increase the individual's legal and social uncertainty through rejection. A further slide into 'bare life' is potentially on the horizon. The category of 'asylum seeker' is distinct from both a 'refugee' and a 'refused asylum seeker' which are two of the possible outcomes once a decision about a claimant's status has been made. A refugee is defined under the UN Convention on Refugees as a person who is unwilling or unable to return to their home country of nationality because of a 'well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion', while a 'refused asylum seeker' is someone who has had their claim for refugee status rejected.¹³⁸

Although the categories of 'asylum seeker', 'refugee', and 'refused asylum seeker' appear as rather static policy categories, they are also set within highly politicised histories of migration and often take on a rhetorical and social status that loosens, exceeds and undermines any stable understanding of the categories. They diffuse into further categories such as 'genuine refugee', 'temporary protection', and 'bogus asylum seeker', as will be discussed below. As such, the categories of 'asylum seeker', 'refugee', and 'refused asylum seeker' become

¹³⁷ Vicki Squire, *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum*, p.3

¹³⁸ United Nations High Commission for Refugees, *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees* (1951), Article 1, A (2).

instances of my figuration of the border as a 'concrete abstraction' as they can be taken to be neutral and set categories that conceal their highly politicised origins and troubled development. As Robert Zetter has stated in relation to the labelling of refugees, there is a need to 'reveal the political in the apolitical'.¹³⁹ It is my intention, in the remainder of this section, to highlight the construction of asylum as an increasingly pejorative political category that serves as a basis for understanding the increased restrictions placed on asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers within the UK.

There is wide consensus that the end of the Cold War marked a shift in how asylum was approached both politically and socially in the UK.¹⁴⁰ Although the modern legal concept of the refugee emerged out of the need to manage displaced persons in Europe in the wake of World War II, Balibar insists that during the Cold War the right to asylum was used as a weapon in the ideological struggle between western capitalist states and communist states.¹⁴¹ The acceptance of political dissidents and defectors was a 'powerful source of propaganda for the West', and as Bloch and Schuster have noted, the value in accepting asylum seekers was not because of any inherent belief in the rights of individual migrants, but because it

¹³⁹ Robert Zetter, 'More Labels, Fewer Refugees: Remaking the Refugee Label in an Era of Globalization', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 20:2 (2007), 172-192 (p.188).

¹⁴⁰ Bloch and Schuster, 'Asylum and Welfare: Contemporary Debates', p.397; Spencer, 'Introduction', in *The Politics of Migration*, p.3; Randell Hansen, 'Migration in Europe since 1945: Its History and its Lessons', in *The Politics of Migration*, pp.25-38 (p.35); Paul Statham, 'Understanding Anti-Asylum Rhetoric: Restrictive Politics or Racist Publics?', in *The Politics of Migration*, pp.163-177 (p.163); Zetter, 'More Labels, Fewer Refugees: Remaking the Refugee Label in an Era of Globalization', p.179; Squire, *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum*, p.6; Castles and Miller, *The Age of Migration*, p.191; Carol Bohmer and Amy Shuman, *Rejecting Refugees: Political Asylum in the 21st Century* (London: Routledge, 2008), p.15.

¹⁴¹ Liisa Malkki, 'Refugees and Exile: From "Refugee Studies" to the National Order of Things', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24, 595-523 (p.497); Balibar, 'What is a Border?', p.80.

was politically expedient to do so.¹⁴² This political expediency was lost after the break-up of the Soviet Union and collapse of the governments in the Eastern Bloc. Western states no longer needed to assert a moral superiority over their ideological rivals. This post-Cold War situation opened up the categories of ‘asylum’ and ‘refugee’ to new complexities, beyond their Eurocentric origins and the binary ideological battle of the Cold War.¹⁴³ New forms of armed conflict and communal violence flared up as the Cold War came to an end which included the increasing use of population displacement as a political and military weapon.¹⁴⁴ Coupled with this was a large increase in refugee populations, and applications for asylum in Western Europe doubled to 695,000 between 1989 and 1992. In the same period, according to data compiled by Oxford University’s Migration Observatory, asylum applications to the UK increased from 11,640 to 24,605 with asylum applications later peaking in 2002 at 82,000.¹⁴⁵

The 1990s saw in what some commentators have termed the ‘politicisation’ of asylum in the UK as distinctly hostile and guarded positions were taken up in both policy and political rhetoric.¹⁴⁶ From this point, UK asylum policy has largely followed a trajectory of increased restrictions, controls, depreciating rights,

¹⁴² Castles and Miller, *The Age of Migration*, p.191; Bloch and Schuster, 2002, p.397.

¹⁴³ Zetter, ‘More Labels, Fewer Refugees’, p.174.

¹⁴⁴ Gil Loescher, *Refugee Movements and International Security*, Adelphi Papers 268 (London: Brassey’s for the International Institute of Strategic Studies, 1992), pp.4-5; Jeff Crisp, ‘Refugees and the Global Politics of Asylum’, in *The Politics of Migration*, pp.75-87 (p.75).

¹⁴⁵ Migration Observatory, <<http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/migration-to-the-uk-asylum>> [Accessed 1 September 2016]. According to the Migration Observatory there were 32,414 applications in 2015. There has been a consistent rise in asylum applications from 2010 onwards, in large part due to conflicts spreading in the Middle East following the so-called ‘Arab Spring’.

¹⁴⁶ Statham, ‘Understanding Anti-Asylum Rhetoric’, p.163; Castles and Miller, *The Age of Migration*, p.192.

securitisation and criminalisation.¹⁴⁷ The 1993 Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act enabled the UK government to detain asylum seekers pending a decision and set strict time limits for appeals, while the 1996 Asylum Immigration Act introduced restrictions on the right to work and removed welfare benefit rights for those who had made their asylum claims after entering the UK. The right to work for asylum seekers was comprehensively removed in the 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act. Yet, alongside these increasing restrictions were moments that highlighted the ‘hospitable’ side of asylum legislation. The 1993 Act made the Refugee Convention part of UK law, and the 1998 Human Rights Act incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law, ‘giving human rights the status of ‘higher law’ and which in cases of conflict would overrule national legislation’.¹⁴⁸ As Darling writes,

The UK [...] has a fractious history of relations with asylum, with governments seemingly caught between a desire to appear benevolent towards those deemed ‘worthy refugees’ and a wish to be seen as ‘hard line’ upon those whose legitimacy to ‘be here’ is placed in question’.¹⁴⁹

Particularly important for this study is the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act that established a separate system of welfare support for asylum seekers under the newly formed National Asylum Support Service. This support included

¹⁴⁷ Darling, ‘Domopolitics, Governmentality and the Regulation of Asylum Accommodation’, p.264; Squire, *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum*, p.116; Chris Philo, Emma Briant, and Pauline Donald, *Bad News For Refugees* (London: Pluto Press, 2013), pp.19-28.

¹⁴⁸ Philo *et al*, *Bad News for Refugees*, p.25.

¹⁴⁹ Darling, ‘Becoming Bare Life’, p.650.

accommodation provision that was tied to a policy of dispersal, where asylum seekers were dispersed to different areas around the country on a no-choice basis in order to have their claims processed. For Sales and Bloch and Schuster, establishing NASS was further indication of the deserving and undeserving distinction at work as asylum seekers were placed within a 'separate and inadequate' support system.¹⁵⁰ Yet, it also fits within the UK's wider fractious and contradictory relation to asylum as the establishment of a separate system of support tied to dispersal allows the UK to simultaneously appear benevolent and supportive while also taking a 'hard line' on asylum. The official rationale behind dispersal was to resolve issues of 'service strain' on London and the South East, as concentrations of asylum seekers were viewed as putting pressure on local authority resources.¹⁵¹ Under the 1999 Act reception centres to accommodate asylum seekers while their claims were processed were opened across the country, particularly in the Midlands and the North, including Manchester. The availability of cheap and vacant housing was a determining factor in locating dispersal areas, and asylum seekers were typically relocated to areas that were high on the Local Deprivation Index.¹⁵² Dispersal sits alongside detention and deportation as a

¹⁵⁰ Sales, 'Deserving and Undeserving?'; Bloch and Schuster, 'Asylum and Welfare: Contemporary Debates', p.399.

¹⁵¹ Squire, *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum*, p.118; Bloch and Schuster, 'At the Extremes of Exclusion: Deportation, Detention, and Dispersal', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28:3 (2005), 491-512 (p.506); Robert Zetter, David Griffiths and Nando Sigona, 'Social Capital or Social Exclusion? The Impact of Asylum-Seeker Dispersal on UK Refugee Community Organizations', *Community Development Journal*, 40:2 (2005), 169-181 (p.171); Phillimore and Goodson, 'Problem or Opportunity?', p.1716.

¹⁵² Nick Gill, 'Governmental Mobility: The Power Effects of the Movement of Detained Asylum Seekers Around Britain's Detention Estate', *Political Geography*, 28 (2009), 186-196; Phillimore and Goodson, 'Problem or Opportunity?', pp.1715-1717.

‘punitive technology’ designed to deter asylum seekers.¹⁵³ For Squire, deterrence is not so much preventative as it is ‘a selective and depoliticising rationality that both prohibits and punishes “undesirables” such as ‘asylum seekers’.¹⁵⁴ In this sense, dispersal uses accommodation as a regulatory tool to manage an unwanted population.¹⁵⁵ However, while detention and deportation feed into an exclusionary cycle of securitisation and criminalisation, dispersal, for Squire, acts as a form of abjectification.¹⁵⁶ As it is enforced on a ‘no-choice’ basis, dispersal is a process of being cast-off and displaced and removed from potential kinship ties and community support structures that are crucial in the early stages of the asylum claims process.¹⁵⁷ Alongside this, as dispersal is the main instrument to accommodate asylum seekers until their status has been decided, NASS accommodation is only ever temporary with little or no emphasis placed on integration once a claim has been rejected or accepted.¹⁵⁸ According to Nick Gill, the ‘forced mobility’ within the asylum system is not an outcome but a ‘process of representation’.¹⁵⁹ Forced mobility not only causes discomfort, inconvenience and disorientation among asylum claimants but also constructs the asylum seeker as

¹⁵³ Squire, *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum*, p.116; Darling, ‘Domopolitics, Governmentality and the Regulation of Asylum Accommodation’, p.264.

¹⁵⁴ Squire, *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum*, p.119.

¹⁵⁵ Darling, ‘Domopolitics, Governmentality and the Regulation of Asylum Accommodation’, p.264.

¹⁵⁶ Squire, *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum*, p.116.

¹⁵⁷ Squire, *The Exclusionary Politics of Asylum*, p.116; Bloch and Schuster, ‘At the Extremes of Exclusion’, p.493; Zetter *et al*, ‘Social Capital or Social Exclusion?’, p.172; Phillimore and Goodson, ‘Problem or Opportunity?’, p.1716.

¹⁵⁸ Darling, ‘Domopolitics, Governmentality and the Regulation of Asylum Accommodation’, p.268; Phillimore and Goodson, ‘Problem or Opportunity?’, p.1719; Zetter *et al*, ‘Social Capital or Social Exclusion?’, p.176.

¹⁵⁹ Gill, ‘Governmental Mobility’.

transient and fleeting, dependent on the state but distinct from the surrounding community.¹⁶⁰

The increasing policy restrictions on asylum seekers are tied in with what the Joseph Rowntree Trust has termed a ‘culture of denial’ within the UK asylum claims system as well as what Robert Zetter terms the ‘fractioning of the refugee label’.¹⁶¹ The phrase ‘culture of denial’ is directed at the UK government and suggests a widespread tendency on its part to reject asylum claims. A culture of denial implies that ‘asylum applications are refused if it is seen that there is any reasonable means to do so’ and ‘as a result, people are being denied asylum who cannot return to their country of origin.’¹⁶² Recent asylum statistics offered by the UK Home Office help confirm this denial. Of the 32,414 initial decisions made on asylum claims in 2015, 61% were refusals, 39% were accepted. In the same year 13,034 appeals were submitted against negative decisions. 64% of these appeals were denied while 30% were allowed and 6% were withdrawn.¹⁶³ These most recent statistics are part of a long-term trend, dating back to 1991, of refusing the large majority of asylum claims. These statistics bear out a culture of denial which suggests that the majority of asylum seekers, throughout the claims process, are not considered to be genuine. According to Crisp, ‘the suspicion by political elites

¹⁶⁰ Gill, ‘Governmental Mobility’; Darling, ‘Domopolitics, Governmentality and the Regulation of Asylum Accommodation’, p.268.

¹⁶¹ Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, *Moving On: From Destitution to Contribution* (2007), p.7; Zetter, ‘More Labels, Fewer Refugees’.

¹⁶² Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, *Moving On: From Destitution to Contribution*, p.7.

¹⁶³ UK Home Office, <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-april-to-june-2015/asylum>> [accessed 1 September 2016]; Oxford Migration Observatory, <<http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/migration-to-the-uk-asylum/>> [accessed 1 September 2016]. This is part of a wider trend. In 2011 68% of applications were refused, in 2012 64% of applications were refused, in 2013 63% of applications were refused, and in 2014 59% of applications were refused. Over the past five years, refusal rates peaked in 2010 when 78% of all asylum applications were refused.

that claiming asylum had become a form of economic migration' led to the 'almost automatic stigmatization of people claiming refugee status' and the emergence of the 'bogus asylum seeker' in mass media discourse.¹⁶⁴ Similarly, as Bohmer and Shuman write, 'the fear of the bogus asylum seeker permeates the system to the detriment of genuine asylum seekers. Asylum seekers are guilty until proven innocent'.¹⁶⁵

It is here that Zetter's 'fractioning of the refugee label' becomes relevant. 'Fractioning' accounts for the more assertive role governments have taken in labelling refugees, particularly in the 'global North'.¹⁶⁶ Although formed out of a need to manage more complex causes and patterns of forced migration, the proliferation of labels serves to 'discriminate and detach claimants from the core attribute of being a refugee'.¹⁶⁷ These labels include terms such as 'spontaneous asylum seeker', 'illegal asylum seeker', 'bogus asylum seeker', 'economic refugee', 'trafficked migrant', 'undocumented asylum seeker' and 'dispersed asylum seeker'.¹⁶⁸ These labels are degraded as they lay the ground for far more restrictive interpretations of the UN Convention label of the refugee while also institutionalising and differentiating new categories of entitlement and eligibility.¹⁶⁹ For example, the policy labels 'at-port claimant' and 'in-country' claimant fraction asylum seekers according to where and when they made their initial asylum claim.

¹⁶⁴ Crisp, 'Refugees and the Global Politics of Asylum', p.164.

¹⁶⁵ Bohmer and Shuman, *Rejecting Refugees: Political Asylum in the 21st Century*, p.11.

¹⁶⁶ Zetter, 'More Labels, Fewer Refugees', p.174. Zetter initially applied this notion of 'fractioning' to understand how the bureaucratic interests of Non-governmental organisations became crucial determinants in the construction of labels such as 'refugee'. [Zetter, 'Labelling Refugees: Forming and Transforming a Bureaucratic Identity', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 4:1 (1991), 39-62].

¹⁶⁷ Zetter, 'More Labels, Fewer Refugees', p.176.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.181, p.186.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pp.176-7, p.184.

Under Section 55 of the 2002 Nationality, Asylum and Immigration Act, asylum seekers who are judged not to have applied for asylum as soon as reasonably practical on arrival to the UK can be denied NASS support. This is based on the presumption that those making claims 'at-port', as soon as they arrive in the UK, have more genuine claims than those that do not. Such fractioning, or constructed distinctions, enable a contraction of rights. Through these labels the rights afforded to the refugee are systematically removed. For instance, the policy label 'asylum seeker' does not include the right to work. The label 'temporary protection' curtails the right live in a country, and the label 'refused asylum seeker' includes neither the right to work or access to public accommodation or support, nor the right to remain. It is in this respect, the culture of denial is enacted through this fractioning of the refugee label. This 'fractioning' is a further instance of 'differential inclusion' as it continues to categorise and stratify those already bearing a depreciated social-legal status. It is important to recognise that these fragmented labels are not only policy based. Terms like 'bogus asylum seeker' or 'genuine refugee' are rhetorical labels that serve to distinguish between those considered deserving of support and those that are not.

7.2 Enforced Destitution

In its 2007 inquiry into destitution amongst asylum seekers in Leeds, the Joseph Rowntree Trust [JRT] defined destitution as 'lacking the means to meet the

basic needs of shelter, warmth, food, water and health'.¹⁷⁰ A similar definition has been offered by the Independent Asylum Commission [IAC], and the recently published Parliamentary Inquiry into Asylum Support for Children and Young People [ASC] cites the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act in which a person is considered destitute if he or she does not have adequate accommodation or has adequate accommodation but cannot meet other essential living needs.¹⁷¹ As seen in these reports, destitution hinges on the connected conditions of homelessness and an inability to meet basic needs for maintaining life. The same reports have also emphasised that destitution is a variable condition that can change in levels of severity for individuals and dependents over time and occurs throughout the asylum application process.¹⁷² Destitution may also continue on beyond the process itself, once a decision has been made to either grant or refuse refugee status.¹⁷³ Although the majority of destitute asylum seekers are those who have had their claims refused, new claimants are also particularly vulnerable to destitution and destitution can also occur as a result of administrative errors during the application process that effect both accommodation and support.¹⁷⁴

While the support of voluntary groups, friends and family may alleviate destitution this support is also precarious.¹⁷⁵ Social networks can be exhausted or non-existent and dependency on friends, kinship ties, and itinerant work to cope

¹⁷⁰ Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, *Destitution in Leeds* (2007), p.64.

¹⁷¹ Independent Asylum Commission, *Deserving Dignity* (2008), p.30; *Report of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Asylum Support for Children and Young People* (2013), p.7.

¹⁷² JRT, *Destitution in Leeds*, p.20.

¹⁷³ *Report of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Asylum Support for Children and Young People: Executive Summary* (2013), p.1; JRT, *Still Destitute* (2009), p.6; IAC, *Fit For Purpose?* (2008), p.30.

¹⁷⁴ JRT, *Destitution in Leeds*, p.5; JRT, *Still Destitute*, p.4; IAC, *Deserving Dignity*, p.30.

¹⁷⁵ JRT, *Destitution in Leeds*, p.5.

with poverty can 'facilitate exploitation'.¹⁷⁶ Chief among the causes of destitution cited by the JRT and IAC is the claimant's lack of right to work during the applications process. Added to this, some claimants have been refused NASS support as their claims were deemed not to have been made within a reasonable time under Section 55 of the 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act. For refused asylum seekers, destitution is an ever-present prospect. Once an asylum claim has been rejected, individuals must vacate their NASS accommodation within 21 days, at which point their cash support is also dropped. For a single person, cash support is currently set at £36.95 per week and was dropped from £42.62 in 2009.¹⁷⁷ Alongside both the lack of a right to work and a potential lack of recourse to public funds, the UK's dispersal policy can destabilise social and support networks that claimants have developed, serving to exacerbate the slide into destitution.¹⁷⁸ The IAC has also highlighted a lack of legal aid for asylum support hearings as a contributory factor to destitution among asylum seekers.¹⁷⁹ For these reasons there is wide agreement from both independent and government reports as well as academic studies that destitution is a direct result of government policy. In the words of the IAC, destitution is 'enforced', and this enforced destitution forms part of a wider policy of deterrence which includes dispersal, detention and deportation and is based on the misplaced assumption that asylum seekers arrive in the UK because of the welfare benefits that are made available.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ JRT, *Destitution in Leeds*, p.3, p.26; JRT, *Moving On: From Destitution to Contribution*, p.11.

¹⁷⁷ UK Home Office, <<https://www.gov.uk/asylum-support/what-youll-get>> [accessed 1 September 2016].

¹⁷⁸ ASC, p.21

¹⁷⁹ IAC, *Deserving Dignity*, p.30.

¹⁸⁰ IAC, *Fit for Purpose?*, p.3; Crisp, 'Refugees and the Global Politics of Asylum', p.84; Lydia Morris, *Asylum, Welfare and the Cosmopolitan Ideal: A Sociology of Rights* (Oxford: Abingdon, 2010), p.11,

Yet according to the Refugee Council, three quarters of the 43 asylum seekers and refugees interviewed in their 2010 study had no knowledge of welfare provision before arriving in the UK, and two thirds 'did not specifically choose to come to the UK to claim asylum'.¹⁸¹ Similarly, the JRT also claims that most asylum seekers do not know their final destination and often end up where the people smugglers and traffickers choose.¹⁸² If, as these reports claim, the majority of asylum seekers arriving in the UK have little knowledge of welfare support or may have had no intention of being in the UK, it is difficult to see how policies geared towards deterrence can have much effect on levels of asylum claims. The main effect, it would seem, is to display to the electorate that politicians and policy makers are somehow 'tough on asylum'. 'Enforced destitution' can be regarded as a particular outcome of the process of bordering and 'differential inclusion'. It is the border bearing down on those deemed 'undeserving' of support, and whose legal-social status has been continually degraded in both policy and rhetoric.

p.116, p.155; Bloch and Schuster, 'Asylum and Welfare: Contemporary Debates', p.404; Bohmer and Shuman, *Rejecting Refugees: Political Asylum in the 21st Century*, p.23.

¹⁸¹ Refugee Council, *Chance or Choice: Understanding Why Asylum Seekers Come to the UK: Executive Summary* (2010), p.1.

¹⁸² JRT, *Moving On: From Destitution to Contribution*, p.8.

3. Methodology and Research Practice: In Shelters and on the Street

1. Introduction

This chapter introduces my research practice and methodology and acts as a bridge between the two previous theoretical chapters and the four ethnographic chapters that follow. The chapter begins by introducing the Boaz Trust, a faith-based organisation in Manchester, UK, that offers accommodation, advocacy, and support to female and male refused asylum seekers in the city. In this study particular focus is given to the Boaz Trust night shelters which are a network of seven shelters and two drop-in centres operated by different churches across Greater Manchester that provide emergency accommodation for up to twelve refused and destitute male asylum seekers each night between the winter months of November and April.

Manchester is a 'dispersal' city where asylum seekers may be moved to on a no-choice basis while their claims are processed. As detailed in the previous chapter, the majority of asylum claims in the UK are rejected in the first instance and refused asylum seekers are required to vacate their NASS accommodation within 21 days and are expected to leave the country. Many are unable or unwilling to do so and end up destitute on the streets of cities such as Manchester. In this respect, the Boaz Trust serves as an important and localised point of support for people pushed into destitution by the UK asylum claims process. In this research the night shelters become a valuable arena to explore how the social-legal status of

'refused asylum seeker', which results from a negative asylum claim, creates a condition of destitution and uncertainty for individuals and how local volunteers, Boaz Trust employees, and communities can come together to form a response to the situation.

This research took place over two winter seasons between November 2012 and May 2014 and involved participant observation as both a night shelter volunteer and a night shelter user. I primarily worked in the Friday night shelter which was operated by the Longsight Community Church of the Nazarene in Longsight, Manchester. Over the 2012-13 winter season I volunteered fortnightly in the shelter, while during the 2013-14 winter season I worked in the Friday night shelter in far more concentrated blocks of time, serving in the shelter every week between March and April, as well as being scheduled in at other points during the year. Over the two winter seasons I served as a shelter volunteer on 18 occasions. During the 2012-13 winter season I also spent one week living in the night shelters alongside the men who were accessing them. The following winter I extended this stay and lived in the shelters for two consecutive weeks. I describe my volunteer work and extended stays within the night shelter network in more detail in sections 4, 5, and 6 below.

Although the night shelters were the primary location of this research, my ethnographic work began to extend beyond the night shelters themselves and involved spending time on the Manchester streets with some of the men using the shelters as well as spending time in public and private spaces around the city including Manchester Central Library, Chorlton Street Coach Station, and the Manchester Aquatics Centre. I also arranged site visits to other refugee and

homeless support services, drop-in centres and foodbanks throughout the city in order to gain an understanding of the service provision landscape in Manchester. During these visits I spoke with or interviewed volunteers and employees representing the organisations. Expanding the research beyond the night shelters was a crucial development in my research practice and in this respect I made use of what Mitchell Duneier has termed 'extended place method'.¹ Duneier developed his extended place method while conducting research alongside second-hand booksellers and panhandlers who primarily lived on Sixth Avenue in Greenwich Village, New York in the mid-1990s. Although the 'sidewalk' was the starting point of his research, Duneier writes that 'I needed to move my fieldwork out, across spaces, to some of the other places where things had happened that had a role in making Sixth Avenue what it was'.² This involved visiting local restaurants to investigate the links between the 'sidewalk scene' and the surrounding 'commercial reality', visiting local parks and public toilets and interviewing their managers, visiting train stations and interviewing their managers, and attending meetings with city development managers and lawyers involved in lawsuits over the removal of homeless persons from train stations. Duneier writes that 'in all these cases, the processes of interviewing off the blocks grew out of participant observation on the blocks, out of seeing and hearing evidence of these problems in the day-to-day lives of people'.³ It was such a process that led my own research beyond the shelters and onto the Manchester streets and into the library and casinos, and interviewing management from Refugee Action Manchester and many other support agencies

¹ Mitchell, *Sidewalk*, p.344.

² *Ibid*, p.344.

³ *Ibid*, p.345.

across the city. As Duneier writes, 'it was not enough to ask the men on the sidewalk about their movements. I needed a more rounded picture'.⁴ Duneier links his 'extended place method' to the wider notion of 'multi-sited ethnography'.⁵ 'Multi-sited ethnography' follows a research topic across multiple spaces and often in shorter spaces of time, bringing together a variety of perspectives to understand a process, topic, or idea. George E. Marcus writes that 'strategies of quite literally following connections, associations, and putative relationships, are thus at the very heart' of multi-sited research.⁶ The function of both 'extended place method' and wider 'multi-sited ethnography' allows for an understanding of how institutions organise power and affect the various micro-settings that are studied.⁷ In this respect, an 'extended place method', departing from the micro-setting of the Boaz Trust night shelters, offers an opportunity to understand and critique the every-day effects of the social-legal category of 'refused asylum seeker' which is a product of the UK asylum system as well as wider processes of bordering.

The two main methods of documenting my research over the course of this study were written notes and semi-structured interviews. Through writing personal notes I was able to describe and reflect on the details, conversations, thoughts, feelings, and events I encountered each time I worked as a volunteer in the night shelter and the times I made visits to other support services or public or private spaces as part of my use Duneier's 'extended place method'. I also took extensive notes during the much more intensive weeks I spent living in the night shelters. As I

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Duneier, *Sidewalk*, p.345; Marcus, 'Ethnography In/Of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography'.

⁶ Marcus, 'Ethnography In/Of the World System', p.97

⁷ Duneier, *Sidewalk*, p.344.

did not always have the personal space or time to immediately write up my experiences, I had to do so when opportunities arose, such as the hours I spent in Manchester Central Library with some of the men using the night shelters or occasions during the day when I was not with anyone, in which case I might find a café or quiet space in the city centre to write, such as the atrium of the Royal Exchange Theatre. Over the course of my research I conducted 25 semi-structured interviews with 31 different participants. Interviewees ranged from Boaz Trust employees, to night shelter and drop-in centre volunteers, and employees or representatives working at different refugee and homeless support services across the city. Unrecorded and 'off the record' meetings were also held with officials from Manchester City Council, a city centre management company, the Multi-Agency for Refugee Integration Manchester, and a volunteer from the Manchester Lesbian Immigration Support Group. These meetings were either 'off the record' or unrecorded at the request of participants and I relied on taking notes during our conversations. I also conducted recorded interviews with a small number of men who were staying in the shelters. As I will explain in more detail in section 5, recording interviews with the men staying in the night shelters was not the most productive or sensitive means of collecting data, and, as was the case with all people who participated in this research, I needed to adapt and contextualise my approach according to each situation.

The contents of the interviews will be used throughout my ethnographic chapters, as appropriate. Following Les Back's concerns over the inhibitions researchers often feel with regards to 'social description' and a resulting tendency to present interview content as material abstracted from any social context, or

what Mitchell Duneier refers to as reducing interviews to ‘a bunch of disembodied thoughts that come out of subject’s mouths’ at the expense of getting ‘at the humanity of people’, I will most often place interview content within the narratives and arguments I am developing while also providing a context to the situation and description of the settings in which they occurred.⁸ For this reason, all interview participants have been anonymised through the use of pseudonyms and social descriptions relating to the interviews are only offered to the extent that they are necessary for providing contextual nuance and explication. The use of pseudonyms also extends to my descriptions of comments, conversations and situations involving volunteers, employees, and men using the shelters that are drawn from my written notes. When necessary, I have also changed certain background details, including some place names and personal details, in order to protect the identity of participants. However, I have not anonymised Dave Smith, the Director and founder of the Boaz Trust, who can be considered a public figure. In 2014 Smith published *The Book of Boaz* which is his personal account of the history and development of the organisation.⁹ I will make continual reference to his book through the following chapters. Smith was also awarded a British Empire Medal for Services to the Community in 2012, which he returned a year later in protest against the then Conservative-Liberal Democratic coalition government’s increasingly restrictive immigration policies. This included an open and public letter of protest to then Prime Minister David Cameron.¹⁰

⁸ Back, *The Art of Listening* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), p.17.

⁹ Dave Smith, *The Book of Boaz or It’s Amazing What You Can do When You don’t Know What You Can’t Do!* (Watford: Instant Apostle, 2014).

¹⁰ *Ibid*, pp.170-3.

In the following sections I provide a more detailed account of the development of my research practice as well as addressing crucial methodological issues relating to my notion of 'border as process' and ethnography. In section 2 I provide an introduction to the Boaz Trust. This section acts as a compliment to the much more in-depth analysis of the organisation and its politics in Chapter 5. I then move on to discuss some key methodological concerns relating to my own status as a migrant to the UK and the need to recognise that the border is not just an object of study, but also deeply embedded in any ethnographic work on migration. The fourth section presents the development of my research practice in more detail and the issues surrounding my need to take on multiple roles as a researcher over the course of my fieldwork. Sections 5 and 6 draw on particular moments from my research that respectively problematise the relation between the 'field' and social life, particularly as I conducted research in my 'home' city, and discuss in more detail issues regarding my research alongside the men accessing the shelters.

2. The Boaz Trust and the Night Shelter Network

The Boaz Trust is a Christian faith-based organisation [FBO] that provides accommodation, legal advocacy, and support to refused and destitute asylum seekers in Manchester, UK. Working within a hostile and increasingly restrictive policy environment, the Boaz Trust is a frontline charitable service responding to the immediate and most basic needs of those for whom the state has withdrawn support. FBOs are organisations that refer directly or indirectly to religion or

religious values and function as service providers and/or political actors.¹¹ They are diverse in scale, scope, and focus, and range from long-standing international and national organisations, to local groups that are active in particular communities and reliant on committed volunteers.¹² There is a similar diversity in scale and scope among other non-governmental organisations and refugee community organisations and, as the Boaz Trust indicates, such labels can easily overlap – FBO, NGO, and RCO.¹³ Yet, organisations such as the Boaz Trust often take on complex and changing roles and cannot be easily categorised as either being large or small in scale. Depending on your perspective, or who you ask, the Boaz Trust is either a small, provincial organisation that provides a localised response to personal crises and destitution resulting from national asylum policy and wider transnational migration movements, or it is viewed as a large organisation with eleven employees, a network of volunteers across the city, and its own housing stock. Although the Boaz Trust offers legal advice, recreational, and educational services, as well as connecting people up to other services in the city, it is first and foremost an accommodation provider. This includes shared housing owned by the Boaz Trust, hosted accommodation where refused and destitute asylum seekers live with

¹¹ Justin Beaumont and Paul Cloke, 'Introduction to the Study of Faith-based Organisations and Exclusion in European Cities', in *Faith-Based Organisations and Exclusion in European Cities*, ed. by Justin Beaumont and Paul Cloke (Bristol: Policy Press, 2012), pp.1-36 (p.11).

¹² Andrew Williams, Paul Cloke, and Samuel Thomas, 'Co-constituting Neoliberalism: Faith-based Organisations, Co-option, and Resistance in the UK', *Environment and Planning A*, 44:6 (2012), 1479-1501 (p.1479); Paul Cloke, Justin Beaumont, and Andrew Williams, 'Faith in Action: Faith-based Organizations, Welfare and Politics in the Contemporary City', in *Working Faith: Faith-Based Organizations and Urban Social Justice*, ed. by Paul Cloke, Justin Beaumont, and Andrew Williams (Milton Keynes: Pater Noster, 2013), pp.1-24; Beaumont and Cloke, 'Introduction to the Study of Faith-based Organisations and Exclusion in European Cities', p.11.

¹³ Roger Zetter and Martyn Pearl, 'The Minority Within the Minority: Refugee Community-based Organisations in the UK and the Impact of Restrictionism on Asylum Seekers', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 26:4 (2000), 675-697.

local residents, and a network of emergency night shelters offering temporary space for up to twelve men throughout the winter months between November and April.

The night shelters are the focus of this study. They are operated by seven different churches across Greater Manchester, with the Boaz Trust playing a coordinating role, while not being directly involved on a nightly basis. Each church opens its building one night a week and provides its own set of volunteers, breakfast and evening meals, transportation, bedding, and supplies. Alongside the shelters are two drop-in spaces which are also run by local churches, one of which opens every Saturday while the other opens every evening in the city centre between 6.00 pm and 9.00 pm as men wait for transportation to the next shelter for the night. Located throughout the city, from post-industrial working-class areas to leafy, middle-class suburbs, these shelters and drop-in centres are at once sites of displacement, on the fringes of public life, while also being focused points of community activity. Those using the shelters are primarily men who, following the refusal of their asylum claim, are simultaneously abandoned by the immigration system and trapped within it. Stripped of their right to work, to remain in the UK, or access public funds, they become caught up in a series of bureaucratic processes including lodging an appeal, waiting for an appeal decision, applying for Section 4 support, waiting for a Section 4 support decision, waiting for refugee status to be granted (however temporary), or waiting for possible detention and/or deportation.¹⁴ These processes are played out from a position of destitution, with

¹⁴ Under Section 4 of the 1999 Asylum and Immigration Act, refused asylum seekers are able to apply for conditional and restricted state support once their claims have been removed. Temporary accommodation and voucher support for essential goods are available for those who 'appear to be

the refused asylum seeker unable to meet basic needs such as accessing food, water, shelter, warmth, and health, pushing them into dependency on support from the Boaz Trust.

The night shelters are situated within, and respond to, wider processes of bordering. As I have argued, the border is a spatial-temporal zone that operates not as a fixed line as such, but as a shifting set of social relations that operate unevenly across race, class, and nationality. These processes render distinctions between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ to be unstable and ambiguous, but are no less forceful or oppressive in doing so.¹⁵ Bordering processes not only filter people, but also produce different legal and social statuses, continually shaping and reshaping people along a spectrum of different subject positions – from the citizen to the asylum seeker. It is the shift in status from asylum seeker to refused asylum seeker that broadly underscores life in the Boaz Trust night shelters. The shelters, as I discuss in more detail in Chapter 7, are spaces of transition, displacement, and uncertainty and they are spaces of constant arrival and departure. Entering the shelters is a transition from the street to the more secure, but still unsettled life of rotating between seven venues each week, entering and leaving a new shelter each day, and sleeping on a different church floor each night. A person may leave the shelters for a variety of reasons – they may have been offered Boaz Trust housing and accommodation, they may have received Section 4 support, or they may have

destitute’ and are ‘taking all reasonable steps to leave the UK’, but are unable to do so. This may be for medical reasons, or a recognition that there is no viable route open for the individual to return, or the individual may have been approved for a Judicial Review of their asylum claim and refusal. Due to the eligibility requirements for Section 4 support, claims necessarily take place from a position of destitution on the part of the claimant. [UK Visas and Immigration, ‘Asylum Support, Section 4 Policy and Process’, version 7 (2016), §1.2]

¹⁵ Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?*, p.4.

found accommodation through friends and acquaintances. Yet, such departures do not mean that a person's legal status has been settled. Both arrival and departure are clouded in uncertainty.

As I discuss in more detail in Chapter 5, the Boaz Trust originated in response to the increased numbers of destitute asylum seekers accessing homeless support services in Manchester at the turn of the millennium, while the night shelter network was later formed in 2008 to meet the specific requirements of homeless male asylum seekers who require emergency accommodation. In chapter 5 I also argue that the Boaz Trust can be seen as an 'outsider' organisation that is not attached to statutory funding streams and was formed as a direct response to what was perceived to be the unjust policies of the UK government. In their 2010 study of homeless service provision in the UK, Paul Cloke, Jon May, and Sarah Johnsen highlighted the dual structure apparent in forms of shelter provision.¹⁶ Shelters have the capacity to be spaces of both care and constraint. For Cloke, May, and Johnsen there has been a tendency to view shelters as sites of control with restrictive rules and regulations that treat people as subjects to be reformed, rather than working with people and respecting them as they are now. As sites of control shelters can serve the interests of civic and state authorities by 'containing' the problems of homelessness within specific sites and areas, while offering only the bare minimum of facilities on the premise that there should be no desire for individuals to 'settle down' in a shelter.¹⁷ Alternatively, as Cloke, May, and Johnsen

¹⁶ Paul Cloke, Jon May, and Sarah Johnsen, *Swept Up Lives? Re-envisioning the Homeless City* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp.148-53.

¹⁷ Cloke, May, and Johnsen, *Swept Up Lives?*, pp.148-150. Cloke, May, and Johnsen argue that many of the critiques of homeless shelter provision are primarily based on analyses originating in the

argue, shelters can also be spaces of compassion and care and operate according to an 'ethos of empowerment rather than "active rehabilitation and change"' and where volunteers and employees are motivated by 'a desire to do the best they can for guests'.¹⁸ Yet, the dual character of shelters is not necessarily one of rigid distinction between control and care. Shelters, like the Boaz Trust network, which necessarily operate outside statutory funding streams, often face problems, including a lack of resources and reliance on under-trained volunteers who are sometimes 'ill-equipped to meet the needs of those they seek to care for'.¹⁹

In this respect the Boaz Trust night shelters hold an ambiguous position. They can be considered 'spaces of asylum', with all the contradictions that this term entails. Spaces of asylum, as I argued in the previous chapter, are conflicted sites of refuge and abandonment, agency and constraint, dignity and indignity, and fixity and mobility. The Boaz Trust night shelters at once offer reception and welcome to men off the street who have been rejected and refused by the UK government, yet they can also continue divisions based on legal-social status that are reproduced in 'volunteer' and 'guest' relations. As I argue in chapters 5 and 6, these latent divisions are unintentionally heightened through resource limitations. The lack of a permanent venue means that those staying in the shelters move to a different building each night of the week. The need for many of the overnight volunteers to work during the day, coupled with the use of most church buildings for other community activities, means that the shelters open late in the evening and close

United States where few attempts have been made to examine the politics of shelter life itself by stepping inside shelter spaces to chart the experiences of homeless persons.

¹⁸ Ibid, p.177, p.179.

¹⁹ Ibid, p.160.

early in the morning, typically between 9.00 pm and 8.30 am. The men staying in the shelters become subject to timings and routines that they have little agency over. Time in the shelter becomes a bifurcated 'waiting', seeing out each day waiting for the shelters to open and close while simultaneously being caught up in long-term and antagonistic bureaucratic processes. This is not to suggest that the shelters are reducible to spaces of 'control', but despite the practices and revised practices of the night shelter volunteers and Boaz Trust employees, the work of the night shelters remain unavoidably caught up in the wider divisions produced by the border. This is an essential tension within the night shelters, situated at the front-line of service provision for those rendered destitute by the policies and practice of the UK government.

3. The Immigration Line

In the previous chapter the border was understood as a 'concrete abstraction' that carried significant symbolic weight as a fixed national boundary while also, and at the same time, being more concretely experienced as a contingent, uneven, and shifting set of policies and practices. This oscillation between abstract fixity and legally produced contingency creates a terrain of 'differential inclusion' that, as Balibar has said, cuts through the heart of civic space. In the previous section, I also argued that such uneven processes of bordering are embedded in the Boaz Trust night shelters, even as I considered the organisation to be offering a response to unjust government policies and the shelters to be sites of

potential care and compassion. A key set of methodological concerns arise here. Just as bordering processes are an intractable part of the night shelters, they must also be recognised as an intractable part of the research process. The ubiquity of the border exists not only in relation to the primary spaces of this research – the night shelters –but also in relation to the research process itself, to the very production of knowledge, and how I construct and understand the ‘field’ and related concepts such as ‘researcher’ and ‘participant observation’. Such categories are neither neutral nor fixed. To view them this way would be to cast them as ‘concrete abstractions’ that mask the shifting and often problematic relations these categories can take on, particularly with regards to the issues of migration and borders.

In his work *The Art of Listening* Les Back argues that as social science practitioners and researchers ‘we need to reinvigorate our engagement with the social world and reflect on our place within it’.²⁰ Discussing contemporary debates about migration and mobility, and drawing on W.E.B. Du Bois’ comment that ‘the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line’, Back suggests that it might now be accurate to say that ‘the problem of the twenty-first century is the problem of the “immigration line”’.²¹ Back writes that,

The immigration line is just as vexed politically, ontologically and practically as the line of colour or race. Indeed, it is deeply implicated in the legacy of racisms past and present and of the foundational principles of citizenship

²⁰ Les Back, *The Art of Listening* (Oxford: Berg, 2007), p.2.

²¹ William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Bantam Books, 1989) p.2; Back, *The Art of Listening*, p.31.

and state formation. The problem of the immigration line is also the problem of the ways in which lines are drawn through and across the peoples of the world. [...] The immigration line demarcates those lives that are endowed with the gift of citizenship and those lives that can be cut short with silent impunity.²²

This notion of the 'immigration line' coalesces with the idea of 'differential inclusion' that has come to define my understanding of border processes. It reveals both the increasing interconnection of people and places, and also the 'thick lines' drawn between people who can move freely across the globe and those who cannot.²³ My position as a researcher is bound up with my own experiences as a transnational migrant. At the age of 16 I moved with my family from rural, western Canada to Manchester, UK. My teenage years were unsettled, moving between cultures and education systems, between the open landscape of the Canadian prairie and the so-called 'grim' post-industrial English North, and between the more globally accessible patterns of North American English and the broad and proud redoubt of the 'Manc' accent and dialect. As an adult I chose to remain in the city. It had become my 'home'. I studied European philosophy at Manchester Metropolitan University and worked for a number of years in the city's arts and cultural sector. In 2006 I became a British citizen, the only person in my immediate family to do so. At the time of writing up my research I had also, for family reasons, become an official resident of Japan. As a white, English speaking male, with dual-

²² Back, *The Art of Listening*, p.31.

²³ *Ibid*, p.13.

citizenship between Canada and the UK, access to residency and employment rights across multiple countries in the 'global north', and with passports and residency cards that allow relatively easy movement across multiple state borders, I was situated on the opposite end of the 'immigration line' to the men who were living day-to-day in the Boaz Trust night shelters. While my rights to employment and residency had actually extended over the course of my research, those staying in the shelters had experienced a reduction in these rights, pushing them into destitution.

The category of the 'migrant' is wide. It covers the full spectrum of the 'immigration line' and is filled with individual histories and experiences. During my stays in the night shelter network we were provided with transport from Manchester city centre to the next shelter every night of the week, usually around 9.00 pm. Often the transportation was a minibus operated by one of the churches, although sometimes it was a fleet of cars driven by volunteers. Victor had arrived on the same evening that I had begun my second stay in the night shelters in late November 2013. He was originally from West Africa, holding dual-citizenship between Ghana and the Ivory Coast, and had accessed the shelters after becoming destitute following the refusal of his asylum claim. One evening as we were driven to the shelters, Victor and I sat together and, as we often did, got into a deep conversation. We spoke about my research and our own experiences as migrants to the UK and we talked about the privileges afforded to White Westerners arriving to the UK. Victor suggested that as a White Canadian I would always be welcome in the UK and had indeed been taken in as one of 'their own', while as a Black African, with a heavy accent, he could never expect to be fully accepted. There's a risk of

over-determining a single conversation in the back of a minibus, but these different experiences of inclusion and acceptance were made objective by the fundamental differences in our legal status. I was a migrant-become-citizen and Victor had recently had his asylum claim rejected. The path of inclusion open to me had eventually allowed me to take up funded post-graduate research in a British university. The 'immigration line' and its historic and contemporary articulations through notions of race and nationality unavoidably cut through my research. As such, the 'immigration line' cannot be viewed as just another theoretical cipher separate from my own position as a researcher.

In the opening chapter to his study on Mexican nationals living and working in Chicago, USA, Nicholas De Genova states that his own research and anthropological aspirations were inextricable from the politics of his own 'social location' as a US citizen, as racialised as White, and educated in elite institutions where he was afforded the luxury of doing research.²⁴ For De Genova, an intractable problem of ethnographic study is that it is often made possible by such social and institutional inequalities which are then exacerbated by a tendency to frame research along an 'inside-outside' axis in which the researcher unlocks the apparently esoteric truths of an exotic 'culture' or 'other' that is accessed from an imagined outside.²⁵ In this respect, constituting irregular migrants as an ethnographic object of study is to commit a form of 'epistemic violence' in which social scientists risk becoming agents in the everyday production of a migrant's uneven social and legal status and become 'in effect, accomplices to the discursive

²⁴ De Genova, *Working the Boundaries: Race, Space, and "Illegality" in Mexican Chicago* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), p.15.

²⁵ Ibid, pp.21-22.

power of immigration law'.²⁶ Such research can easily succumb to the 'enchanted ordinary' and reduce itself to mere reportage and 'anthropological pornography' that unwittingly promotes a resigned acceptance to the tragedy of the border by taking labels such as 'asylum seeker' and 'refused asylum seeker' to be neutral, natural, and static objects of study.²⁷ For De Genova it is necessary to delineate the historical and social specificity of contemporary migrations as they become shaped by the legal and political economies of particular nation states.²⁸ Terms such as 'asylum seeker' and 'refused asylum seeker' need to be approached as active and contingent social-legal conditions, rather than fixed labels that are reducible to particular individuals. It thus becomes possible for ethnographic study to critique these conditions so as to transform them.

4. Research Practice

In this section I discuss in more detail how my research practices developed over the course of my fieldwork. In the introduction to this chapter I stated that my research took place over two winter seasons between November 2012 and May 2014. However, these dates act more as relative markers than definitive breaks on the commencement and conclusion of my fieldwork. I had been volunteering at the Longsight Community Church shelter for two years prior to beginning formal

²⁶ De Genova, 'Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life', pp.422-423; Andersson, *Illegality Inc.*, p.12.

²⁷ De Genova, 'Migrant "Illegality" and Deportability in Everyday Life', pp.422.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p.423.

research, and like most other volunteers had been scheduled to work overnight in the shelter once every two or three months each winter. I also continued to be scheduled on as an irregular volunteer during the 2014-15 winter season. Other aspects of my fieldwork continued on well past May 2014 when the shelters closed for the season.²⁹ This included follow-up conversations and emails with Boaz Trust employees and shelter volunteers, as well as opportunities to conduct further interviews and site visits to venues in the city as part of the 'extended place method' I adopted during this research.

Much of the participant observation within this study took place in the Friday night shelter based in the Longsight Community Church of the Nazarene [LCC], located in the inner-city district of Longsight, south Manchester. I have longstanding connections with this church. My immediate and extended family regularly attend the church and have held both voluntary and paid leadership roles there. Indeed, some members of my immediate and extended family – both female and male – are ordained ministers, practicing theologians and/or educators within the Church of the Nazarene, an international Evangelical church in the Methodist tradition.³⁰ It was through the LCC that my research initially took shape. In 2012, I spoke informally with a member of the church's pastoral team about conducting participant observation in the Friday night shelter. The response was positive and, indeed, encouraging, but I was also made aware that some responsibilities had

²⁹ As I will discuss in Chapters 5 and 6, the Boaz Trust continually revises its practices and scheduling so as to improve its services. Following discussions between the Boaz Trust and the seven churches the 2013-14 shelter season was extended to the end of May. In previous years the shelter network had closed at the end of April.

³⁰ Further information about the Longsight Community Church of the Nazarene and the wider Church of the Nazarene denomination can be found on the following links, respectively: www.longsightnazarene.org; <http://nazarene.org> [accessed 9 April 2016].

shifted within the church's leadership team and that Carlos, who was an ordained minister in the church, would now be coordinating the Friday night shelter. I had known Carlos for a number of years and, like myself, he was a migrant to the UK. Originally from Colombia, and having previously lived in Spain, Carlos had lived in Manchester for a number of years and had eventually taken up a leadership position in the LCC. His new responsibilities as the shelter coordinator included organising volunteer schedules, organising shelter supplies including food, bedding and toiletries, organising transport from Manchester city centre to the shelter every Friday night, and being the point of contact between LCC and the Boaz Trust. Carlos fully supported my research and scheduled me in as a regular volunteer. This regular scheduling and familiarity with the shelter, alongside two previous years of volunteering, led to me being asked, very early on, to take on the role of being the shelter manager during my overnight shifts at LCC. This meant some added responsibility. I was given keys to the building and arrived early to set up the shelter each Friday evening, and was the last to leave the shelter in order to close the building each Saturday morning. It also meant taking the lead in introducing any new volunteers to the shelter and its routines, and introducing the building and the facilities and the schedule to any men who were arriving at the LCC shelter for the first time. Although volunteer structures in the shelter were very informal, being the shelter manager often meant taking the lead in dealing with any issues that arose while the shelter was open, whether this was responding to any concerns from the men staying in the shelters, settling or diffusing minor disagreements, or responding to concerns from other volunteers. As a shelter manager I was also in direct contact with the Boaz Trust every Saturday in order to

provide a list of the name and numbers of men who would need emergency accommodation the following night as well as reporting any issues or information that needed to be passed on to the Boaz Trust.

This added responsibility meant a constant negotiation between the roles of researcher and shelter manager. Although never mutually exclusive, responding to immediate issues within the shelter would often take priority over gathering data through conversation and reflection. In other words, the 'participant' side of the 'participant observer' often raised itself over the 'observation'. Yet, this additional responsibility also provided crucial insights into the concerns, issues, and pressures faced by shelter coordinators and volunteers as they turned their churches into temporary accommodation for a night. The experiences and the insights I gained from this additional role were foundational for my articulation of the shelters as being spaces of fragile, arduous, and often mundane work that requires continually adapting routines which I present in Chapters 5 and 6.

I was raised an Evangelical Christian, although I do not regularly attend an Evangelical church. My relationship with this branch of Christianity can be described as ambiguous at best – a deep-seated respect alongside equally deep-seated criticism. However, my familiarity with Evangelical Christianity, and my personal and family connections to the Church of the Nazarene and the LCC in particular, meant accessing this fieldwork and engaging with volunteers was much easier. As I discuss in chapters 5 and 6, the Boaz Trust itself has Evangelical roots and most of the churches involved in the night shelters – and their volunteers – are oriented to Evangelical Christianity. Discussions and interviews with volunteers often involved the use of faith-based and Evangelical idiom – an idiom that I was

very familiar with and able to draw upon and utilise in the final analysis of my research. My personal and family connections with the LCC also meant that I was able to arrange semi-structured interviews with volunteers without much need for personal introduction. In most instances at the LCC, the volunteers that I interviewed either knew me personally or knew my immediate and extended family. I arranged interviews via email or text message or during conversations while working alongside people in the shelters. As I discuss in chapters 5 and 6 not all volunteers at the LCC shelter attended that church, and not all volunteers identified as Christian, and in these cases I arranged interviews after getting to know volunteers while serving in the shelters. Interviews took place in a range of different places that best suited participants – cafés, pubs, following a church service at the LCC, in a participant's home or over lunch while they were at work. I also conducted some semi-structured interviews with volunteers from other shelters. These were arranged over conversations during my two-week stay in the shelter network and took place in the Saturday drop-in centre in Cheetham Hill, Manchester. In all instances I used consent forms which participants read in advance. Signed copies were kept by the participants and myself.

As I discussed in the introduction to this chapter, my research was not limited to one particular site and extended to other spaces that were much less familiar to me than the LCC. Like many of the volunteers working in the night shelters, whether at the LCC or other venues, I had little prior knowledge of the Boaz Trust until I formally began my research. Like many other volunteers, my experience of the shelters had been limited to the particular venue I had worked in, the distinct social spheres that surrounded it, and the particular church that

operated it. (This is a point I pick up again in chapter 7, as the men staying in the shelters had a much broader – and more detailed - understanding of the shelter network than most of the volunteers working in it). Following my discussions with the LCC pastoral team in early 2012 about conducting research in the LCC shelter, I then approached the Boaz Trust. A meeting was arranged in mid-September 2012 with the Projects Manager at the Boaz Trust offices, just outside Manchester city centre. Out of this initial meeting and further follow up discussions, the research was extended to include stays in the entire shelter network and interviews with all the Boaz Trust staff. While Carlos became my formal point of contact at the LCC, the Projects Manager and the Night Shelter Coordinator became my formal contacts for the Boaz Trust, although these roles and the people in them would change over the course of my research. Interviews with Boaz Trust employees took place in the Boaz Trust offices over the course of two days in April 2013. This was followed by a further set of interviews in 2014 which included more recently hired staff and employees who were not available on the previous dates. The interviews were arranged by the Project Manager who also sent out consent forms in advance to all participants which were then signed prior to the interviews.

Jonathan Darling writes that beginning fieldwork can be a ‘daunting, demanding and at times bewildering experience, with researchers negotiating a myriad of assumptions, expectations and motivations’.³¹ Darling describes pacing around a drop-in centre for asylum seekers and refugees in the city of Sheffield, nervously chewing gum, before entering the building to start his PhD research. The

³¹ Jonathan Darling, ‘Emotions, Encounters and Expectations: The Uncertain Ethics of ‘the Field’, *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, 6:2 (2014), 201-212 (p.201).

drop-in centre would eventually become a familiar space and he would spend the next 10 months there.³² My first stay in the night shelter network took place over the week between Monday, 24 November 2012 and Sunday, 2 December 2012. Like Darling's recollection of pacing outside the drop-in centre, on that first evening in late November 2012, I paced the dimly lit streets of Ancoats in nervous preparation, before arriving outside the Boaz Trust offices where a fleet of cars and volunteers were waiting and men were arriving to be taken to the shelter for the night. In the shelter network each night meant sleeping in a different venue, with a different set of volunteers working in each one. This constant movement between venues could be jarring and unsettling, and, as I discuss in chapter 7, could easily descend into sleepless nights and persistent tiredness for those staying in the shelters. At the same time, however, for those living in the shelters over multiple weeks – or longer – the routines and volunteers particular to each venue could make them familiar spaces. The three weeks spent living in the shelters became an essential aspect of this study. They were an opportunity to spend time with the men using the shelters, to share meals together, to wait for transport together, to develop friendships and to have conversations and listen to concerns and thoughts about their experiences. It was also an opportunity to see how other churches operated and organised their night shelters and to speak with volunteers working in venues across the network. Yet, I held an ambiguous position while living in the shelters - a researcher positioned somewhere between a volunteer and a shelter user, but never fully either.

³² Ibid, p.202.

Prior to both my stays in the network, the Boaz Trust Night Shelter Coordinator would send an email to all the individual shelter coordinators to inform them that I would be staying in the shelters. I would bring my own toiletries and sleeping bag, so as not to use the limited resources in each venue, and would be willing to help out with any work that needed to be done. However, as each shelter had a well organised set of volunteers within them, there was never a need for me to get involved with any shelter work beyond activities such as clearing tables or washing up, which many of the other men staying in the shelters also took part in. The ambiguity of my position was perhaps best articulated in the sleeping arrangements. Most venues had separate sleeping areas for volunteers and the men using the shelters and, depending on the venue, I would be placed either with the volunteers or the other men. This continual shifting of position became most prominent during my second stay in the night shelters over a two week period between Monday, 25 November 2013 and Sunday, 8 December 2013. My sleeping arrangements in some of the venues changed over the course of the two weeks, with venues more and more likely to place me with the other men using the shelters during the second week, rather than with the volunteers as had often been the case during the first week. This may have been the unspoken result of the closer relations I naturally developed with some of the men as we moved from venue to venue each night of the week.

Following my two stays in the shelter network I would continue to work as a shelter manager at the LCC. This meant moving between fundamentally different positions with different responsibilities. George E. Marcus writes that multi-sited fieldwork is 'always conducted with a keen awareness of being within the

landscape, and as the landscape changes across sites, the identity of the ethnographer requires renegotiation'.³³ I always found this renegotiation of roles and shifts in position to be initially jarring. Rather than following the timings and schedules of the shelters, I was now implementing them. I was turning off the lights at night and waking people up in the morning, effectively regulating the sleeping times of those staying in the shelters. I was involved in diffusing the occasional argument or dispute and responding to possible breaches of the shelter code of conduct that the Boaz Trust provided to the men. These shifts in position and responsibility were often played out alongside the men I had been living with in the shelters and made explicit my privileged role as a researcher who was able to move in and out of situations that others had little choice over. While some of the men living in the shelters had already seen me in the manager role, others had not. On one occasion a young man who had arrived in the shelters the previous Sunday –the last night of my second stay in the network – expressed surprise to find me organising the shelter the following Friday. However, more often than not, returning to the Friday night shelter was a positive experience. It was an opportunity to catch up with and talk to the men I had been living alongside and continue to develop friendships and relations beyond the time I had spent staying in the shelter network. Indeed, the fact that I had stayed in the shelters, which no other non-asylum seekers had done, seemed to be appreciated and there was a connection between myself and others that wasn't always available to other volunteers who were scheduled more irregularly to work in the shelters.

³³ Marcus, 'Ethnography In/Of the World System', p.112.

The three weeks spent living in the shelters were formative to my research. Shelter life was not only bound to the physical spaces of the churches themselves, but also extended out to the streets of Manchester and places such as Manchester Central Library, bus stations, and drop-in centres. Time spent in the shelters also became time spent on the streets and the experience of living in the shelters and listening to people's experiences of the immigration system would push the notion of temporality to the fore of my research and my understanding of the border. I would come to realise that time in the shelter was shaped by prolonged periods of waiting, both the mundane time spent passing away the day while waiting for the next shelter to open and the more antagonistic bureaucratic temporality of the asylum claims and appeals process. This bifurcated waiting will be crucial to the ethnographic chapters that follow.

5. Urban Borders and the Manchester Street

On a late morning in early December 2013, I was walking through Exchange Square in central Manchester. The Christmas markets filled most of the public space in the city and stalls selling seasonal food and trinkets ran along New Cathedral Street and into the square. I was into my second week of my second stay in the Boaz Trust night shelters and that evening, like the previous evening and the following evening, I would spend the night on the floor of a local church that would temporarily open its building as a shelter space. During my stay in the shelters I often wore a rucksack that held toiletries, some spare clothes, a notebook and pen,

and a voice recorder. I also wore a warm, but worn, jacket and a heavy sweater and carried a sleeping bag over my shoulder. It was in Exchange Square that I would bump into a friend and former colleague who was also passing through the square.

Karen worked for a city centre management partnership that connected local businesses to public agencies in the city. Karen and I had discussed my research before, both in casual conversation and more formally. The previous winter Karen had provided some useful contacts within the local authority who were connected to refugee and asylum support services. Noticing the sleeping bag over my shoulder, Karen asked, 'Sleeping in the shelters again, Mark?'. I explained that yes, I was, and we continued to talk on the edge of Exchange Square. Karen then invited me to her company Christmas party. It was taking place that evening in Manchester Art Gallery. I initially said I couldn't make it, but she insisted, suggesting that I could stop by the event at 6.00 pm, before making my way to the shelter later that evening.

Only a few minutes earlier, I had left Manchester Central Library where I had spent the morning with Victor who was also staying in the shelters. Victor and I often passed the time in the library after a night spent sleeping on a church floor. The library was temporarily located on the ground floor of the Manchester Town Hall Extension, right next to the Customer Service Centre where people queued to access housing benefit and other support services, and the provisional set-up of bookshelves, tables and PC terminals offered a warm, safe and active environment for someone, like Victor, who might otherwise be spending the day on the streets while waiting for the shelters to re-open. Yet hours spent sitting around a crowded

table in this temporarily reduced-sized library could make a person restless and Victor and I would sometimes leave the building, at alternative times, for a bit of personal space and fresh air. It was on such a walk that I had crossed paths with Karen in Exchange Square.

That evening, at 6.00 pm, I arrived at Manchester Art Gallery which was now closed except to those attending the Christmas party. I handed in my rucksack, jacket and sleeping bag at the coat-check that was set up for the event and made my way to the first floor. The party was being held in the Manchester Room where paintings of the industrial-era city by L.S. Lowry and Adolphe Valette hung on the walls. There was sparkling wine and canapés, and a brief speech by the company's CEO. Marketing firms, business representatives, and local politicians were in attendance, including the Leader of the Council. I briefly spoke to the chairman of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce about my research into destitution among male asylum seekers in the city. I explained that I was staying in emergency night shelters, hence my low key dress. 'It sounds dangerous', he said. 'It's not', I quickly replied, restively adding that, 'there isn't the levels of substance abuse you might associate with other shelters', as if to justify my quick reply. I was trying to bring to an end a conversation that I didn't want to have and I had just caught myself reproducing common stereotypes associated with homelessness in order to explain my own research. On another occasion, under different circumstances, I might have felt more comfortable at the event. Yet, there and then I just felt awkward. I was underdressed and stood out among the dresses and suits. I didn't stay long and by 6.30 pm I had left. Conducting research in my own city, where 'the field' and my social life were never clearly distinct, could produce such unsettled

moments. Yet, this wasn't just a comedic being-out-of-place, but pointed to something much more fundamental. It was only a short walk from Manchester Art Gallery to the Friends Meeting House on Mount Street, where up to twelve men would be gathering in a room inside as they waited for transport to another temporary shelter for the night. The walk took me across Mosely Street, through St. Peter's Square, and between the grand civic architecture of the Town Hall, Town Hall Extension, and Central Library before arriving at the Friends Meeting House. Yet this short walk raised again the question of the 'immigration line' and the spaces and contexts I was able to move between as a researcher compared to the spaces and contexts open to the men using the Boaz shelters. Even whilst it made me uncomfortable, my journey from the gallery to the meeting house was one that Victor would likely be unable able to undertake.

Étienne Balibar connects his claim that borders have shifted from territorial edges to the middle of civic space and public life to the notion of 'divided cities'.³⁴ Divided cities draw the externalised colonial histories of borders, in which national divisions within Europe became a means of dividing up the world between European colonial states, back into internal urban spaces. Cosmopolitan cities, from Paris to Jerusalem to Frankfurt, become cities divided along the lines of race, class, and nationality.³⁵ Cities become 'border areas' as national borders diffuse into urban space and shape and re-shape urban life.³⁶ Yet, this is not a recent phenomenon. Before writing *The Communist Manifesto* and before his friendship with Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels lived and worked in Manchester. His 1845 work

³⁴ Balibar, *We, the People of Europe?*, p.111.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid, p.2.

The Condition of the Working Class in England provided a detailed account of the industrial city, its urban space, and its streets.³⁷ Engels described the streets of Manchester and its urban space as being fundamentally divided along class lines.³⁸ These class divisions were also and at the same time reproductions of the internal nationalisms within Great Britain as slum districts such as Little Gibraltar and Little Ireland were made up of primarily Irish migrants. Importantly for Engels, the city's layout had developed in such a way as to conceal these class and national divisions. Manchester was so designed that a businessman could 'take the shortest road through the middle of the labouring districts to their places of business, without ever seeing that they are in the midst of the grimy misery that lurks to the right and left'.³⁹ In the early industrial Manchester described by Engels, streets extended outwards from the city centre and the Exchange, which was then the centre of the global textile trade, and cut through the slums and factory districts to provide an uninterrupted link to the suburban, bourgeois areas of the city.⁴⁰ For the twenty-four year-old Engels, these thoroughfares were essentially lines of capital that served to conceal the abject spaces at the very heart of the city's vast accumulation of manufacturing wealth.⁴¹

³⁷ Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (London: Penguin, 2005)

³⁸ *Ibid*, pp.83-110.

³⁹ *Ibid*, p.86.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*.

⁴¹ *Ibid*. It's worth noting that Engels' account of industrial Manchester prefigured the Chicago School's concentric zone model of urban development by over eighty years, although Engels' description is one of contained, crushing poverty rather than outward and upward mobility. [Ernest Burgess, 'The Growth of the City: A Research Project', in *The City*, ed. by Robert Park and Ernest Burgess (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925), pp.47-62; David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), p.132].

In her analysis of turn-of-the-millennium Manchester, Rosemary Mellor returns to, and updates, the work of Engels.⁴² Although the factory system no longer operates, there is still a ‘pronounced dualism’ between wealth and poverty in the post-industrial city.⁴³ For instance, despite three decades of ‘regeneration’ and ‘redevelopment’ around the city centre, Manchester retains the dubious distinction of being a national leader in child poverty statistics.⁴⁴ But, although there is a ‘poverty belt around the city’, according to Mellor, ‘both cosmopolitan and poor are users of the central city, and indeed the latter depend on it’.⁴⁵ Despite the attempts by developers and investors to exclude the ‘poorer people’ of Manchester from the roles they play in the city centre, the urban core remains ‘one to all comers’ as it does not have the ‘defensible space of the purpose-built shopping mall, leisure centre or country club’.⁴⁶ Mellor adds that ‘for many it is the only place to sit out, to be a part of public life, to be in the turbulence of the crowd’.⁴⁷ It is here that Mellor’s analysis of contemporary Manchester becomes important. It takes into consideration the acute social divisions in contemporary Manchester – and by extension many cities, but also recognises that the city centre cannot constitute a comprehensively exclusionary space. This point becomes crucial in the following chapter ‘Time on the Street’, which explores the issues of temporality, destitution and the need to ‘pass time’ in the city as men staying in the Boaz Trust shelters see out each day, waiting for the shelters to open and close.

⁴² Rosemary Mellor, ‘Hypocritical City: Cycles of Urban Exclusion’, in *City of Revolution: Restructuring Manchester*, ed. by Jamie Peck and Kevin Ward (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp.214-235.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p.216.

⁴⁴ End Child Poverty, *Child Poverty Map of the UK* (2013), p.9.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, pp.230-1.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p.216, p.231.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p.231.

Mellor's analysis is not offering an egalitarian account of city centre space, but rather an insight into the acute, but diffuse social divisions that take place there.

It was only a five minute walk from Manchester Art Gallery and the private, corporate Christmas party to the Boaz Trust drop-in centre at the Friends Meeting House. My passage between the two spaces was not only a reminder of my own position - able to easily pass between two social extremes in the name of research - but also that nearness does not necessarily equate to 'proximity' in any social sense, and that the divisions and concealments I have highlighted in urban space, via Balibar and Engels, can easily be compressed into the most narrow of city spaces, often without recognition that such divisions exist. Reflecting on my passage between the corporate Christmas party and the drop-in space, draws me back to the border understood as a 'concrete abstraction' as it masks its own vicious contingencies and social exclusions. It draws me back to Julia Wessel's recognition that borders can become visible or invisible, malign or benign, depending on who you are and your particular social-legal status. As I will explore in more detail in the following chapter, in Manchester city centre – as in many urban spaces – people can often coexist within the same spaces without recognising the damage and the personal tragedy the border can have on some more than others.

6. Uncertainty, Transition, and Dignity as Methodological Issues

On a Saturday evening in late November 2013, we gathered around a table in a side room of the Kingsburn Hall night shelter in Burnage, south Manchester. Volunteers brought in plates of rice and curry that had been prepared in the building's kitchen, and the other men spending the night in the shelter and I began to eat our evening meal. As usual, conversations picked up around the table, often in multiple languages. Victor and I were sitting together and began talking. The topic eventually came around to my research and Victor asked me a provocative, personal question: 'Mr. Mark, what would you do if you worked in the UKBA?'. Victor had had many personal encounters with border officials already, whether in the police station, the detention centre, or the courts and his question pressed home the question of personal ethics in relation to employment in border enforcement and whether or not I had ever considered the issue. I hesitated for a moment. This was a big question and others around the table were now listening. At the far end of the table Ibrahim, who was originally from the Sudan, spoke up and asked, 'Mark works for the UKBA?'. Adil, a former military surgeon and also originally from the Sudan, was beside Ibrahim and quickly added, 'If Mark's a spy we'll kick him out of here'. I didn't reply to the comments as I didn't really know how to and instead, after a moment, returned to my conversation with Victor. Yet, those comments that evening in Kingsburn Hall stood out to me. They were a reminder that the 'immigration line' was always and unavoidably embedded in this research and I could never assume that I always had the confidence of others while staying in the shelters. I could not share or fully understand the deep-seated experience and tragedy of becoming destitute following the refusal of an asylum claim, nor could I assume that I belonged in the shelters simply because I was

temporarily living in them for research. As another man plainly and politely said to me towards the end of my stay in the shelters the previous winter: 'at the end of the week you've got a home to go back to. We don't'.

The topic of respect can be an important object of ethnographic study.⁴⁸ Yet, what is not often recognised is the ethnographer's own desire for respect and own desire for assurances from others while conducting research. Feelings of respect can easily bring other gratifying feelings such as comfort and surety. The ethnographer's desire to be respected and assured is also a desire to feel at ease while conducting fieldwork. Reflecting on his research on the streets of Greenwich Village, New York, Duneier writes that, 'it would have been a methodological error for me to believe that apparent rapport is real trust, or that the poor blacks I was writing about would feel comfortable taking off their mask in my presence'.⁴⁹ For Duneier, acceptance by others during fieldwork does not necessarily mean having their trust.⁵⁰ This ultimately leads to an unavoidable uncertainty within ethnographic work that must be recognised and declared rather than cloaked behind awkward attempts at methodological resolution. 'Perhaps the best starting point', writes Duneier, 'is to be aware that a different social position can have a serious effect on one's work, and these differences must be taken seriously'.⁵¹ Feeling ill-at ease or uncertain can have an important role to play in ethnographic research particularly if it becomes a means to push one out of the 'enchanted

⁴⁸ Phillipe Bourgois, *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*, 2nd Edition (CUP, 2003).

⁴⁹ Duneier, *Sidewalk*, p.338.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid, p.354.

ordinary' and recognise the uneven and often concealed tragedies instituted, in the example of my own research, by processes of bordering.

The Boaz Trust night shelters are spaces of constant movement and transition and of constant arrival and departure. Men arriving in the shelters might stay for one night or for a few days, while others might be living in the shelters for weeks or even months. Over the course of a winter season over 100 men could be referred to the night shelters and stay for widely varying lengths of time.⁵² The shelters are transient spaces with a constantly changing population of men. As I will argue in chapter 7, both arrival and departure from the shelters are filled with uncertainty and leaving the shelters does not necessarily mean that one's legal status has changed or stabilised. Such transience can affect the relations between the men using the shelters and other volunteers and Boaz Trust employees. As one Boaz Trust employee wrote in a newsletter for Boaz Trust supporters,

One of the frustrations of our work is that all too often, we don't get to see the end of the story for those we support. We can sometimes get to know someone over the course of a year or more, then the client may get allocated asylum accommodation and support in a different part of the country and we may not hear from them again.⁵³

This is particularly the case with the night shelters, as a person could leave the network quickly and without warning as they secured other forms of

⁵² Interview, Male Case Worker/Night Shelter Coordinator, 2013. See Appendix.

⁵³ 'Engage' Boaz Trust Newsletter, email, 24 March 2016.

accommodation or support at short notice. A person could spend weeks or months in the shelter and then suddenly not return. If new accommodation was provided through NASS this could lead to an individual being moved on at short notice to another city as part of the government's dispersal policy. As a researcher, this transience and uncertainty meant that developing long-term relations and maintaining contact with those using – and eventually leaving – the shelters could be difficult. It was rare to keep in touch with people once they had left the shelter. I did, however, keep in close contact with Samar, a former engineering student from Tehran, and our friendship continued to develop long after he had left the shelters as he moved between different Boaz Trust housing in Manchester. Samar took a keen interest in my research and offered detailed feedback on drafts of my ethnographic writing that helped shape Chapters 4 and 7 in particular.⁵⁴

The transience of the shelters could also shape and effect relations between the men staying in them. In their study of homelessness in Austin, Texas, David Snow and Leon Anderson argue that the quick and easy conviviality of supporting and sharing modest resources are easily counterbalanced by the fragility and impermanence of social bonds.⁵⁵ This oscillation between affiliation and disaffiliation also occurred in the shelters.⁵⁶ While managing the LCC shelter in 2013, I noticed that three men who had regularly used the shelters over the past

⁵⁴ An important point of feedback from Samar was the need to examine the effects of destitution on the mental and physical health of those staying the shelters. While I explore some of the physical effects of shelter life in Chapter 7, I have not given much focus to mental health issues. This is something I intend to include in any further research.

⁵⁵ David Snow and Leon Anderson, *Down on Their Luck: A Study of Homeless Street People* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p.194.

⁵⁶ See also Robert Desjarlais' 1997 study on state shelter provision in Boston Massachusetts. Desjarlais' writes that relations between people living in shelters were often a 'combination between affiliation and disaffiliation'. [Robert Desjarlais, *Shelter Blues: Sanity and Selfhood Among the Homeless* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), p.121].

months were no longer there. I asked one of their mutual friends about their circumstances. He replied that one friend was now in Sheffield as 'he's got his Section 4 and moved there. He said he would call and maybe visit Manchester, but I haven't heard anything from him'. Of the second he said, 'he's found somewhere to stay for three weeks. He'll be back' and of the third friend he was dismissive, saying, 'I don't care man. He's not my friend anymore. I told him not to hang around me anymore. He talks too much and gets aggressive. He was pushing me. If I see him in the mosque I might say hello, but that's all'. As conversations of this sort indicated, the transitory state of the shelters not only affected the relations between myself, as a researcher, and the other men, but also between the men themselves. A key point to raise here is that the legal uncertainty faced by those staying in the shelters was in turn shaping the shelters as spaces of constant movement and transition. This had implications for gaining and maintaining informed consent among the men who were using the shelters. My social position as White Westerner meant I was clearly an outsider while living in the shelters and I made a point of introducing myself as a student researcher to individuals who were arriving in the shelters for the first time. Introducing my research to others and my reasons for staying in the shelters was an activity I was constantly engaged in. However, this became more difficult in my role as a shelter manager as conversations about my research had to take place alongside introducing the shelter to newcomers and other essential work. This most often meant further conversations with individuals. Responses to my research could vary. Some of the men were keen to engage with me and offer support for my work by talking about their situation, their experiences as destitute and refused asylum seekers, and their

thoughts and experiences of the night shelters. Often the people most engaged were also the most constructively critical such as Adil and Victor and Samar who continually posed questions and gave advice or suggestions about what they felt I should write about or emphasise in my work. Informed consent also meant recognising that some men in the shelters were not interested in my research and in these instances I would not seek engagement beyond what was expected between a volunteer working in the shelters and those staying in them. The issue also shaped aspects of my 'extended place method' as spending time on the streets was normally at the invitation at the beginning of the day or through asking permission to spend time with them. This had to be constantly, and most often informally, negotiated and re-negotiated throughout the weeks and over the course of a day as individuals decided when they wished to have me accompany them or not. It effectively shaped where and when I spent my time on the streets with others.

During my research with those staying in the shelters I did not use recorded interviews to the extent that I had done with volunteers and Boaz Trust employees. It became apparent to me that this was not the most appropriate means of gathering data and that normal procedures for gaining consent for interviews were deeply problematic in the night shelters. When I conducted a group interview one evening at the LCC in April 2013 with men staying in the shelter, Carlos and I set up a table in a side room of the church in preparation and invited people to participate. One young man named Temir, who was in his early to mid-twenties and originally from Iraq, said he was willing to take part but wondered aloud to me why I needed to do the interview as over the past weeks 'I've already poured my

heart out to you'. Temir and two others did participate, however the consent forms that I produced for the interview immediately became an issue. When I handed one to Temir to read and sign, he asked sarcastically, 'what am I meant to do with this?'. The others also looked uncomfortable with the forms. In other contexts, with volunteers and employees, these were an essential part of gaining informed consent. However, for the men staying in the shelters who had no personal space and no place to call their own, the forms merely exposed the fact that they had nowhere to keep them. The consent forms became a physical reminder of their destitution, poverty, and state of homelessness and my actions, although unintentional, pressed against their personal dignity. The very documents that were meant to confirm an ethical relationship had become ethically problematic. Based on this experience I conducted only one other recorded interview with an individual using the shelters and that was Victor, as I will discuss in the following chapter. It was also for this reason that I primarily relied on taking notes throughout my stay in the night shelters and during my time working as a shelter manager.

I will return to the issues of dignity and indignity in the following chapter and in Chapter 7. They were themes that constantly and consistently emerged during research on the streets and in the shelters. Like other themes, such as uncertainty and transition, issues of dignity and indignity not only began to shape my research practice but were also fundamentally products of the 'immigration line' and deeply connected to processes of bordering. Confronting questions of dignity and indignity, respect and uncertainty, may produce unease on the part of the researcher, but ultimately began to open key aspects of my ethnographic work.

4. Time on the Street: Waiting and Destitution on the Streets of Manchester

1. Introduction

Based on observation, conversations, and participation, this chapter explores the 'weaponisation of time' as a form of waiting as it is experienced by men staying in the Boaz Trust shelters. Waiting is the mundane and repetitive experience of seeing out each day, waiting for shelters to open and close, without access to steady income, and without a place to call one's own. This 'waiting' is also understood from a position of destitution and rejection as the men staying in the shelters have been denied refugee status and are without the right to work or remain in the UK. For these reasons, time on the street is an emotionally loaded time, with attendant feelings of uncertainty, boredom, isolation, indignity, and loneliness.

I suggest that the situation of the men staying in the night shelters can be described as a 'doubled placelessness', extending Samira Kawash's definition of 'placelessness' to include not only being without a place to call one's own – homeless in the sense that it describes individuals who are sleeping rough or otherwise lack settled accommodation – but also in the sense of refused asylum seekers whose presence within the national boundaries of the state are under constant question and who are without many of the basic rights available to residents and citizens.

Following this initial discussion I begin an account of ‘time on the street’ that focuses on ‘walking’ and ‘waiting’. These are descriptions of walking the streets of Greater Manchester in an effort to keep busy, keep warm, and keep active, as well as pass the time over the course of the day. The chapter then returns to the notion of ‘spaces of asylum’ that I developed in Chapter 2 and discusses particular spaces such as Manchester Central Library, Chorlton Street Coach Station, and Manchester Aquatics Centre as ‘spaces of asylum’. I argue that ‘spaces of asylum’ are not only discrete sites, but areas that are inscribed with meaning and practices by those living in the social-legal condition of ‘refused asylum seeker’.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of shame and dignity and indignity on the street, and returns to my earlier discussions of the ‘community of value’. I show how divisions between the ‘deserving and undeserving’ are activated and reproduced by those living on the edges of the community of value and not just its centre.

2. Time on the Street

At 8.30 am on a bitterly cold Sunday morning in early December 2012, a minibus pulls up alongside Piccadilly Gardens in central Manchester. Twelve men, most of whom are from the Middle East, North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, step out onto the street. Many disperse across the city in small groups while others make their way from the minibus individually. Some will spend the day at a friend’s home while others will simply look for a place to keep warm – perhaps a bookies, a

casino, a bus station or the food court of the nearby Arndale Shopping Centre. If they are Christian they might attend a local church service, and if Muslim they might visit one of the two mosques in central Manchester. As it is Sunday, the city streets are nearly deserted and there is none of the usual weekday morning rush. It also means that a number of the public buildings some of the men frequent during the day, such as Manchester Central Library, will be closed and alternative spaces will need to be sought out. On a weekday, some might attend English classes offered by a local college or charity, while others might take up itinerant or illicit work, perhaps at a chicken factory, a shisha café, or delivering leaflets door-to-door for a local takeaway. It is £10.00 for a day's work leafleting. Whatever the case, all have just spent the night in an emergency night shelter for refused and destitute male asylum seekers organised by the Boaz Trust. Most of the men who have filtered out onto the street will make their way back to the Boaz Trust offices later that evening, just north of the city centre, and at 9.00 pm will be taken to a new shelter for the night.

Arriving in central Manchester after a night spent sleeping on a church floor is a daily occurrence for the men staying in the night shelters. It is a moment that not only takes place on any given Sunday, but also throughout the week over the course of the winter season. Time on the street is an everyday part of shelter life. It is the repetitive and mundane experience of seeing out each day, waiting for the shelters to open and close, without the right to work, without access to steady income or public support, and without a place to call one's own. Days unfold from a position of destitution and are accompanied by uncertainty over one's legal status and future. The enforced destitution resulting from an antagonistic asylum claims

process becomes an enforced waiting and idleness. Time on the street is a component of what Melanie Griffiths terms, 'the lived experience of immigration administration' with its oscillation between immanent change and seemingly endless waiting.¹ It becomes a form of institutionally produced 'chronic waiting' that is founded on the exclusion of particular groups who are placed outside 'legal norms' and are designated as unwanted and superfluous.² Drawing on the work of Hannah Arendt in the context of the early colonisation of South Africa, Achille Mbembe maintains that 'superfluity' held a conflicting racist logic that at once instrumentalised the labour of Black workers for sale on the market, while also devaluing, wasting, and debasing the Black body by exposing labourers – and miners in particular – to increased scrutiny, suspicion, risk, accidents, and sickness.³ 'Here, superfluity was akin to the dissipation of value and its reorganisation in the realm of the biopolitical', writes Mbembe, as 'native life, in turn, was both indispensable and expendable'.⁴ Bordering processes also work to render particular groups of people superfluous and a similar logic of differential inclusion appears in the context of refused asylum seekers and in particular this current research undertaken alongside men of primarily Middle Eastern and African origin, both young and old, who are unwanted by the British state and rejected as refugees. Suspicions over their 'genuineness' call into question their honesty and integrity and ultimately begin to strip away their dignity as they become destitute and idle.

¹ Griffiths, 'Out of Time: The Temporal Uncertainties of Refused Asylum Seekers and Immigration Detainees', p.1992.

² Craig Jeffrey, 'Waiting', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 26 (2008), 954-958 (pp.954-5).

³ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (San Diego: Harcourt, 1968), p.189; Achille Mbembe, 'Aesthetics of Superfluity', *Public Culture*, 16:3 (2004), 373-405 (pp.380-1).

⁴ Mbembe, 'Aesthetics of Superfluity', pp.380-1.

Yet, this rejection and ‘wasted time’ is instrumental in shoring up the community of value, with its need to exclude people – morally, socially, and legally – in order to consolidate a cohesive sense of national identity and attendant sense of common moral worth. Here, the ‘immigration line’ described by Les Back - with its legacy in racisms both past and present - asserts itself as a zone of temporal differentiation, trapping certain individuals in an uncertain present.⁵ This can lead to ‘refused asylum seekers feeling outside the “normal” time of mainstream society’, amplifying what Saulo Cwerner terms the liminal time of migration where the ‘future is uncertain; the present seems to be leading nowhere; and the past cannot be relied upon as a guide for action’ with accompanying mental and emotional states of ‘indecision, confusion, incompleteness, underachievement and eternal expectation’.⁶

In her recent study of the UK’s asylum determination process, Rebecca Rotter writes that,

much of the existing research on asylum has focused on the content of ‘events’ (the journey, the asylum interview and the appeal hearing) in the asylum seeker’s life or in the asylum determination process. However, the ordinary ‘non-events’, or everyday life of waiting *between* these events, have received much less attention, perhaps because it is assumed that nothing (of interest) happens during these periods.⁷

⁵ Back, *The Art of Listening*, pp.31-32.

⁶ Griffiths, ‘Out of Time: The Temporal Uncertainties of Refused Asylum Seekers and Immigration Detainees’, p.1992; Cwerner, ‘The Times of Migration’, p.21.

⁷ Rebecca Rotter, ‘Waiting in the Asylum Determination Process: Just an Empty Interlude?’, *Time and Society*, (2015), doi:10.1177/0961463X15613654 (p.5).

This chapter is an exploration of this 'everyday life of waiting'. Through conversations, interviews, and ethnographic research alongside men staying in the shelters, it offers an account of the ordinary 'non-events' as they pass their time on the streets. Time on the street is not only shaped by the imposing rhythms of an often dysfunctional bureaucracy, it is also shaped by basic needs such as keeping warm, staying safe, and combatting boredom. This chapter reflects on the condition of 'waithood' – a term introduced by Adeline Masquelier in reference to young men who faced chronic unemployment in Niger and for whom, 'life was experienced as a daily repetition of dull routines, structured around mundane tasks of eating and sleeping, not as a progression towards a future qualitatively different from the present'.⁸ It involves itself with the dull temporality of prolonged waiting, at the same that it recognises that asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers can be subjected to abrupt changes in circumstances - a theme also explored in more detail in Chapter 7 and in particular the section 'Arrivals and Departures'. Time on the street carries the dual uncertainty of both immanent and absent change at the same time as it is characterised by a sense of boredom, dependency and anxiety, and the continued resilience of those facing such conditions.

Writing about 'time on the street' is a doubly difficult task. Not only must the writing convey the experience of extended periods of waiting and boredom, it must also recognise that it is an emotionally loaded time, laden with feelings of isolation, fear, shame, and uncertainty. In late 2013, during my second stay in the

⁸ Adeline Masquelier, 'Teatime: Boredom and the Temporalities of Young Men in Niger', *Africa*, 83:3 (2013), 470-91 (p.475, p.482).

night shelters, Victor brought a pile of documents to the Sunday night shelter in Ashton-Under-Lyne. They related to his asylum case and he had been storing them at a friend's house, along with some other personal possessions. The following day he handed the documents to me as we sat together in Manchester Central Library. The documents were an archive of his time in the UK including arrest reports, police statements, medical information, interview transcripts, court judgements, appeals forms, letters of rejection, a release form from the Harmondsworth Immigration Removal Centre, and fresh documents – including newspaper reports on Ghana – that Victor had been gathering in support of a possible renewed asylum claim or judicial review of his case. Victor was not seeking my help or asking for my advice in handing over the documents, but did so voluntarily in support of my research. They were a comprehensive official account of his asylum claims process. I read through each document, one by one, before handing them back to Victor. He agreed to record an interview with me and later we made a short walk to the Royal Exchange Theatre and conducted the interview in the open, but quiet and private, space of the atrium. We discussed a lot – his first experience with immigration authorities while in jail following his arrest in London for overstaying his visa, his experiences in Harmondsworth Immigration Removal Centre, the processing of his asylum claim and appeal, and his thoughts on the Boaz Trust night shelters. Prior to his arrival in the night shelters, Victor had spent three nights sleeping rough on the streets of Manchester. Alongside the weeks he had spent living with different friends, this period formed a 'between time' – to borrow Rotter's phrase – that was not covered by any official documentation. I asked Victor about his experiences on the street and he spoke of dizziness, loneliness, and how he had to hold back the

tears. Victor became hesitant while speaking, giving short emotive answers, before concluding by saying, 'I felt very lonely, but I don't want to go back there'. This comment doesn't come across well on paper. Victor wasn't talking about a possible return to sleeping rough at some point in the future. By not wanting 'to go back there' he meant not wanting to recall the experience during an interview. Amid the papers documenting his experiences in the Ivory Coast and Ghana and his reasons for leaving West Africa, amid our discussions on detention and asylum claims and appeals, it was life on the street that Victor found most difficult to speak about at that moment in time. Victor carried himself with a friendly, easy-going dignity, and constantly prodded me with questions and thoughts about my research, but in asking about his time on the street – his homelessness - I seemed to be questioning his sense of pride and stripping back his dignity. We quickly moved the discussion on.

Samar – a former engineering student from Tehran – arrived in the Boaz Trust shelters in the early months of 2013 and stayed in the shelters until they closed in April of that year. Samar had claimed asylum in the UK during his studies and was moved into NASS accommodation while his claim was processed. Following its rejection, he was given the standard 21 days to vacate his accommodation. With no place to go, Samar faced the prospect of life on the street and so he approached the accommodation management with a code of conduct form he had been given while living on NASS support. It included the warning that any breaches of the code could lead to detention in an IRC. Samar pointed out all the times he had broken the rules and then volunteered himself for detention. It was an attempt to avoid becoming homeless. Nothing came of it and

Samar would later end up living in the Boaz Trust night shelters. Time on the street is a deeply emotive landscape. Victor's comments and eventual withdrawal from the topic during our interview, and Samar's active attempts to be detained are indicative of the indignity, anxiety, fear, isolation, and shame that can hang over those experiencing enforced destitution.

3. Doubled Placelessness

Drawing on the work of the homeless rights activist Mitch Snyder, Samira Kawash writes that the central dilemma of homeless existence is 'how to pass the time without any space'.⁹ Kawash's reflections on homelessness in the United States were prompted by seeing a person tightly folded up, asleep, on the seating of a New York Subway with an overstuffed plastic bag and who was actively avoided by other commuters.¹⁰ It was a socially charged image of isolation, vulnerability, and abjection. For Kawash, as for Talmadge Wright, those visually identified by others as 'homeless' become stand-ins for wider notions of poverty – a process that obfuscates the more fluid realities of homelessness.¹¹ Under the public gaze the visual comportment of particular urban street dwellers – as dirty or dishevelled, in possession of carts or bags of belongings, and engaged in panhandling or

⁹ Mitch Snyder, 'Life on the Streets', in *Homelessness in America: A Forced March to Nowhere*, ed. by Mitch Snyder and Mary Ellen Hombs (Washington, DC: Community for Creative Non-Violence, 1982), 107-118 (p.110); Samira Kawash, 'The Homeless Body', *Public Culture*, 10:2 (1998), 319-339 (p.328).

¹⁰ Kawash, 'The Homeless Body', p.319.

¹¹ Kawash, 'The Homeless Body', p.319; Talmadge Wright, *Out of Place: Homeless Mobilizations, Subcities, and Contested Landscapes* (New York: SUNY Press, 1997), pp.1-2.

scavenging – functions as a clear dividing mechanism between housed and unhoused persons. Set against the housed public, homelessness emerges as both a rhetorical device and a real objective situation.¹² Kawash argues that an abstract image of the public – however partial and illusory, and subsequently a notion of public space, are constituted through the imagined exclusion of the abject ‘homeless body’.¹³ The homeless body in the public imagination represents the body of decay, the degenerate body, a body that is constantly rejected by the public as sick, scary, dirty and smelly; that not only wanders through the physical borders of our cities, but also through the social borders, defined by moral, ethical, and normative interpretations of behaviour.¹⁴ It threatens the imagined wholeness of the public at the same time that it constitutes it through its exclusion.¹⁵

As with my earlier analysis of bordering processes, the structure of the ‘concrete abstraction’ is apparent here. Abstracted notions of the ‘public’ and ‘public space’ work alongside a particular image of the ‘homeless body’ and are taken as true in practice and begin to aggressively bear down on urban space. Public space becomes regulated and refigured as a proprietary space through the active exclusion of homeless persons. Such exclusions are enacted through the programmed hardening of the urban surface as street furniture is designed to make sleeping impossible and sitting for long periods uncomfortable, formerly public toilets are closed or made accessible mainly to tourists and office workers through their location in semi-private spaces such as transport hubs, office buildings, and

¹² Wright, *Ought of Place*, p.15.

¹³ Kawash, ‘The Homeless Body’, p.328.

¹⁴ Wright, *Out of Place*, p.2, p.69.

¹⁵ Kawash, ‘The Homeless Body’, pp.328-9.

restaurants, and 'quality of life' legislation is introduced that criminalises activities such as sleeping, camping, and drinking in public.¹⁶ Don Mitchell refers to this as the annihilation of space by law.¹⁷ For Kawash this leads to what she terms a 'condition of placelessness'.¹⁸ Placelessness is the experience of dispossession. It is having no place to be. It is being without a place to call one's own – a safe space to leave one's things. Under the 'condition of placelessness' one's possessions are reduced to whatever one can carry.¹⁹ Through material and social dispossession, the extension of the homeless body in the world is pressed closer and closer to the bodily boundary marked out by the skin.²⁰ Yet, because of this, at the same time that placelessness is formed as a public non-existence, it requires an embodied, albeit contested presence in public space.²¹ Kawash writes, 'it is because it is paradoxically positioned as simultaneously excluded and present that the homeless body appears as a limit figure in relation to the public'.²²

In his autobiographical work *'Illegal' Traveller* Shahram Khosravi describes his experiences in Sweden as both a refugee and later as an anthropologist working alongside refugees. He writes of how there is a particular image of a 'refugee' that holds sway in the public imagination:

¹⁶ Mike Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York: Vintage, 1992) p.223; Kawash, 'The Homeless Body', pp.322-3.

¹⁷ Don Mitchell, 'The Annihilation of Space by Law: The Roots and Importance of Anti-Homeless Laws in the United States', *Antipode*, 29:3 (1997), 303-335 (p.305).

¹⁸ Kawash, 'The Homeless Body', p.329.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p.329, 331.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p.331.

²¹ *Ibid*, p.329.

²² *Ibid*.

[...] Pain and suffering have become the hallmarks of refugeeness. The term 'refugee' generally signifies deprived and underprivileged people. A 'real' refugee is thus supposed to be a 'profound', 'poor', 'traumatized', 'serious' and of course 'sad' person.²³

Khosravi recalls accompanying a young Kurdish woman to an appointment with the Migration Board after her asylum claim had been rejected. The lawyer told the woman to wipe off her makeup and change her miniskirt into jeans as in her current condition 'she did not look like a refugee'.²⁴ Similarly, Khosravi was told by a refugee case worker in Sweden that Iranians could not be 'real' refugees as they are too well-dressed and go to discos.²⁵ Like the imagined 'homeless body', the image of the 'refugee' was being abstracted and deployed in relation to a wider, normative, but also imagined, national community. In this case, the image of the 'suffering refugee' was needed to affirm the legitimacy and hospitality of the 'host' nation, while also reducing the agency of individuals by moralising on their behaviour and appearance. Many of the men staying in the Boaz Trust night shelters are casually or smartly dressed and bear no relation to the visual markers of the imagined 'homeless body' or suffering refugee. 'A happy, well-dressed, good-looking refugee is a contradiction', writes Khosravi.²⁶ The men in the Boaz Trust night shelters remain in the 'condition of placelessness', without a space to call one's own, without a home. They remain homeless in the sense that it is used

²³ Khosravi, *'Illegal' Traveller*, p.73.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p.72.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p.73.

²⁶ *Ibid*.

to describe individuals who are sleeping rough or otherwise lack settled accommodation and this includes people in temporary or insecure forms of accommodation, such as night shelters.²⁷ Yet, this is also a doubled placelessness, as they exist in a state of 'irregularity' where the 'norms and rules taken for granted by all *citizens* cease to apply and everyday activities or possibilities such as returning home, working, travelling, and accessing healthcare may be criminalised or severely restricted.²⁸ It is in this sense that there is a condition of 'doubled placelessness' faced by the men staying in the Boaz Trust shelters – it is the placelessness of the urban homeless as well as the refused asylum seeker who is without the right to work, access public support, and without the right to remain in the UK. Importantly, for Kawash, the condition of placelessness binds a person to 'a perpetual state of movement' as they are without a home, without recourse to a private space of one's own and 'are forced into constant motion not because they are going somewhere, but because they have nowhere to go. Going nowhere is simultaneously being nowhere; homelessness is not only being without home, but more generally without place'.²⁹ In this way the condition of placelessness, and doubled placelessness, returns to the dilemma posed earlier – of how to pass the time without any space.

4. Walking and Waiting

²⁷ Sarah Johnsen, Paul Cloke, and Jon May, 'Imag(in)ing 'Homeless Places': Using Auto-photography to (Re)Examine the Geographies of Homelessness, *Area*, 40 (2008), 194-207 (p.205).

²⁸ Khosravi, '*Illegal Traveller*', p.90.

²⁹ Kawash, 'The Homeless Body', p.327.

I wish to return to that Sunday morning in early December, 2012, as the day opened out to the limited options available to the men staying in the shelters. Although most of the men departing the minibus quickly made their way into the city, I was invited to join three men standing on the edge of Piccadilly Gardens. It was Wasim, a well-built and verbose man, originally from the Gaza Strip, who extended the invitation. Alongside Wasim were Hani and Naveed. Hani was also from Palestine and closely accompanied Wasim during his stay in the shelters. He was a shy and withdrawn man who spoke little English and remained quiet even around other Arabic speakers in the shelters. He wore an awkward dark purple wide-brimmed hat that Wasim would sometimes remove without warning into order to reveal Hani's balding head. While others smiled or chuckled, Hani would remain silent. Naveed was originally from Pakistan, in his mid-sixties, and had spent years living precariously in the UK as an asylum seeker and then refused asylum seeker before arriving in the Boaz Trust night shelters where he would spend three months sleeping on different church floors. Naveed was sociable, talkative, and attentive to others who were staying in the shelters. He often made people cups of tea and ensured others had enough bedding for the night. I had become close to both Naveed and Wasim during my first stay in the shelter network and we shared many conversations over mugs of tea, during meals, and while walking the streets, waiting for transport to and from the shelters, and throughout the evenings as we prepared for sleep.

Although Wasim had a strong personality and often took the lead on the streets and could easily dominate conversation in the shelters, it was Naveed who

suggested that we make our way to a 'church' that provided space for homeless people during the day. The church Naveed spoke of was the Beacon Drop-in Centre on Richmond Street, parallel to Canal Street, otherwise known as the city's 'Gay Village'. Operated by Barnabus, a Christian charity, the Beacon Centre offers food, sanctuary, and hot showers to homeless people in the city.³⁰ However, it is only open five days a week and was closed that Sunday. In the biting cold we retraced our steps back to Piccadilly Gardens, stopping at the Chorlton Street Coach Station. It had seating and, importantly, was warm. We would spend the next five hours there.

While Naveed was leading us to the Beacon Centre, Wasim had approached a man standing outside the coach station. Initially intending to ask the man for a cigarette, Wasim quickly recognised him from other homeless support services in the city and from the casinos they both frequented. He joined us as we walked to the Beacon Centre – also not realising it was closed – and then returned with us to the coach station. He was reserved and quiet and spoke little, although he seemed happy with the company. While sitting in the coach station waiting area, I began a short conversation with him. His name was Yvgeny and he said he was from Siberia, but had lived the past three years in Munich before arriving in Manchester. When I asked if he had liked Munich Yvgeny replied sarcastically, 'If I liked it, I wouldn't be in Manchester would I?'. The conversation was short. He stayed with us for another two hours before pulling a casino chip from his pocket saying 'this will get me into the casino. Maybe I'll win something'. This was the last I saw of

³⁰ www.barnabus-manchester.org.uk [accessed 16 September 2016].

him. Meeting Yvgeny, in passing, on that early morning in December would prefigure the transience I would soon encounter in the night shelters as people suddenly left and moved on, without notice and without further contact.

Gerald Daly writes that ‘for people living without housing, who live on the streets, their days are marked by endless walking and waiting’.³¹ That Sunday in early December 2012, like other days, would involve prolonged periods of walking and waiting, movement and stasis, with little purpose beyond passing time until the shelters opened again. The day began with a walk through the city centre, following Naveed, and, as I discuss below, included walking to the Manchester Aquatics Centre – near Manchester Metropolitan University – and back, as well as passing through the casinos of Chinatown. ‘Waiting’ takes on particular meanings under the condition of ‘doubled placelessness’ which, as I have argued, not only includes the condition of being without a home or a place to call one’s own, but also a condition of irregularity and legal uncertainty that, in the case of the refused asylum seeker, prohibits employment and access to public funds and support, and place’s one’s very presence in the UK under constant question. ‘Waiting is an urgent matter’, writes Jean-François Bayart and it is a particularly urgent matter for those caught up in the regulation of international migrations and who are rendered superfluous or unwanted by processes of bordering.³² For Bayart, ‘waiting’ is a symptom of being in a state of ‘permanent displacement’.³³ It is waiting shaped by the politics of abandonment, as the law withdraws its support at

³¹ Gerald Daly, *Homeless: Policies, Strategies, and Lives on the Street* (London: Routledge, 1996), p.128.

³² Jean-François Bayart, *Global Subjects: A Political Critique of Globalization*, trans. by Andrew Brown (Cambridge: Polity, 2007), p.269, p.272.

³³ *Ibid*, p.282.

the same time that it maintains its authority, pushing individuals on a slide towards 'bare life' and into a 'permanent state of stand-by'.³⁴ It is waiting shaped by differential inclusion as individuals are 'forced into latency' – present yet not visible – not only in segregated sites like detention centres, but also, as I am arguing, on the city streets and in the heart of civic space.³⁵

Walking was a means of passing time. It was a form of waiting. Early one Friday morning I joined Wasim, Naveed, Hani, and two others as they left a shelter in Broughton, Salford, which is some distance from Manchester city centre. Like others leaving the shelter that morning, they decided to walk into the city centre despite being given bus fare by the church operating the night shelter. Walking became a means of saving money and some of the group pooled their bus fares together to buy a packet of cigarettes to share. Wasim would also tell me, later, how important it was to save money in order to top up on mobile phone credit in order to keep in touch with family 'back home'. I spent most of that walk with Naveed, who was a non-smoker. He planned to spend the £3 he had been given in a pound shop and purchase earphones in order to listen to the radio, as well as biscuits and water. It was an hour and a half walk into the city centre, over five kilometres, and from there to the Boaz Trust offices where we would spend the day in their communal area, warm. Walking had its purposes beyond saving money. Naveed spoke of its health benefits, saying 'it's good to be active and walking is healthy'. As if to further justify the need to walk such long distances, he also added that walking allowed you to see the city. Wasim overheard this last comment and

³⁴ Ibid, p.272.

³⁵ Ibid, p.269.

began to laugh, pointing at the Salford skyline and saying 'but what is there to look at?'. In other conversations Naveed described how walking formed part of his daily routine as he would spend the day 'walking around Piccadilly' in the city centre, unless the weather was poor in which case he would spend the day in Manchester Central Library – at that time temporarily located on Deansgate as the main building near the Town Hall underwent a three-year refurbishment. Others adopted similar routines and during the 2012-2013 winter season I would often see Babir, a young Kurdish man originally from Iraq, walking around the Arndale Shopping Centre as he waited for the shelters to open. It was a safe, warm, and public environment where he could blend in with the crowds of shoppers. One evening, as we waited on the street for transport to the shelters, some of the men described their day. After leaving the shelter in Didsbury, south Manchester, they walked to the Rainbow Haven day centre in Openshaw, east Manchester. From there they walked to the Boaz Trust offices in Ancoats, covering a total of eleven kilometres over the course of the day.

The street was not only a place for walking in order to pass time, save money, or keep active, but also for fostering interaction and opportunities with other members of the public. This was particularly the case for Wasim, whose verbosity and outgoing personality would see him approach strangers for cigarettes, say 'good morning' to passers-by and, more awkwardly and embarrassingly for us around him, wolf-whistle and cat-call to women we passed on the street. While these actions shifted between the friendly and the crude, they were also strategic. Wasim described to me his technique for obtaining cigarettes, which was carefully planned so as to avoid the appearance of begging. He would

greet a person and then ask, 'Do you smoke?'. If they replied 'yes', he would ask, 'What's your favourite brand?' while simultaneously ruffling his hand in his pocket - an action suggesting that Wasim was about to pull out his own cigarettes in order to display his favourite brand. Yet, his question would often lead to the stranger pulling out their own cigarettes to show Wasim. At this point he would pull a lighter from his pocket, rather than cigarettes, and ask the stranger for one of theirs and then light them both. In this respect, there was a certain degree of 'blagging' to these interactions and Wasim would later tell me, with pride, that he had the skill of 'convincing people that they wanted to give me something that I need'. My last conversation with Wasim was on a Friday night in the LCC shelter in late January 2013. It was the evening before a date he had arranged with a woman he had met on the street and Wasim asked my advice on whether or not he should wash his jacket in order to make a better impression. He was nervous and tense. The woman he had met on the street only days earlier had been texting him throughout the day telling him what she expected and wanted from any new boyfriend. He felt under pressure, but it was also a way out of the shelters. This was the last time I would see Wasim and rumour among other men staying in the shelters was that he had moved in with the woman.

While walking was described as a useful way of passing time, saving money, and keeping active, less positive descriptions also emerged. Wasim would sometimes talk about his life immediately prior to arriving in the shelter network. He spoke about wandering the streets of Manchester in a morose stupor. These recollections did not refer to any specific length of time, but were rather descriptions of his state of mind and physical health during an intense period of

depression over his destitution. Wasim described how he developed a limp to cope with the severe pain he began to feel in his feet, while at the same time ignoring the growing concerns of passers-by. His wandering lasted until his feet turned black and blue, apparently from gangrene. An eventual visit to the hospital, which should provide primary care to refused asylum seekers, led to an injection that eliminated the condition. 'I almost lost my feet, Mark', Wasim once concluded after recalling that time.

The streets could be sites of indignity, isolation, and shame. They could also be sites where violence occasionally erupted. Wasim spoke about a man, originally from Pakistan, who owed him money. Wasim confronted him multiple times, roughing him up on the streets of Rusholme or, on one occasion, dragging him by the ear from a casino. Each time Wasim would claim whatever cash the man had on him. Wasim preferred it that way, rather than being paid back in a lump sum, as it meant he had a quick source of cash if needed. Naveed carried a business card with him on the streets. It had a contact number for the UKBA and it was his option of last resort if a confrontation or argument ever escalated or became threatening. Naveed described how he would pull the card out from his pocket and threaten to call the immigration authorities, putting himself and any others at risk. For Naveed, this had been a successful mechanism for diffusing any aggression and intimidation he had encountered on the streets.

In relation to street homelessness, Robert Desjarlais writes that 'the dominant chronotope of the street was one of drifting unmoored, with very few

demarcated ends or places'.³⁶ For the men living in the Boaz Trust shelters, time on the street could be both banal and anxious, filled with prolonged boredom and yet, also, potentially aggressive and violent moments. Walking the streets was often a 'drifting unmoored' - whether around the Arndale Shopping Centre, around Piccadilly Gardens, or on extended walks between shelters, service points, and the city centre. It was a means of 'passing time without any space'. Walking and waiting were the products of the temporality of 'doubled placelessness', an unyielding mixture of grinding boredom and poverty and repetitive days spent arriving and departing from different shelters, without a place of one's own and without the right to work, all superimposed by the antagonistic and potentially threatening bureaucratic processes of the UK asylum claims system.

5. Spaces of Asylum: The Library, The Coach Station, The Swimming Pool

The public entrance to Manchester Town Hall Extension is directly across from the Friends Meeting House on Mount Street, beside Albert Square in central Manchester. The entrance is set within a colonnade that runs along the outside of the large, neo-classical building. Inside, the visitor is met with a sweeping, curved hall with a lofty ceiling. A number of large sofas and chairs line the right-hand side. It is a grand space that leads on to both the City Council's Customer Service Centre and the Media Lounge which has a range of PC terminals, Mac terminals, and

³⁶ Desjarlais, *Shelter Blues*, p.128.

gaming stations for public use. On a wall linking the two areas is a sign reading: 'No matter who you are or where you are from, Manchester is, and always will be, yours.' It's a busy space. There are people queuing at counters to access housing support and other council services, and there are meetings between advisors and members of the public taking place at desks across the open-plan area, while others are sitting at, or moving between, terminals in the Media Lounge. Between 2013 and 2014 the area was even busier as the Media Lounge served as the temporary location for Manchester Central Library while the main building underwent a three year refurbishment.

During my time living in the Boaz Trust night shelters in late 2013 I would spend hours, and days, in the temporary library with Victor and some of the other men who were staying in the shelters. Each morning we would walk across the city centre from the drop-off point, which was typically outside the Boaz Trust offices in Ancoats or alongside Piccadilly Gardens in the city centre, and make our way to the Town Hall Extension, through its curved entrance hall, and into the library space. This space was filled with mobile shelving units, tables, and a temporary library desk where visitors could be issued with library cards, return or take out books, and book times at the always-busy PC terminals which were also in the space.

Victor and I would normally take our seats at a large, round table that was prominently placed at the back of the temporary library. Despite arriving fairly early each morning, we would often find that the table was already quite busy with others sitting around it, and other chairs and desks around the space were also already filling up. Sitting at the large table brought us together with other regular users of the library who would often also spend their days there. Victor was a

former school teacher and had often spoken of his plans to become a licenced accountant if he was ever given status to remain and work in the UK. Each morning he would take an accountancy text book from the shelves, pull out a pen and a paper, and work through a chapter of exercises. He told me that it was a way of keeping his mind active during the relatively empty days while living in the shelters. On the first day we arrived in the library together, Victor signed up for a library card so that he could take out books and read them in the afternoon or take them to the shelters in the evening. The first book he took out was on the biography and political thought of Malcolm X. A library card also allowed a person to book times at the PC terminals and Victor would use it as an opportunity to connect to the internet.

Others also joined us in the library. Adil sometimes spent time there studying for an English course he was taking in the hope of working in the National Health Service in the future. In early December 2013, Adil secured accommodation outside the night shelters and it was in the library that I would last see him. We hugged and wished each other luck, he with his future and I with my studies. It was also in the temporary library that I would once again meet Arif, an older man from the West Bank who had been living in the night shelters throughout the winter the previous year. I will discuss Arif's time in the shelters in more detail in the Chapter 7, but in the library that day in late November 2013, he tapped me on my shoulder and greeted me with a beaming smile, a handshake and hug. The long, whispery, and greying beard he once had while living in the shelters had been trimmed and dyed and as he was just leaving the Customer Service Centre I assumed that his legal status as a 'refused asylum seeker' had now changed as he was likely

accessing local support services that were once unavailable to him. Arif and I rarely had long conversations. He spoke little English and I spoke no Arabic, but when I asked him how he was that day he replied simply and affirmatively, 'good, good'. Those words indicated, along with his changed appearance and smile, a deep change in circumstance from the difficult times he had faced while living in the night shelters, destitute.

Other men who had stayed in the shelters also described how important the library was as a place to spend the day. Samar and Temir spoke of how they would spend time together in the temporary library in early 2013. Samar spoke about reading books on local history, while Temir described how he would sometimes ask the librarian for information on a specific topic so as to appear as a student doing research in the library, rather than someone who was destitute and passing time there. Protecting himself from the possible indignity of being known as 'homeless' or as an 'asylum seeker' connects with the issues of shame and dignity that I will discuss at the end of this chapter. Other libraries, beyond Manchester Central Library, were used too. Betin was a young Kurdish man from Iran who had arrived in the UK as a minor and had received temporary refugee status only to have his asylum claim rejected once he re-applied as an adult. While living in the night shelters in late 2014 and early 2015, Betin said he would sometimes return to Oldham, a northern Borough of Greater Manchester, and spend the day in the local library where he had friends and knew the people working there.

On occasion, during the hours we spent in the library, Victor and I would sometimes take turns sleeping at the table, as the nights spent on different church floors left us with aching bodies and near-constant tiredness. I once fell into a deep

sleep only to be woken up by a private security guard shaking my shoulder as I lay folded over the table. He was employed by the council and worked in the building and, likely aware that homeless persons were using the space, would periodically wake people up who had fallen asleep. 'Are you alright?', he asked. It took me a while to compose myself after being woken up from the deep slumber. I nodded and after the security guard had left Victor started laughing. 'I thought they were coming for me again', he said. It was a reference to his previous arrest in London during an immigration enforcement operation in Victoria Station. It was a reminder that even in the relatively safe and welcoming space of the library, amid monotonous days book-ended by entering and leaving the shelters, there was a constant anxiety about the very real threat of border enforcement.

'It's the city's living room', one of Manchester Central Library's Customer Service Managers said to me during a recorded interview in 2015.³⁷ We were sitting in the ground floor café of the newly refurbished and re-opened Central Library and I had just asked her how she would define the library as a space. 'To be honest with you, I don't know who came up with that quote', she continued, 'but I quote it now because that's basically what it is – it's the city's living room. It's supposed to be an open and free space for people to come in and meet friends. If they want to join the library they're more than welcome to'. The Customer Service Manager could very well have been referring to the 2002 study on the Toronto Reference Library and Vancouver Public Library by Gloria Leckie and Jeffrey Hopkins. According to Leckie and Hopkins, for many users who visited on a daily or

³⁷ Interview, 'Interim Customer Service Manager', 22 October 2015. See Appendix.

weekly basis, the libraries 'served as an extension of their living room'.³⁸ Along with earlier studies by Liz Greenlagh and Ken Worpole on the role of public libraries in Britain, and Loretta Lees' study on the Vancouver Public Library, Leckie and Hopkins have emphasised the public library's potential for becoming a multi-faceted and successful public space where people are free to come and go at their leisure, regardless of social rank, and where knowledge is made accessible to 'all publics'.³⁹ Each of these studies is tempered by the recognition that the increasing privatisation of public libraries can potentially lead to differential forms of paid access to services, and that libraries are necessarily surveilled spaces, where staff or private security guards may regulate behaviour that is deemed disruptive – as I discovered while sleeping at the table - or remove individuals from the space.⁴⁰

In Chapter 2 I introduced the notion of 'spaces of asylum' which I defined broadly as the spaces where the legal and social processes of asylum policy are played out and acted upon. This definition carried both affirmative 'political' meanings associated with refuge, sanctuary, agency, and individual and collective potential, as well as more negative meanings associated with constraint, indignity, and depreciating rights. Manchester Central Library can be considered as a more affirmative, and indeed 'political', space of asylum as individuals and groups living under the socio-legal conditions of being an 'asylum seeker' or 'refused asylum seekers' can spend their day in a safe, warm, and non-judgmental environment, and

³⁸ Gloria Leckie and Jeffrey Hopkins, 'The Public Place of Central Libraries: Findings from Toronto and Vancouver', *Library Quarterly*, 72:3 (2002), 326-372 (p.353).

³⁹ Loretta Lees, 'Ageographic, Heterotopia, and Vancouver's New Public Library', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 15:3 (1997), 321-47 (p.344); Liz Greenlagh and Ken Worpole, *Libraries in a World of Change* (London: UCL Press, 1995), p.12; Leckie and Hopkins, 'The Public Place of Central Libraries', p.332.

⁴⁰ Lees, 'Ageographic, Heterotopia, and Vancouver's New Public Library', p.336, p.339, p.344; Leckie and Hopkins, 'The Public Place of Central Libraries', p.360.

can access public services without questions about their background or legal status. As the Customer Services Manager pointed out, an individual can sign up for a library card and access their services without being asked for a proof of address. During the interview the Customer Services Manager also pointed me to a statement recently released by the Society of Chief Librarians which affirmed that 'public libraries are safe, trusted spaces and are able to offer a range of vital services for new arrivals in local communities across the country'.⁴¹ The statement was timed in response to the UK government's announcement in 2015 that 20,000 Syrian refugees would be received by the UK over the next five years. While offering welcome and practical and free support to the 'new arrivals', the Society of Chief Librarians also took their statement further by declaring that 'this welcome is also extended to the existing 150,000 refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless people who are currently in the country'. The statement concluded by referencing occasions when public libraries had been used by refused asylum seekers to gather fresh material and information to support successful appeals against negative decisions by the UK government. The statement aimed to break-down forms of differential inclusion by re-affirming equality of access to library services, something which was played out during my time with Victor and others in Manchester Central Library. The library was a 'space of asylum' in a very affirmative sense, in both rhetoric and practice, and a space that ties in with my reference to Rosemary Mellor's analysis of central Manchester in the previous

⁴¹ Society of Chief Librarians, 'Library Leaders Across England and Wales Confirm the Welcome Offered to Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Public Libraries', September 2015. <http://goscl.com/library-leaders-across-england-and-wales-confirm-the-welcome-offered-to-refugees-and-asylum-seekers-from-public-libraries/> [accessed 16 September 2016].

chapter in which the city centre cannot be fully understood along strict binaries of exclusion and inclusion, but rather becomes a space of overlapping meanings, uses, and practices across the social spectrum at the same time that stark hierarchies of unequal legal and social status persist.

The definition of ‘spaces of asylum’ I offered in Chapter 2, however, was not reducible to specific sites or discrete spaces, but also included anywhere the border was ‘borne by the legal-social status of individuals’. ‘Space of asylum’ include areas and places across the city that are inscribed and re-inscribed with meaning by those facing destitution and living under the label of ‘asylum seeker’ or ‘refused asylum seeker’.⁴² I wish to return to that Sunday morning in early December 2012 as Hani, Naveed, Wasim, and I spent hours sitting in the Chorlton Street Coach Station. We were not waiting for a bus, nor were we waiting to pick somebody up, but instead were simply using the space to see out the day in a warm and safe environment. The chairs in the coach station waiting area became a sort of ‘living room’ for us – in a similar manner to how the Customer Service Manager and the study by Leckie and Hopkins described the public library. Wasim made a point of greeting the staff who passed by our seats, whether security guards, coach drivers or cleaners. They were simple greetings. A mere ‘hello’ and a nod, a ‘good morning’, or ‘having a good day, mate?’, but they served the strategic purpose of creating a rapport with those working in the station in order to make our presence in the station more

⁴² In their 2008 study of homelessness in Bristol, UK, Cloke, May, and Johnsen argue that notions of the homeless city cannot be reduced to binaries of inclusion and exclusion or determined by regulations and controls, but also involve the ways in which homeless persons themselves inscribe and re-inscribe meanings to the urban environment. This point was essential to my understanding of ‘spaces of asylum’ as also being areas where those living under the social-legal condition of ‘refused asylum seeker’ create and inscribe their own meanings to different spaces. [Cloke, May, and Johnsen, ‘Performativity and Affect in the Homeless City’, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 26 (2008), 241-263]

acceptable. Hani, Naveed, Wasim, and I would spend hours shifting between silence and conversation, talking about everything from religion and our families, to imagining our lives if we all moved to Dubai together. Wasim would also, occasionally, make his way out of the station and onto the street in order to ask people for cigarettes. These long hours of 'shooting the breeze', of talking and silence, and of sitting stationary in relatively comfortable spaces, were typical of many of the spaces in which we spent our time – whether the communal area of the Boaz Trust offices, the coach station, or the library.

That morning in the coach station, Wasim received a phone call. It was a friend who was offering some paid work for a two-day delivery job transporting heavy appliances from Blackpool to London. Twenty minutes later Wasim's friend arrived at the coach station so that the two of them could discuss the details of the job. The coach station had momentarily become a place of business and Hani, Naveed, and I left our seats and wandered the station so that Wasim and his friend could have some privacy. After his friend left, Wasim's mood noticeably brightened. He'd been given a cash advance on the work, as well as two packets of cigarettes. Wasim immediately purchased two coach tickets to Blackpool, thinking that Hani might join him and keep him company on the overnight delivery.

After spending five hours in the coach station and with a small amount of cash now in hand, Wasim suggested we all go to the Aquatics Centre together. He would use some of his cash advance to pay for our entry fees into the pool, but as he knew the security code to the much more expensive health spa area, we could then get in there and use the sauna, jacuzzi, and steam room for the rest of the day.

It was a forty minute walk from the coach station to the Aquatics Centre on Oxford Road.

As we arrived, Hani decided that he did not want to join us and insisted that he would wait outside. Wasim, Naveed, and I went to the health spa without him. Wasim always wore a bathing suit underneath his trousers in case he had the money for the pool and opportunity to get into the spa. He was a regular visitor. However neither Naveed nor I had any swimwear. Naveed relied on Wasim's 'blagging' skills to convince a member of staff to provide him with a pair of swimming shorts, while I wore a spare pair of boxer shorts that I had in my bag. I spent most of my time sitting in the jacuzzi out of fear that I might be caught by a staff member, or be greeted with a complaint by another customer. If the spa was a chance to escape the street, wash, and relax, it was also a social space and Wasim and Naveed would carry on conversations with strangers over the time we spent there. After two hours we left the spa. I was the last one out of the changing rooms and would find Naveed and Wasim in the canteen sharing three large plates of chips with a young woman in her late twenties. She was post-graduate student from the USA who was studying at the nearby University of Manchester. Her boyfriend worked in the Aquatics Centre canteen and, although I missed the initial conversation, I assumed that Wasim had started a conversation with her that eventually led to the free plates of chips.

Hani was nowhere to be seen after we left and he had stopped answering his telephone when Wasim called. Angered that he had bought Hani a coach ticket to Blackpool later that evening, Wasim was determined to find him and suggested that he was likely to be in one of the casinos in Chinatown. As we made our way up

Oxford Road, back towards the city centre, Wasim explained to me how the casinos had become important places for him to spend his days. Using the right tactics, a person could spend a day there without spending money or attracting attention. Wasim told me he would never spend consecutive days in the same casino and would sleep in the toilet cubicles, out of sight from any CCTV cameras. Wasim had passed these tactics on to Hani and was now convinced that Hani had gone to one of the casinos they had spent time in together.

The search was interrupted along Oxford Road as Wasim struck up a conversation with a sight-impaired man while waiting at a pedestrian crossing. The man was originally from Tunisia, but had been adopted by British parents and although he introduced himself as Henry he also went by the name of Habib. He spoke in a strong received pronunciation, but spent most of the walk along Oxford Road speaking in Arabic with Wasim. We accompanied him to Oxford Road station and sat with him in a café as he waited for his train to Liverpool.

We would later return to our search for Hani, visiting every casino along Portland Street and in Chinatown. Typically, Wasim and I would wait outside while Naveed would enter with Wasim reminding him to 'check the toilets'. As we waited Wasim would greet some of the older men entering and leaving the casinos of Chinatown – 'Yē Yē, did you win anything today?'. Most often people just walked by in silence. Hani never did turn up. Wasim then convinced Naveed to join him on the trip to Blackpool, telling him that it would be a break from the night shelters, at least for the night. Later that evening I would see them both off at the Chorlton Street Coach Station, where we had begun the day.

6. On the Edge of the Community of Value

In his work *In Search of Respect*, Phillippe Bourgois introduces the reader to his research on young Puerto-Rican crack dealers in New York by retelling the moment he disrespected the crackhouse owner by accidentally exposing him as an illiterate in front of his own crew. This *faux pas* not only threatened his continued access to his research field, but also his physical safety. It also reinforced the need to follow certain, unwritten, codes of respect within his research.⁴³ In this closing section I similarly begin with my own *faux pas*. It occurred while Wasim, Naveed, and I escorted Henry to Oxford Road Station and sat in a nearby café with him as he waited for his train. I had introduced myself as a student to Henry and, with Naveed and Wasim on either side of me, he began to question me very earnestly and directly about my studies. In all my other interactions with the public while staying in the shelters and walking the streets, I would always introduce myself in vague terms, saying I was a 'student in London', and leave it at that. However, Henry's persistence caught me off guard. He asked what topic I was studying, what theories I was using, and what specific examples I was looking at. In the end I said that I was staying in a shelter with Naveed and Wasim. It was only after we saw Henry off on the train that I realised what I had done. As we walked down Oxford Station approach Wasim roughly elbowed me in the shoulder saying, 'Why did you have to say that to Henry? You don't need to tell him that I'm in the shelters. You

⁴³ Bourgois, *In Search of Respect*, pp.20-22.

brought shame on me, Mark. That's why I left the café'. I now also realised that Wasim had not gone out for a cigarette as I originally thought. I apologised to Wasim and would do so again later as I saw him off on the coach to Blackpool. He told me not to worry as, 'Henry's a good person and he wouldn't care'. The implication was that he thought others would care - and Wasim himself certainly did care.

Shame is not necessarily reducible to positive or negative connotations. According to Jean-Paul Sartre, shame reveals the fundamental ontological structure of the human being, which is an inescapable relation to others. Through his dictum 'I am ashamed *of myself before* the Other', Sartre argues that shame is the recognition that I am always and already caught up in the Other's gaze.⁴⁴ He writes that 'shame is a way of getting stuck in an impossible moment that I can neither inhabit nor flee, a time that goes nowhere, yet precisely because of this ambivalence, still retains a transformative potential'.⁴⁵ In her reflections on the concept, and drawing on the work of Sartre, the philosopher Lisa Guenther argues that shame is a 'notoriously ambivalent' notion.⁴⁶ It is, she argues, indispensable to ethical life as, following Sartre, it constitutes a subject's openness to others. Shame is ethically provocative as it can shake us out of our own complacency in regards to another's situation and the uneven distributions of power that constitute social life, yet it can also be used as a mechanism to exert control, normalise social exclusion,

⁴⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. by Hazel Barnes (London: Routledge, 2003), p.296, p.246.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p.249.

⁴⁶ Lisa Guenther, 'Shame and the Temporality of Social Life', *Continental Philosophy Review*, 44 (2011), 23-39 (p.23).

and reinforce patterns of silencing.⁴⁷ I wish to take up both meanings in the remainder of this chapter, firstly arguing that ‘shame’ over one’s status and situation is a mechanism for pushing people to the edges of the community of value, while also arguing that it can carry political potential as a means of shaking one out of the ‘enchanted ordinary’.

In Chapter 2 I argued that the social-legal categories of ‘asylum seeker’, ‘refused asylum seeker’, and ‘refugee’ had become pejorative political constructions in both policy and rhetoric. The label of ‘homeless’ is also a pejorative construction. April Veness argues that both ‘home’ and ‘homeless’ are loaded terms, with ‘home’ being symbolically empowered while ‘homeless’ is symbolically disempowered.⁴⁸ Kim Hopper argues that the notion of ‘homelessness’ remains ‘located within the conceptual brace of deviancy’ – a deviancy associated with, as Andrew Mair suggests, not living in accepted family modes, abusing substances in public, offending the senses of sight and smell, saying the wrong things in public and frightening people, and not maintaining acceptable trapping such as clean clothes.⁴⁹ Like the term ‘asylum seeker’, the label ‘homeless’ can become a social stigma and, according to Desjarlais, becomes attached to a ‘diminished sense of personhood’ for those labelled this way as the visibly homeless are ‘assigned the role of untouchable’ to which the wider public try to ‘skirt any engagement’.⁵⁰ This returns us to the issue of ‘doubled placelessness’ and my

⁴⁷ Ibid, p.23, p.25.

⁴⁸ April Veness, ‘Neither Homed nor Homeless: Contested Definitions and the Personal Worlds of the Poor’, *Political Geography*, 12:4 (1993), 319-40 (p.327).

⁴⁹ Kim Hopper, ‘More Than Passing Strange: Homelessness and Mental Health Illness in New York City’, *American Anthropologist*, 15:1 (1987), 155-167 (p.164); Andrew Mair, ‘The Homeless and the Post-Industrial City’, *Political Geography Quarterly*, 5:4 (1993), 351-368 (pp.359-360).

⁵⁰ Daly, *Homeless: Policies, Strategies, and Lives on the Street*, p.7; Desjarlais, *Shelter Blues*, pp.122-125.

earlier argument that labels such as 'homelessness' and 'refugee' and 'asylum seeker' are concrete abstractions that take on particular, negative meanings in the public imagination that then bear down on, and mask, the variegated experiences of individuals associated with these terms and the highly politicised histories behind them. As concrete abstractions these terms can fix people into meanings that do not belong to them, yet serve to differentiate and exclude them. As Guenther writes, the 'burning feeling of shame' is also a feeling of 'being out of place, judged by others as unworthy, unwanted or wrong – not only in this or that particular action but in one's very existence'.⁵¹

By exposing Wasim and Naveed's presence in the shelters, I had potentially exposed them to the hostile judgement and gaze of others. While talking in the LCC shelter late one Friday night in early 2013, Temir told me about his first six months in the UK after arriving in the country in the back of a lorry. He was destitute, but found work in a restaurant in Stoke-on-Trent where he kept his homelessness hidden from his employers. Each night he secretly slept in the cellar of the building to which he had a set of keys. Temir's concern about disclosing his situation to others was not only over the shame of being homeless, but also because his destitution made him vulnerable and he could easily become indebted to others who offered help. 'If someone helps you, they'll expect something in return,' he said, adding, 'I don't need a phone call at 2.00 am telling me to go join someone in a street fight just because they helped me once'. As I will discuss in more detail in chapter 7, Temir would liken his experience to being in a 'locked room' as he was

⁵¹ Guenther, 'Shame and the Temporality of Social Life', pp.23-4.

barred from any legal employment and therefore unable to participate fully in society or take advantage of opportunities available to others. His destitution, he said, ‘doesn’t mean that I don’t like to work or I’m using drugs or gambling’. These qualifications not only placed emphasis on his legal status as the source of his destitution, but also acted as defences against perceived immoral behaviour. For Talmadge Wright, ‘the creation and deployment of categories of poor [...] have displaced considerations of economic and political equality in favor of individual “moral” behavior’.⁵² In the community of value, the deserving and undeserving distinction not only relates to legal status but also social status and the acting out of shared, common values. The deserving and undeserving distinction becomes a deeply engrained element of the key fantasy of what a good person or good citizen is.⁵³ As I argued in Chapter 2, this is not a static distinction. It bears down through different degraded labels, whether the ‘benefit scrounger’ or immigrant, and through the differential labels within ‘immigrant’ itself, including ‘refugee’, ‘asylum seeker’, and ‘refused asylum seeker’.

I wish to argue that the deserving and undeserving distinction is not only mobilised by those firmly within the community of value, but also those excluded from it. The borders of the community of value are contested and frayed, where those facing the full force of exclusion can turn on others in order to claim a moral sense of place, in order to shield themselves or deflect the shaming gaze of others. While Bridget Anderson’s work presents the view from the centre of the community of value - as the ‘good citizen’ moves against the benefits claimant and

⁵² Wright, *Out of Place*, p.24.

⁵³ *Ibid*, p.45.

immigrant who can easily be imagined as the 'benefits scrounger' and 'illegal' alien, thereby pushing them farther from the centre - I wish to view this dynamic from the position of its border. Drawing on work by Cloke, Johnsen, and May, and Steve Hanson, I will argue that the deserving and undeserving distinction is reproduced and tactically deployed by those pushed to the edges of the community of value.

The majority of my ethnographic research took place between 2012 and 2014, during the Conservative-led Coalition government's programme of austerity. Austerity was a supposed attempt to balance the government budget deficit by cutting public spending and, among other things, involved the targeting of benefits claimants through both policy and in the media. On the final morning of my second stay in the shelters in December, 2013, Victor and Adil and I left the shelter in Ashton-Under-Lyne and caught the 219 bus back to Manchester city centre. We took our seats at the back of the bus where copies of the Metro newspaper were freely distributed. Victor picked up a copy and began reading the headline news before commenting to Adil and I that he agreed with David Cameron and his policies to cut support to benefits claimants. 'I like Cameron', he said, continuing, 'people need to be motivated and not so lazy. They should work rather than just rely on the government'. Although he did not use the term, Victor's comments were directed at the 'benefit scrounger' of tabloid newspaper and media rhetoric.

Others in the shelters made similar comments. The Boaz Trust shares its offices with Mustard Tree, another FBO working with homeless people in the city, and the offices were a key site of interaction between those using the Boaz Trust and those accessing Mustard Tree services. During the winter of 2012-3, waiting for transport outside the Boaz Trust offices to the night shelters would coincide

with Mustard Tree's Friday evening 'soup run' which provided a hot, nutritious meal to homeless people, as well as an opportunity for Mustard Tree to sign-post those who were living on the streets or in temporary accommodation to other services in the city. The shared office space would typically be crowded on a Friday evening, with up to seventy people accessing the soup run. The soup run was also an opportunity for those waiting for Boaz Trust transport to step inside the building and off the street to keep warm. It was particularly crowded and raucous one Friday evening, with a bouncer stationed at the stair-case leading to the exit. As we stood amid the scene, one man from the Boaz Trust shelters nudged me, gestured towards those receiving meals and asked, 'Mark, don't these people get benefits? Don't they get housing from the government? Why are they here? They must spend it all on drinking and drugs'. The answer to his own question posed tropes often attributed to street homeless and suggested a moral laxity on their part. Similarly, another man who was staying in the shelters in early 2013 said to the others, as we waited for transport to the shelters, that '80% of people on benefits smoke marijuana'. He insisted that we only had to visit the Job Centre in Rusholme and look at the people waiting outside to see that this was true.

In their study on homelessness in the UK, Cloke, May, and Johnsen have written about the tensions that can sometimes emerge between different groups accessing services such as hostels. According to their work, one point of tension is the increasing number of refugees and asylum seekers being housed in Britain's homeless hostels.⁵⁴ This tension was emphasised in an interview with 'Dan', who

⁵⁴ Cloke, May, and Johnsen, *Swept Up Lives?*, p.168.

was staying in a hostel: ‘Dan’s own complaint against such people is that they appear to have been allowed to ‘jump the queue’, gaining access to housing and resources denied to more ‘legitimate’ claimants like himself’.⁵⁵ The claim for ‘legitimacy’ in Dan’s comment is crucial here. Just as Dan was claiming a genuine need to access accommodation in opposition to ‘asylum seekers’ and ‘refugees’, so too were men in the Boaz Trust shelters often claiming ‘legitimacy’ through differentiating themselves from other homeless persons and benefits claimants. To borrow Bridget Anderson’s terminology, Victor and others were positioning themselves as ‘good citizens’ who would work hard and contribute to society if only given the opportunity, and in contrast to the ‘failed citizens’ that they encountered around them in the same service points, whether a Job Centre or soup kitchen.

In his 2014 work *Small Towns, Austere Times* – an ethnographic study of the Yorkshire town of Todmorden – Steve Hanson writes about those working illicitly on the economic fringes of society as they attempt to ‘get by’ during times of economic recession and government imposed austerity. In this work, Hanson describes ‘Peter’, a former factory worker of retirement age, who sold unlicensed and untaxed sweets, cola, and designer goods from an unmarked van, ‘no questions asked’.⁵⁶ Hanson writes,

Suddenly, unprompted, Peter then told me about the people he called ‘the scrotes’, which is an abbreviation of ‘scrotum’. With this unlovely term he designated those in and around Todmodern and Bacup he sold drinks and

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Steve Hanson, *Small Towns, Austere Times: The Dialectics of Deracinated Localism* (Alresford: Zero Books, 2014), p.69.

sweets to, people who were claiming Income Support or Incapacity Benefit.⁵⁷

For Hanson, Peter maintained a 'them' and 'me' mentality which formed a personal fortress against his own feelings of guilt at no longer being able to find legitimate work. Peter refused to let his identity merge with these 'others', at the same time 'as there seemed to be little difference between them and the people he criticised, at least to an outsider's eye'.⁵⁸ Hanson's mention of the 'outsider's eye' here is significant, as it positions the gaze at the centre of the 'community of value', the point from which those on the fringes are pushed farther out, and from which the reproduction of the deserving and undeserving distinction from the fringes can be easily missed. Hanson also highlights how Peter operates in the same cultural and physical landscape as those he differentiates himself from. This is crucial, particularly in regards to the Boaz Trust shelters. Not only did some of the men very vocally distinguish themselves from other destitute persons and benefits claimants, but they also differentiated themselves from other refugees.

As I will discuss in chapter 7, and the section 'Arrivals and Departures' in particular, Victor thought that the UKBA is able to act with relative impunity as long as it reaches its government set targets for reducing immigration and asylum claims. As Victor understood it, the asylum system was a zero-sum game and once a certain quota of asylum seekers had been reached, other claimants would have little chance of gaining refugee status. This meant that legitimate claimants, like

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid, pp.70-72.

himself, had been rejected, possibly at the expense of claimants who were falsifying their cases. This discussion took place in the Friends Meeting House one evening in late 2013 as we waited for transport to the shelters. Izad, a former bodyguard from Tehran, was also a part of the conversation and agreed with Victor's further point that educated asylum claimants were less likely to have their claims accepted because UKBA staff felt intimidated by them, and that non-English speakers were more likely to be accepted. As Caroline Moorehead writes, 'refugee life is rife with rumour. Among those who wait to be interviewed for refugee status, word circulates about how some nationalities are more likely to get asylum than others, about how some stories are more powerful than others, and some more likely to touch the hearts of the interviewers'.⁵⁹ Izad also took it further. He made reference to a self-immolation that had taken place in the Refugee Action offices in Manchester, claiming that an Iranian asylum-seeker had committed suicide in protest at the Home Office accepting too many false claims, while rejecting his own. Although Izad was not specific about the details, he was likely referring to the suicide of Esrafil Shiri who self-immolated in the offices of Refugee Action in the city in August 2003, and died of his burns three days later. Although it would be near impossible to know the specific thoughts of Shiri before his self-immolation nearly twelve years earlier, Izad was adamant that he had done so because too many false claims had been accepted, while Shiri underwent the personal humiliation of not being believed. Interpreting the end of Shiri's life in this way may have been following a rumour, in the manner Moorehead suggests, but for Izad it also

⁵⁹ Caroline Moorehead, *Human Cargo: A Journey Among Refugees* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2005), p.136.

highlighted his own insistence that the Home Office's acceptance of false claims was a pressing concern for himself and others as refused asylum seekers: a way of re-affirming his own legitimacy amid a system that had not believed him and ultimately rejected him. Similarly, in writing on the death of Suleiman Dialo, Moorehead writes,

He seemed confused and complained how it was that some of the asylum-seekers he had met had made up stories, fabricated events and dates and even torture, and yet had been granted asylum, while he had told the truth and had been turned down.⁶⁰

The moments cited above are crucial in understanding the community of value not only as a set of deserving and undeserving distinctions emanating from the centre outwards, from the 'good citizen' to the 'immigrant' and 'benefit scrounger', but also as reproduced and redeployed at the fringes of the community of value in order for those who have been excluded to claim legitimacy and maintain a sense of dignity.

Shame is ambivalent, as Guenther has argued. It is ethically provocative, and while 'shame' was an entry point into understanding and discussing the frayed edges of the community of value, it is not reducible to solely negative meanings that push people into defensive positions, but constantly redeploys the deserving and undeserving binary in new and multiple ways. For Guenther 'shame's

⁶⁰ Moorehead, *Human Cargo*, p.132.

ambivalence bears the possibility of both abjection and solidarity – both an indissoluble connection to others and the constant risk that this indissoluble connection can be refused, manipulated and exploited'.⁶¹ There is a politically productive side to shame.⁶² Drawing on the work of Simone de Beauvoir and her reflections on the Algerian War of Independence as a French citizen, Guenther argues that 'shame' can prompt reflections on and responses to 'inherited privileges' in order to disrupt complacency and orient one towards an ethical and political solidarity with others.⁶³ In the context of this research, we can find ourselves implicated in the border without having chosen or consented to it, and yet still benefit from its unevenness and willingness to accept it as 'natural' or 'neutral'. Shame has the capacity to shake us out of this 'enchanted ordinary'. In the next chapters I will examine the origins and politics of the Boaz Trust, and how its volunteers and employees respond to the situation faced by destitute and refused asylum seekers in Manchester.

⁶¹ Guenther, 'Shame and the Temporality of Social Life', p.35.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid, p.25, p.36.

5. Works of Love: The Night Shelters and the Boaz Trust

1. Introduction

This chapter explores the organisational structure, politics, and aims of the Boaz Trust. The Boaz Trust was formed in 2004 in direct response to increasingly restrictive and antagonistic asylum policies within the UK and the subsequently increased numbers of destitute asylum seekers seeking charitable support on the streets of Manchester. In the opening part of the chapter I place the Boaz Trust's emergence in historic, and ongoing, debates within Evangelical Christianity between the desire to 'evangelise', and the need for churches to become active in the social transformation of communities without the aim of gaining converts, and long-standing concerns – recently revisited in debates around the role of faith based organisations as potential tools, or critics, of neoliberal welfare reform - regarding the tendency of faith-based organisations to misrecognise the causes of poverty by focusing on individual morality rather than structural inequalities. I argue that the Boaz Trust, like many faith-based organisations, largely falls outside these criticisms and constitutes an 'outsider' organisation that emerged in direct response to unjust government policies, and is separated from state funding, relying instead on the work of individuals wanting to serve in their local communities whilst seeking to do no less than 'end asylum destitution'.

I take this goal to end asylum destitution as an example of a 'utopian' political aim that carries a faith-based eschatological weight. 'Utopia' is not taken

to mean an unattainable ideal, but is instead understood as political aims that are constantly revised and concretised in practice, while 'eschatology' is understood along faith-based lines as the 'outworking of the Kingdom of God' in order to positively shape the here-and-now. This discussion connects the sacred and the secular to constitute an organisational faith-based motivation that is non-conciliatory, but not disengaged with present conditions. The chapter then moves on to a discussion of *agape* – a concept of love that has Christian, secular, and potentially politicised connotations. Beginning with Kierkegaard's account of *agape* as 'becoming neighbour', I present an overview of the concept resting on Žižek's view of *agape* as an arduous work of explicit uncoupling from social stratifications. Alongside my account of 'utopia' and 'eschatology', this discussion of *agape* connects with Gillian Rose's understanding of 'ethical life' and, in particular, her view of justice as an ongoing and continually revised work within the fragmented present. This discussion of the continual revision, messy and ambiguous practices of *agape* and justice prepares the ground for chapter 6 where I explore the practices of Boaz Trust volunteers and the experience of those staying in the Boaz Trust night shelters.

2. Faith-Based Organisations, the Boaz Trust, and the Evangelical Tradition

The offices of the Boaz Trust are located in a former industrial building on Oldham Road, a major transport artery leading into central Manchester that hugs the northern edge of Ancoats - a post-industrial landscape where attempts at

regeneration have left a mix of new-build flats, converted mills, abandoned buildings, wholesalers, trendy bars, and pubs that have perhaps seen better days. Directly across from the red-brick offices are a large Post Office sorting house and Cash-n-Carry selling Chinese goods and foods, all of which are a ten to fifteen minute walk from the city centre.

The offices occupy part of the upper floor of the building which centres on a large open area with chairs, tables, meeting rooms, a kitchen, a pool table, and IT facilities. It is a shared space. The building is owned by Mustard Tree, another local faith-based organisation [FBO] which provides support and services to homeless people in the city.¹ This upper floor can be a busy place with those accessing Mustard Tree or Boaz Trust services both using the space. Among other things, it is a space used for well-being activities, English classes, individual and group meetings, volunteer training, and meals. Once a month Boaz Trust hosts a 'Family Night' in the space where visitors, staff, volunteers, and those accessing Boaz Trust services can meet, share a hot meal, and hear updates and announcements; while every Friday night Mustard Tree offers a hot, nutritious meal on the same upper floor. However, to the passer-by, the most prominent and public area of the building is the charity shop occupying the ground floor. It is run by Mustard Tree and sells furniture, appliances, clothing, and electronics and is staffed by Mustard Tree service users and volunteers as well as those who are accessing Boaz Trust services.

¹ www.mustardtree.org.uk [accessed 20 September 2016].

The often overlapping services and activities between the Boaz Trust and Mustard Tree are not only down to their shared space, but also to their shared history. The Boaz Trust was founded in 2004 by Dave Smith who had founded Mustard Tree ten years earlier in 1994. It was the increased number of refused and destitute asylum seekers accessing Mustard Tree services at the turn of the millennium that led Smith to establish the Boaz Trust. In his 2014 account of the Boaz Trust, entitled *The Book of Boaz*, Smith writes that the timing of its foundation coincided with the implementation of Section 55 of the 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act which declared that anyone who 'did not claim asylum as soon as reasonably practicable' would not be eligible for NASS support.² The 2002 Act privileged 'at port' claimants over 'in country' claimants and effectively rendered many irregular migrants, who had not entered the UK through official channels, destitute following their asylum claim. According to Smith, by 2003 Mustard Tree was receiving 200 visits a week from asylum seekers. This was 60% of all visitors.³ More specifically, the Boaz Trust was born from a joint initiative between Mustard Tree and Refugee Services at the British Red Cross which allocated specific services to asylum seekers, including food parcels, cash and toiletries, following the introduction of Section 55. Fifteen people accessed these services during its first week in March 2003, which then rose to eighty-five people within four months.⁴ The Boaz Trust was formally established the following year. All of this also coincided with the implementation of the UK's dispersal policy,

² Smith, *The Book of Boaz*, p.43; HM Government, *Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act (2002)*, §55.1

³ Smith, *The Book of Boaz*, p.35.

⁴ *Ibid*, pp.44-45.

introduced in the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, in which asylum seekers were dispersed on a no-choice basis to urban areas outside London and the South East in order for their claims to be processed and, in most cases, refused. Without access to NASS accommodation or public funds, and under threat of deportation and/or detention, refused asylum seekers (and those affected by Section 55 restrictions) would often find themselves destitute and on the streets of cities such as Manchester. Accommodation provision was therefore at the core of the Boaz Trust from its outset. According to Smith, who has since stepped away from Mustard Tree to act as full-time Director of the Boaz Trust:

When we started it was purely a few people in a spare room. Then people started to donate houses. As we grew it became apparent that we also needed a night shelter for those who were street homeless so they could be put somewhere immediately.⁵

At present, Boaz Trust manages fourteen homes with thirty to forty available spaces. In addition to this, there are ten to fifteen spaces available in hosted accommodation and twelve spaces available, specifically for men, in emergency night shelters over the winter season.⁶ The Boaz Trust now has seven full-time employees and a solicitor available one day a week to offer legal advice. What essentially began as hosted accommodation in a 'few spare rooms' in 2004, has since expanded to include housing stock, a network of night shelters, legal support,

⁵ Interview, Dave Smith, 4 April 2013. See Appendix.

⁶ Interview, Project Manager, 12 March 2013; Interview, Dave Smith, 4 April 2013; Interview, Housing Support Manager, 13 March 2014. See Appendix.

and a series of well-being activities and classes as well as involvement in campaigning and policy impact research.⁷

The Boaz Trust is deeply rooted in, and connected to, the Evangelical Christian tradition. This includes the backgrounds of many of its employees and volunteers as well as the work being carried out by mainly Evangelical churches in the night shelter network. The church historian D.W. Bebbington broadly defines Evangelicalism to include, 'any denomination dedicated to the spreading of the gospel'.⁸ More specifically, Evangelicalism can be identified on the basis of four characteristics: conversionism, activism, Biblicism, and crucicentrism, or the belief that lives need to be changed through personal conversion, the necessity for the active spreading of the gospel message, a belief in the Bible as the inspired word of God, and a stress on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross.⁹ However, Evangelical Christianity cannot be regarded as a homogenous block.¹⁰ For Bebbington, the question of how the 'spreading of the gospel' is defined in relation to social concerns has been a crucial, if divisive, aspect of Evangelical history from the 18th century onwards. More specifically, there has been debate whether Christian effort should be directed towards conversion and evangelism or towards social reform.¹¹ Conservatives within this tradition have historically tended to withdraw from social action as the 'social gospel', which focused on changing people by changing their

⁷ www.boaztrust.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns [accessed 20 September 2016]; British Red Cross and Boaz Trust, *A Decade of Destitution: Time to Make a Change* (2013).

⁸ D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1970s to the 1980s* (London: Routledge, 2005), p.1.

⁹ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, pp.2-3; Cloke, Thomas, and Williams, 'Radical Faith Praxis? Exploring the Changing Theological Landscape of Christian Faith Motivation, in *Faith-based Organisations and Exclusion in European Cities*, pp.105-126 (p.107).

¹⁰ Cloke, Thomas, and Williams, 'Radical Faith Praxis?', pp.107-113.

¹¹ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, p.216.

environment, was seen to be at odds with ‘changing their hearts’ through conversion.¹² Within this historic – and ongoing – internal debate, the Boaz Trust can be placed on the side of the ‘social gospel’, with its focus on action and social reform, although such categories remain both fluid and contentious – a contentiousness that extends back to the category of Evangelical itself.

In *The Book of Boaz* Dave Smith writes, ‘I’m an Evangelical Christian’, and immediately follows it by saying, ‘at this point you may be tempted to burn the book, but I beg you to bear with me’.¹³ The presumed negative reaction is perhaps linked to Evangelicalism’s associations with social conservatism and bigotry, as well as a reputation for instrumentalising charity work for the purposes of evangelism – a point articulated by George Orwell in the closing paragraph of *Down and Out in Paris and London* where he bluntly advises the reader: ‘don’t subscribe to the Salvation Army’.¹⁴ This instrumentalised form of religiously backed care has been termed ‘sin-talk’ by Theresa Gowan and ‘salvationist’ by Rebecca Allahyari, as poverty is seen as a result of moral laxity and spiritual corruption.¹⁵ Here the ‘social gospel’ remains a form of overt evangelism as religious organisations refuse to separate social service delivery from conversion efforts and charitable action becomes a buttress to the wider work of evangelising to the poor.¹⁶ According to Talmadge Wright, Leonard Feldman, and Teresa Gowan, such salvationist work

¹² Ibid, p.211, p.214.

¹³ Smith, *The Book of Boaz*, p.37.

¹⁴ George Orwell, *Down and Out in Paris and London* (London: Penguin, 2001), p.230.

¹⁵ Teresa Gowan, *Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders: Homeless in San Francisco* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), p.36; Rebecca Allahyari, *Visions of Charity: Volunteer Workers and Moral Community* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p.76.

¹⁶ Jason Hackworth, ‘Neoliberalism, Partiality, and the Politics of Faith-based Welfare in the United States’, *Studies in Political Economy*, 84 (2009), 155-179 (p.160); Allahyari, *Visions of Charity*, p.76.

forms part of a wider misrecognition of poverty that turns away from its socio-economic and legal roots and instead casts individuals as hopeless or disreputable subjects, which ultimately serves to substitute making substantive policy or practical changes for moralising about the state of individuals.¹⁷ Further criticism has been made in the context of the roll-back of the welfare state and the minimising of state-backed service provision in favour of non-state charitable work, where FBOs are seen to be willing beneficiaries of the collapse of state welfare systems and are co-opted as ‘little platoons’ in the service of neoliberal goals.¹⁸

Yet, such visions of charitable work, particularly by FBOs, are highly contested. Beaumont and Cloke warn against reductionist thinking as ‘simple binary oppositions such as progressive versus reactionary, evangelical versus ‘no strings attached’, do not help us grasp the realities of FBOs on the ground’.¹⁹ FBOs present a heterogeneous mix of differing theologies, organisational structures, and aims. They range from the professional to the volunteer based, those that are attached to streams of state funding and those that remain ‘outside’, and those that take staunchly Christian approaches and those that offer unconditional, non-proselytising service.²⁰ FBOs are organisations that embody some form of religious

¹⁷ Wright, *Out of Place*, p.183, p.306; Leonard Feldman, *Citizens Without Shelter: Homelessness, Democracy, and Political Exclusion* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp.92-4; Gowan, *Hobos, Hustlers and Backsliders*, p.27.

¹⁸ Hackworth, ‘Neoliberalism, Partiality, and the Politics of Faith-based Welfare in the United States’, pp.161-2; Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell, ‘Neoliberalizing Space’, *Antipode*, 34:3 (2002), 380-404 (p.390).

¹⁹ Beaumont and Cloke, ‘Introduction to the Study of Faith-based Organisations and Exclusion in European Cities’, p.13.

²⁰ Cloke, Williams, and Thomas, ‘Faith in Action: Faith-based Organization, Welfare and Politics in the Contemporary City’, p.12; Beaumont and Cloke, ‘Introduction to the Study of Faith-based Organisations and Exclusion in European Cities’, p.13; Rachael Chapman and Leila Hamalainen, ‘Understanding Faith-Based Engagement and Volunteering in the Post-Secular City: Motivations, Rationales, and Translation’, in *Postsecular Cities: Space, Theory and Practice*, ed. by Justin Beaumont and Christopher Baker (London: Continuum, 2011) pp.184-202 (p.196).

belief in their mission statements, operate across a range of scales and areas that not only provide basic emergency social services, but also form the basis for political activism, mobilisation, and contestation.²¹ This capacity for active resistance and contestation emerges in the willingness of many FBOs to take up the needs of those that the state has abandoned, to suspend the increasing moralisation over the deserving and undeserving poor, and to speak truth to power by standing alongside the poor, vulnerable and marginalised.²²

The Boaz Trust can be considered an ‘outsider’ organisation which is generally defined as a small-scale charity, detached from state-funding and heavily reliant on charitable donations and the work of volunteers, and distinct from ‘insider’ organisations that are more professionalised and attached to state funding streams. Whereas attachments to government funding can potentially lock insider organisations into centrally controlled ways of operating and therefore potentially suppress the theo-ethics of an organisation, ‘outsider’ organisations are seen to have more flexibility and are often set up as a ‘direct response to what are perceived to be the perniciously unjust socioeconomic policies of the government’.²³ Williams, Cloke, and Thomas caution that such designations may be too simplistic, while also recognising the capacity for insider FBOs to rework, revise and resist policy-oriented funding in their daily practices. However, the Boaz Trust’s outsider status can be

²¹ Beaumont and Cloke, ‘Introduction to the Study of Faith-based Organisations and Exclusion in European Cities’, p.11; Williams, Cloke, and Thomas, ‘Co-constituting Neoliberalism: Faith-based Organisations, Co-option, and Resistance in the UK’, p.1479.

²² Williams, Cloke, and Thomas, ‘Co-constituting Neoliberalism: Faith-based Organisations, Co-option, and Resistance in the UK’, pp.1495-1496; Cloke, Thomas, and Williams, ‘Faith in Action: Faith-based Organizations, Welfare and Politics in the Contemporary City’, p.13.

²³ Williams, Cloke, and Thomas, ‘Co-constituting Neoliberalism: Faith-based Organisations, Co-option, and Resistance in the UK’, pp.1487-1490; Cloke, May, and Johnsen, *Swept Up Lives?*, p.46; Cloke, ‘Emerging Postsecular Rapprochement in the Contemporary City’, in *Post Secular Cities: Space, Theory and Practice*, p.244.

seen in both its funding, which is dependent on individual donors and the support of non-governmental trust funds, and its history of actively responding to the immediate needs of those abandoned by the state – from the initial Mustard Tree soup runs in Manchester’s Chinatown in 1994, to the Mustard Tree and Refugee Services of the British Red Cross parcels for asylum seekers in preparation for the implementation of Section 55, to the foundation of the Boaz Trust itself in 2004.²⁴

Most pertinent to this study was the foundation of the emergency night shelter network in 2008. According to Dave Smith, while hosted accommodation provided twelve to fifteen spaces at any given time and five houses were in use by the Boaz Trust, there remained a ‘real problem finding anywhere for men who were often street homeless’.²⁵ Like much of Boaz Trust’s history and development, the night shelters had a direct link to earlier work by Mustard Tree:

We [Mustard Tree] carried out a pilot project over one Christmas, because we knew there were a lot of people from the indigenous population with nowhere to go at night. The council found out and told us that we couldn’t do it, but we went ahead anyway, as it was Christmas and the courts were not sitting. In the end they could only slap an injunction on us to prevent us doing it again. [...] With that experience in mind, we planned to run a Boaz Trust night shelter for up to ten men for six months from November through to the end of April. As those using it would have no recourse to public funds, we figured that the council would not want to close it down, since

²⁴ Interview, Dave Smith, 5 April 2013; Interview, Senior Case Worker, 12 March 2013. See Appendix.

²⁵ Smith, *The Book of Boaz*, p.90.

there was nowhere else for these men to go, either in theory or in practice.²⁶

In Smith's account, the night shelters exist at the very threshold of the law, responding to the immediate needs of destitute men that Boaz Trust does not have the capacity to house or host and that the state has rejected and refused to support. Under UK planning law a church is designated as a 'non-residential institution' within Use Class D1, while homeless shelters are designated as *Sui Generis*. Planning permission would be needed to switch between these uses.²⁷ Despite the previous injunction against Mustard Tree, according to Smith it is the very legal status of the men – without the right to work, remain or access public support – that allows the shelters to continue to operate in such a legal grey area. There would be no place for the men to go, apart from the street – a point tacitly acknowledged in an unrecorded meeting with Manchester City Council refugee service officials who stated that they were 'aware' of the shelters, but said little more directly about the night shelters.

3. The Boaz Trust: Eschatology and Utopia in Manchester

Yet, and as should already be apparent, while the Boaz Trust is first and foremost a local accommodation provider it also maintains a much more expansive

²⁶ Ibid, pp.90-91.

²⁷ See www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/changeofuse [accessed 19 November 2015].

goal - declared on its website, to 'end asylum destitution'.²⁸ As the Boaz Trust operates exclusively in Manchester and presents a limited and local response to the effects of national policy and wider irregular migration born of violence, poverty, and conflict as well as an uneven series of border regimes, this stated aim appears utopian. But this guiding vision of a seemingly impossible 'no-place' without asylum destitution is laden with eschatological weight. Eschatology is, literally, discourse on last things. It is, in the words of the theologian Gustavo Gutiérrez, a hope in concrete historical liberation through 'an openness to the God who is to come' and, according to Vitor Westhelle, a 'looking forward to, an anticipation' and a 'reception'.²⁹ Importantly, for these two theologians – one Peruvian Catholic and one Brazilian Protestant – eschatology is not 'about cosmic catastrophes or abstract speculations about time and eternity'.³⁰ Rather, it has, for Gutiérrez, 'strong implications for the political sphere, for social praxis'.³¹ For Westhelle, who draws on the work of Henri Lefebvre, this social praxis involves uncovering and challenging the uneven political relations within social space.³² Eschatology as 'reception' is not simply a passive act of receiving, but opens a 'tangential space' that touches on 'the circles of power at the point that intersects with its stability, opening up unexpected otherness'.³³ Eschatology is non-conciliatory, but not disengaged with present conditions.³⁴ Gutiérrez's characterisation of 'utopia' as both a

²⁸ www.boaztrust/about [accessed 20 September 2016].

²⁹ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, trans. and ed. by Sister C. Inda and J. Eagleson, 15th Anniversary Edition (New York: Orbis Books, 1988), p.125; Vitor Westhelle, *Eschatology and Space: The Lost Dimension of Theology Past and Present* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p.131, p.137.

³⁰ Westhelle, *Eschatology and Space*, p.132.

³¹ Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p.122

³² Westhelle, *Eschatology and Space*, p.17.

³³ Westhelle, *Eschatology and Space*, p.20.

³⁴ Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p.122.

condemnation and proclamation expresses this. Utopia is imbued with hope, and hope is a 'gift accepted in the negation of injustice, in the protest against trampled human rights, and in the struggle for peace and fellowship'.³⁵ Utopia necessarily means a condemnation of the existing order alongside 'an annunciation of what is not yet, but will be; it the forecast of a different order of things, a new society'.³⁶ Rather than being an illusory ideal, utopia supplies 'new goals for political action' which 'must be revised and concretized constantly'.³⁷ Understood as utopian in this precise sense, eschatology is the 'building up of a just society, qualitatively different from the one which exists today'.³⁸

We can read the Boaz Trust's aim to 'end asylum destitution' as an example of this utopian condemnation-proclamation. It carries what Cloke, Thomas, and Williams call, in their analyses of FBOs in the UK, a 'prophetic rationale' or 'prophetic radicalism'.³⁹ This prophetic radicalism represents a shift away from more traditional accounts of FBOs as instrumentalising charity for the purposes of conversion or 'saving souls', and towards a faith-based practice of social engagement that stands with the poor, vulnerable and marginalised and views the outworking of the Kingdom of God, or the upbuilding of justice in Gutiérrez's terms, as transforming society in the here and now.⁴⁰ Like Gutiérrez's vision of utopia, this

³⁵ Ibid, p.125.

³⁶ Ibid, p.126.

³⁷ Ibid, p.136, p.139.

³⁸ Ibid, p.122.

³⁹ Cloke, Thomas and Williams, 'Faith in Action: Faith-based Organizations, Welfare and Politics in the Contemporary City', p.6; Williams, Cloke, and Thomas, 'Co-constituting Neoliberalism: Faith-based Organisations, Co-option, and Resistance in the UK', p.1495.

⁴⁰ Williams, Cloke, and Thomas, 'Co-constituting Neoliberalism: Faith-based Organisations, Co-option, and Resistance in the UK', p.1495; Cloke, Williams, and Thomas, 'Radical Faith Praxis? Exploring the Changing Theological Landscape of Christian Faith Motivation?', in *Faith-based Organisations and Exclusions in European Cities*, pp. 105-126 (p.109).

prophetic radicalism engages the subversive power of eschatological promise in order to address things as they are with a vision of how they could be, providing ‘new lines of flight’ and ‘spaces of hope’ in the ‘seemingly hegemonic spaces of the current order’.⁴¹ During an interview in 2013, Dave Smith remarked that in his view the Boaz Trust would likely not have been founded if it were not an FBO:

If you did not trust in God you would always be waiting for the finance before you did anything. On that basis we would probably not have started in the first place, because the people we are dealing with have no recourse to public funds.⁴²

From this comment, the Boaz Trust can be read as a faith-based ‘line of flight’ that develops a practical means for taking up the goal of ending destitution among asylum seekers, not only in its day-to-day work, but also in its involvement in local and national campaigns to affect positive change in asylum policy, such as Still Human, Still Here.⁴³ Elsewhere, Paul Cloke refers to such lines of flight as ‘acts of love’, writing:

These acts of love are in many senses impossible – how can helping to provide shelter for a few people solve problems of homelessness [?] [...] – yet by being willing to countenance the impossible, these religious people

⁴¹ Cloke, Williams, and Thomas, ‘Radical Faith Praxis?’, p.113.

⁴² Interview, Dave Smith, 5 March 2013. See Appendix.

⁴³ www.stillhumanstillhere.wordpress.com [accessed 20 September 2016].

are led to spill out their passion into situations of social, economic or political need.⁴⁴

Yet, it is crucial to recognise, as Cloke and others do, that the subversive core of these concepts – love, utopia, prophetic radicalism and the eschatological – cut across the sacred and the secular in both theoretical and practical ways. *Agape* or Christian love, provides one such example.

4. The Work of *Agape*

In his 1847 text, *Works of Love*, Søren Kierkegaard deploys the image of the ‘feast’ as an example of Christian *agape*. Kierkegaard reworks the New Testament parable of The Great Banquet, in which the invited guests of a feast refuse to attend, only for the host to then invite the ‘poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame’ and those on the ‘roads and lanes’, as a conversation between the banquet host and his friend.⁴⁵ The friend argues that without friends and without ‘quality of company’ such a meal is merely a charitable gesture and not a feast. However, the host argues that such a meal is more festive than one based on social or personal preference as friends, kinsmen, and wealthy neighbours would be expected to return the hospitality later. The friend, who is caught up in these social distinctions, would not want to attend such a meal anyway and this is why he is unwilling to call

⁴⁴ Paul Cloke, ‘Emerging Postsecular Rapprochement in the Contemporary City’, p.246

⁴⁵ Luke 14. 15-24; Matthew 22. 1-14; Søren Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, trans. by Howard Hong and Edna Hong (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), pp.90-93.

it a 'feast', 'but so scrupulous is Christian equality and its use of language', Kierkegaard argues, 'that it demands not only that you feed the poor – it requires that you shall call it a feast'.⁴⁶ The language of the feast, for Kierkegaard, is the language of *agape* and 'he who gives a *feast* sees in the poor and unimportant his neighbours – however ridiculous this may seem in the eyes of the world'.⁴⁷

Works of Love hinges on the question, 'what is a neighbour?' which is drawn from The Great Commandment found in the New Testament: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind". This is the first and greatest commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself".⁴⁸ In answering this, Kierkegaard makes a distinction between preferential love and genuine love. The former are forms of love, such as friendship and erotic love, which are defined by their object and which bear likeness and offer benefits to the lover or friend, while the latter is a love determined by love itself, based on the equal humanity of all. Preferential forms of love are based on distinctions and are blind to the equal humanity of others, while genuine neighbour love recognises this innate equality and is blind to the social distinctions that shape the everyday world.⁴⁹ For Kierkegaard, there are no limits or distinctions to who is one's neighbour 'for one's neighbour is all men, unconditionally every human being'.⁵⁰ To say that *agape* has love as its object is to connect it to the divine, to God who is love and who loves without distinction.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, p.91.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p.93.

⁴⁸ Matthew 22. 36-40; Mark 12: 29-31.

⁴⁹ Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, pp.77-79.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p.79. Kierkegaard is not against friendship or erotic love as such, but argues that they too need to be rooted in neighbour love, or *agape*.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p.74, p.65.

Agape is a reflection of the divine, or in Kierkegaard's words, carries 'eternity's mark':

Everyman is your neighbour. In being king, beggar, scholar, rich man, poor man, male, female, *etc.*, we do not resemble each other – therein we are all different. But in being a neighbour we are all unconditionally like each other. Distinction is temporality's confusing element which marks every man as different, but neighbour is eternity's mark – on every man.⁵²

Reflecting the inseparableness of divine love and love for one's neighbour in the Great Commandment, Kierkegaard embeds the divine within *agape*. God is the 'middle term' in human relations and the foundation of *agape*.⁵³ 'Like other religious writers', writes M. Jamie Ferreria, 'he walks a tightrope, trying to do justice to both immanence and transcendence'.⁵⁴ Understood through the Great Commandment, *agape* also becomes an ethical imperative, an unconditional obligation.⁵⁵ For Kierkegaard, when I act on this obligation I not only relate to my neighbour as neighbour, but I also become neighbour myself as 'the one to whom I have a duty is my neighbour, and when I fulfil my duty I show that I am neighbour'.⁵⁶ The imperative to 'become neighbour' alongside the coupling of divine and human relations are crucial.

⁵² Ibid, p.97.

⁵³ Ibid, p.112.

⁵⁴ M. Jamie Ferreria, *Love's Grateful Striving: A Commentary on Kierkegaard's "Works of Love"* (OUP, 2001), p.9.

⁵⁵ Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, p.59.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p.22.

During semi-structured interviews with night shelter volunteers and Boaz Trust employees, I would often ask about their personal motivations behind their work and what role faith had to play, if any, in this work. Most of those interviewed were practicing Christians and framing the questions in this way unintentionally hinted at a possible separation between faith and ethics. This became an issue during a group interview with five shelter volunteers over the course of a church lunch at the Longsight Community Church [LCC]. Taking my questions as suggestions of such a separation, one volunteer argued:

It's hard to separate out. It happens within the context of church. Would you be involved if you weren't a Christian or didn't have the connection to church? I don't know because I am a Christian and I am involved in the church.⁵⁷

This was followed up by a comment made by Glenn, another volunteer who was involved in setting up LCC's initial links with the Boaz Trust and regularly prepared meals for the night shelter:

I can't separate myself. It would take too long to think about what I have done. I'm too old. I can imagine that I would continue to be concerned about the political situation, but I don't know what influences which.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Interview, David, 30 June 2013. See Appendix.

⁵⁸ Interview, Glenn, 30 June 2013. See Appendix.

In his writing on religion in the public sphere, Jürgen Habermas refers to the separation of private faith practice and public ethical discourse as an ‘artificial distinction’, not only because followers of a particular faith do not easily make such a distinction, but also because religious discourse itself is often translated into the secular sphere.⁵⁹ The coupling of faith practice and ethics forms what Cloke, May and Johnsen have termed a ‘theo-ethics’ which is the ‘growing importance of *praxis* as a central facet of the expression of faith’ – particularly in relation to the work of FBOs and their employees and volunteers.⁶⁰ In a separate interview, Carlos, the night shelter coordinator for the LCC expressed his motivations for engaging with destitute and refused asylum seekers by stating, ‘at the bare minimum we have this belief in seeing people as humans. And we start from that base’.⁶¹ Later in the discussion he also stated that, ‘it also comes down to our Christian beliefs of helping people, whoever they are, just helping people. If I wasn’t a believer I would probably view them differently’. Similarly, Joy, a regular volunteer at the Manchester International Church of Christ Saturday drop-in centre, stated, ‘I don’t come with any political, economic [positions]. I come from human nature. People are people’. Joy would also assert her Christian beliefs throughout the interview and shared her personal faith narrative as a reason for volunteering, concluding that,

⁵⁹ Jürgen Habermas, ‘Religion in the Public Sphere’, *European Journal of Philosophy*, 14:1 (2006), 1-25 (p.8,p.10)

⁶⁰ Cloke, May, and Johnsen, *Swept up Lives?*, pp.48-9; Cloke, ‘Emerging Postsecular Rapprochement in the Contemporary City’, p.237.

⁶¹ Interview, ‘Carlos’, 2 July 2013. See Appendix.

If I'm a Christian and following Christ, his model was people and loving people. He was so big on that. Everywhere in the Bible is about helping your neighbour and loving people. Love is the biggest commandment in the Bible.⁶²

Kierkegaard's *Works of Love* offered an account of religiously grounded human interrelation from within a wider body of writing that was most often focused on the relation of the single individual to God, as a single individual.⁶³ However, while Kierkegaard viewed *agape* as an ethical imperative, he refrained from pushing the concept towards a call for social change. Reflecting his own disengagement and even disdain for the social changes sweeping Denmark around the time of writing the text – as the country shifted from absolutism to constitutional monarchy – Kierkegaard constructed *agape* as removed from the temporal world of social status and hierarchy.⁶⁴ For Kierkegaard, the Christian was to perform the delicate balance of maintaining indifference to social distinctions while existing within them, but without challenging them in their unevenness.⁶⁵ Categories such as 'king', 'beggar', and 'scholar' are, for Kierkegaard, like an 'actor's costume' or 'traveling cloak' that hide the 'essentially human' as understood from the perspective of divine love.⁶⁶ Yet, such an indifference to the 'temporal' world

⁶² Interview, 'Joy', 7 December 2013. See Appendix.

⁶³ Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling/Repetition*, ed. and trans. by Howard Hong and Edna Hong (PUP, 1983); Kierkegaard, *The Point of View*, ed. and trans. by Howard Hong and Edna Hong (PUP, 1998).

⁶⁴ Joakim Garff, *Søren Kierkegaard: A Biography*, trans. by B. Kirmmse (PUP, 2007), pp.492-495. In his biography of Kierkegaard, Garff indicates that Kierkegaard's approach to politics drastically changed in the later 1840s and into the 1850s as he took up a proto-Christian Socialist position. [Ibid, p.702-707].

⁶⁵ Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, pp.80-85.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.95.

and its social constructions, removes *agape* from the outworking of the Kingdom of God in the here-and-now which has so far defined our utopian, radically prophetic, and eschatological understanding of the work of the Boaz Trust. Social-legal statuses are not simply ‘traveling cloaks’ to be discarded or removed, but are deeply affective and form the often inescapable and uneven relations of everyday life. The metaphor of the traveling cloak is apt here, particularly in relation to bordering processes, which, as we have seen, not only confront people in regards to their nationality, class, race, or gender, but also actively produce new social-legal categories such as ‘asylum seeker’ and ‘refused asylum seeker’ with all the reduced rights, reduced dignity and increased uncertainty that they carry. The intensification of inequality through bordering is at odds with Kierkegaard’s delicate disengagement with social distinctions, and exposes the limits of his understanding of *agape* despite the valuable insights it provides. Kierkegaard recognises social difference, only to ultimately ignore it.

Returning to Habermas’ argument that religious discourse has been translated into the secular sphere opens up further and wider possible analyses of *agape*. In his descriptive study of early twentieth century theological understandings of *agape* – from Anders Nygren to Karl Barth – Gene Outka extracts a common normative core which he terms, ‘equal regard’.⁶⁷ *Agape* as equal regard attributes an irreducible worth and dignity to others that is not based on or weighed in proportion to individual merit, preference or social grouping.⁶⁸ Following Kierkegaard’s foundational work, Outka also views *agape* as

⁶⁷ Gene Outka, *Agape: An Ethical Analysis* (New Haven: YUP, 1972), p.13.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.260, p.269.

unconditional and non-accommodating to preference and self-interest, although there is also more emphasis on actively promoting the welfare of others.⁶⁹ As Jules Toner writes, ‘to regard is to consider the interests of someone, to have active concern for what he or she wants or needs, to commit oneself to meeting the needs of his or her “psycho-social existence”’.⁷⁰

The shift from the theological to the secular is much more explicit in the work of Luc Boltanski as he offers a secularised *agape*, detached from any specifically supernatural dimension.⁷¹ In his text *Love and Justice as Competences* Boltanski constructs what he terms a ‘state of agape’ which stands in opposition to the ‘empire of justice’.⁷² The ‘state of agape’ is ‘built entirely on the notion of the gift’, which knows no favouritism or preferences.⁷³ In a similar manner to Kierkegaard’s image of the feast, ‘agape as gift expects nothing in return, either in the material form of objects or in the immaterial form of requited love. The gift of agape has nothing to do with counter gifts’.⁷⁴ As such, *Agape* is unconditional, non-instrumentalised, non-judgmental and refrains from calculations of exchange.⁷⁵ It neither retraces the past in search of wrongs and misdeeds, nor does it look to the future in anticipation of returns or counter-gifts.⁷⁶ It is this refusal of judgement that places it in opposition to the regime of justice, which, for Boltanski, is the

⁶⁹ Ibid, p.278.

⁷⁰ Jules Toner, ‘The Ethical Features of “Agape”’, *The Journal of Religion*, 55:4 (1975), 462-465 (p.463).

⁷¹ Luc Boltanski, *Love and Justice as Competences*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012), p.101.

⁷² Ibid, p.103, p.156.

⁷³ Ibid, p.111.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p.112-113.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p.115, p.153.

calculation of and desire for equivalence in interactions.⁷⁷ Justice, for Boltanski, is to maintain an equivalence of exchange (and is fundamentally different to how I have developed the notion in chapter 1, via Gillian Rose, and via Gutiérrez above, where it is understood as a constant and continued action against the unevenness of present social conditions). Crucially, if a non-judgemental and unconditional *agape* is not to be shrugged aside as absurd, it must be known in practice. *Agape* must form a 'regime of action' as 'when love speaks, it is to pass into action, as a gesture is prolonged in words'.⁷⁸ It is a 'practical relation' oriented to the present that silences the need for judgment in the form of calculating past interactions or future expectations.⁷⁹ A person can actively move in and out of such a 'state of *agape*' and in the concrete circumstances of everyday life, Boltanski argues, a person may be engaged, in varying degrees, in the regime of *agape* and the regime of justice (or interactionist calculation). *Agape* emerges as an action that disrupts these regimes of exchange and it must be constantly worked on, constantly maintained in the clash of everyday life.⁸⁰

Slavoj Žižek refers to *agape* as an act of 'unplugging', or what he also terms a 'short circuiting' that creates a faulty connection – 'faulty of course, from the standpoint of the network's smooth functioning'.⁸¹ Rather than detach *agape* from its faith-based roots, he re-wires it into his unorthodox and thoroughly materialist reading of Christianity in order to re-politicise it as a concept. Žižek's reading of

⁷⁷ Ibid, p.114, p.156.

⁷⁸ Ibid, p.150.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p.102.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p.157.

⁸¹ Slavoj Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute: Or Why is the Christian Legacy Worth Fighting For?* (London: Verso, 2000) p.128; Žižek, *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity* (Boston: MIT, 2003), p.1.

Christianity hinges on the ‘death of God’ in the act of crucifixion. For Žižek, this was an act of divine *kenosis*, or God’s self-emptying into the world. What dies on the cross is not only the figure of Christ, but God himself, as the transcendent God of the beyond.⁸² What emerges in its place, alongside the material remainder of the ‘tortured body’ of Christ, is the Holy Spirit as the collective or community of believers.⁸³ In this reading, the Christian ‘love for one’s neighbour’, becomes detached from the Divine Other – whether the Levinasian Other as impenetrable neighbour, or Kierkegaard’s God-as-middle-term – and instead the neighbour is understood as a member of the ‘collective’ of believers.⁸⁴

Expanding on these arguments, Žižek also casts *agape* as political action. ‘As every Christian knows’, he writes, ‘love is the *work* of love – the hard and arduous work of repeated “uncoupling”’.⁸⁵ This uncoupling unplugs us from the stratified social relations into which we are born and gives individuals access to universality ‘irrespective of one’s place within the social order’.⁸⁶ The unconditional love of *agape* is maintained by repeated and concerted action rather than dependent on the Christian God as divine Other. In this reading, Westhelle’s space of ‘reception’ would be produced through work and action rather than God-dependent eschatological trajectories. Similarly, in his work *St. Paul*, Alain Badiou politicises the core theological concepts of faith, hope and love writing that, ‘faith would be the opening to the true; love, the universalizing effectiveness of its trajectory; hope,

⁸² Žižek and John Milbank, *The Monstrosity of Christ: Paradox or Dialectic?*, ed. by Creston Davis (Boston: MIT, 2009), pp.59-61.

⁸³ Žižek, *The Monstrosity of Christ*, pp.59-61; Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute*, p.138.

⁸⁴ Žižek, *The Monstrosity of Christ*, p.138.

⁸⁵ Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute*, p.128.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p.111.

lastly, a maxim enjoining us to persevere in this trajectory'.⁸⁷ Within these virtues there is an 'imperative of continuation' to work towards a radical and universal transformation of the stratified social world.⁸⁸ These two thinkers – Badiou and Žižek – tap into the subversive potential of Christianity in order to articulate Marxist political goals and it should be added here, in reciprocal fashion, that Gutiérrez views adopting 'Marxian thought' as essential for the working out of a utopian 'theology of hope'.⁸⁹ Žižek's emphasis on *agape* as a work is essential here, as is Gutiérrez's insistence that utopian acts are those that are revised and concretised constantly.

In chapter 1 I argued that law, ethics, and justice folded together under the wider notion of 'absolute ethical life', a term used by Gillian Rose via the earlier work of Hegel. Ethical life, or *Sittlichkeit*, marked a break from law and ethics understood through transcendent principles or fixed universal impositions and was instead understood as the inherently fractured, contestable, and conflicting space of social practice. Rose's view of justice as the working and re-working of the boundaries and uneven stratifications of social life are connected to Gutiérrez's notion of 'utopia' in that it also does not posit an abstract, pure ideal beyond criticism, but is rather built up in practice with the construction of new political goals that are constantly concretised and revised. In Paul Cloke's more faith-based terms this is the 'outworking of the Kingdom of God'. In this respect *agape* and justice also fold together, with both concerning the working and re-working of the

⁸⁷ Alain Badiou, *St. Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, trans. by R Brassier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), p.93.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, p.126.

stratifications and exclusions within social space. My argument here is that, unlike Luc Boltanski's separation of *agape* and justice, these two notions are in fact best understood in tandem. The value of *agape* in particular is that it shifts across the sacred and the secular, both in theory and in practice, and alongside justice becomes crucial in understanding the everyday work of the Boaz Trust.

Importantly, there is a fragility to the work of *agape* and of justice and, as much as the language of revolutionary Christian hope is exciting and dramatic – whether taken in faith-based or materialist terms – in Manchester as elsewhere this work is in reality underscored by the often messy and mundane practices and routines of the Boaz Trust, its volunteers and the men staying in the night shelters. I use the word 'mundane' very deliberately here – it signals the ordinary, the common, and that which pertains to the 'earthly' rather than the 'heavenly'. In the case of the Boaz Trust it includes the volunteers cooking and serving meals, hoovering, washing up, setting up shelter supplies and packing them away, and opening and closing the shelters; and it is the routines and revised routines that take place on an organisational level, as the Boaz Trust repeatedly reviews and re-works the operational structure of the night shelters, from opening times, to transport logistics, to the availability of drop-in centres.

Importantly too, the Boaz Trust functions as a 'para-church' organisation, particularly in relation to the night shelters. Each shelter and drop-in centre is organised by a particular church that provides its own supplies, volunteers, and space. The night shelter network includes seven emergency shelters and two drop-in centres run by individual churches in the city, who provide their own volunteers, supplies, and transport. The network is para-denominational and includes a range

of different churches in different parts of Manchester, from leafy middle-class suburbs to post-industrial working class areas. On a weekly rotation the shelters include Emmanuel Church of England in Didsbury on Monday nights, Heaton Park Methodist church in Prestwich on Tuesday nights, St. Clements Church of England in Openshaw on Wednesday nights, Mount Chapel in Broughton, Salford on Thursday nights, Longsight Community Church of the Nazarene on Friday nights, South Manchester Family Church in Burnage on Saturday nights, and Ashton Church of the Nazarene in Ashton-Under-Lyne on Sunday nights. In addition to these overnight venues are an evening drop-in run every night of the week between 6.00-9.00 pm by the Manchester Society of Friends (Quakers) and a Saturday drop-in centre run by the Manchester International Church of Christ in Cheetham Hill.

A key aspect of the network's organisational structure is the relative autonomy given to individual churches in the running of each shelter. In particular, night shelter volunteers are primarily drawn in through the churches rather than the Boaz Trust itself, meaning that volunteers have little or no direct contact with the Boaz Trust. Direct links tend to be made through the night shelter coordinators who often hold leadership or pastoral positions within their respective churches. At LCC, the recruitment of volunteers was based on those willing and able to stay overnight on a Friday and included church members and a network of their friends, acquaintances, work colleagues and people within the surrounding community. During interviews with night shelter and drop-in centre volunteers, many spoke about learning about the night shelters during announcements in church or hearing about it from friends. Volunteers also spoke about 'being aware' of the Boaz Trust without knowing much about the organisation. Indeed, one volunteer – an

international student studying at one of the city's universities and with no faith links to the LCC – stated that she only learned that the Boaz Trust was a religious organisation as our interview was taking place, while Joy, a volunteer at the Saturday drop-in centre, said that her only, very indirect, contact with the Boaz Trust had been during a 'sleep-out' protest in front of the University of Manchester Student's Union that highlighted the issue of refugee and asylum seeker destitution.⁹⁰ The money raised had gone to the Boaz Trust.

This disconnection between the Boaz Trust and the night shelter volunteers cements aspects of the Boaz Trust's 'outsider' status as it is heavily reliant on relatively untrained volunteers, with little contact between Boaz Trust and the night shelter volunteers or between the volunteers working in different venues. It also reinforces the recognition that amongst this range of volunteers there will necessarily also be a range of ethical positions brought to the shelters, and which include variations of faith and non-faith. These positions may align with aspects of the Boaz Trust's stated goals without adopting its stated Christian background. The overview of *agape* presented above, was therefore not an attempt to present it as a unified concept across different theorists, from Kierkegaard to Žižek - although the themes of unconditional love, the maintenance of dignity, and equal regard for the neighbour repeatedly appear - but to account for the varying sacred, secular and politicised articulations of *agape* brought to and negotiated within the shelters that I explore in the following chapter.

⁹⁰ Interview, 'Rita', 10 June 2013; Interview, 'Joy', 7 December 2013. See Appendix.

6. Performing Care and Questions of Justice in the Boaz Trust Night Shelters

1. Introduction

This chapter continues on from the previous one in that it takes the discussion over the ethics, politics, and organisational aims of the Boaz Trust and places them directly within the everyday work of the night shelters. In the previous chapter I concluded by suggesting that while the notions of revolutionary Christian hope and eschatology and utopia are exciting, in practice they are often underpinned by the mundane day-to-day work that is necessary for operating spaces such as the Boaz Trust night shelters. This chapter also argues that the night shelters are spaces of constant adaptation and changing routines, as volunteers and churches work to meet the continuing needs of those they are serving.

In section 1 I provide an example of network wide adaptation, when in the 2013-2014 season the night shelters were restructured to include an evening drop-in centre. Section 2 places the importance of routines and adapted routines within the context of specific churches. Particular focus is given to the Longsight Community Church shelter where I served as a manager on Friday nights throughout the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 winter seasons. Here I present an overview of the weekly practices within that shelter, while also drawing on my observations of other shelters and conversations with volunteers and employees working in them.

The remaining sections offer a more reflective take on night shelter work by drawing on interviews undertaken with volunteers and employees. These discussions return to some of the ongoing debates encountered in the previous chapter, particularly over the role of faith-based organisations in community work and to what extent Evangelical churches in particular should focus on 'witnessing' or the 'social gospel'. As I argued in the previous chapter, these distinctions are often fluid and while some volunteers clearly stated the role of the church was to engage with the issues of its surrounding community, others saw the night shelters as 'missional' spaces that communicated Christian belief through action.

The final section focuses on questions of justice and injustice and is based on discussions and interviews with volunteers. In these interviews a variety of views on 'justice' were communicated that included relating the concept to other terms such as 'dignity' and 'respect', or to particular encounters with 'injustice' through the night shelters. It also included the outright denial by some volunteers of justice as a useful concept at all in relation to shelter work, with some volunteers feeling that they were only offering the 'bare minimum' to people in the face of much wider systemic exclusion. In chapters 1 and 5 I developed a speculative approach to 'justice' that viewed it as an incomplete action that required constant, continued, and arduous work and re-working in practice. This understanding was developed alongside these discussions with volunteers and through my own experiences of working and living in the shelters and ultimately recognises that justice is a fragile work.

2. Adaptations

The Friends Meeting House in central Manchester, run by the Manchester Quakers, has an important, if understated role in the shelter network. While in previous years the Meeting House was used as one of the seven overnight shelters, during the 2013-2014 winter season a room was offered to the Boaz Trust every night of the week as an early evening 'drop-in' between 6.00 pm and 9.00 pm. The Friends Meeting House served as a safe, warm space for men to see out each evening before transport arrived to take them to a new shelter for the night.

In previous years transport to the shelters would leave from the Boaz Trust offices in Ancoats, a former industrial district just north of the city centre. At 9.00 pm, with the offices most often closed, the men would need to wait outside, on the street, exposed to the cold and inclement weather. Added to this, in the lead-up to 9.00 pm, the city centre would undergo a general shift away from a day-time economy towards an evening and night-time economy and the need to adopt a consumer position to access city centre spaces would become more pronounced. Public buildings would begin to close and restaurants, pubs, and bars would begin to fill with people. This would mean a shift away from spaces that were free to access, like Manchester Central Library, to much more privatised spaces that assumed certain cultural practices, like the consumption of alcohol, and required money or some form of consumer relationship to access. For the men using the shelters, alternative spaces would need to be sought out, such as train or coach station waiting areas, spending the evening at a friend's house, or simply walking the streets.

The gap between 6.00 pm and 9.00 pm was a problem recognised by Boaz Trust employees directly involved with the night shelters and this included Leon, the Night Shelter Coordinator, who was himself a former asylum seeker. During an interview Leon recalled walking along Oldham Road, near the Boaz Trust offices, one Sunday evening while on his way to church. It was 6.00 pm and he saw two men standing at a nearby bus stop. Recognising them from the night shelters, he asked them what they were waiting for. They replied that they were not waiting for any bus, but instead were 'waiting for the Boaz'. Leon asked them if they were aware that the Boaz Trust transport did not leave until 9.00 pm and they replied, 'Yes, we are [aware], but we don't have anywhere else to go'. For Leon,

[...] this was really, really shocking. You have genuine asylum seekers with nowhere to go and sleep. Waiting outside and it was freezing, Mark. It was completely cold and they had to wait there from 6.00 pm to about 9.00 pm at the bus stop.¹

Leon added that in his work, he often saw these kinds of 'scenes'. In this particular 'scene', waiting on the street was not only these two men seeing out the evening with nothing to do, a boredom directly shaped by social-legal abandonment, but also an activity that took place under the harsh conditions of exposure to the winter night. For Leon, this moment stood out as an example of the daily situation faced by many of the men using the night shelters.

¹ Interview, 'Leon', 12 April 2013. See Appendix.

My interview with Leon took place in the early spring of 2013 and by the following winter the Boaz Trust would restructure the night shelters to include the Friends Meeting House as a nightly 'drop-in' space. This not only meant making new arrangements with all the churches involved in the network as the pick-up point each evening moved from the Boaz Trust offices in Ancoats to the Friends Meeting House in the city centre, but also arranging for a new church to be included in the shelter network to replace the Friends Meeting House which had previously operated the Sunday night shelter. From the 2013-14 winter season onwards the Ashton Church of the Nazarene in Ashton-Under-Lyne in east Manchester would join the network, and like other venues would provide its own set of volunteers, food provision, bedding, and supplies.

The introduction of an evening drop-in centre was not the only major change that took place over the course of my research. For the 2014-2015 winter season the opening times of the shelters underwent an overhaul so that meal times could take place earlier in the evening at 8.30 pm rather than after 9.00 pm. As I will detail below, this meant some venues had to significantly adjust their routines and practices, particularly as they served as wider community spaces that held a variety of activities, some into the late evening. The Boaz Trust night shelters were in constant transition, working and re-working the practices, routines, and structures involved in serving refused asylum seekers both on an organisational level and, as I will discuss below, within particular venues.

In the previous chapter I characterised the Boaz Trust as an 'outsider' organisation; detached from statutory funding and formed in direct response to the perceived injustices of government policy. But the Trust is a continually changing

organisation. From its inception in 2004, when it provided accommodation in a 'few spare rooms', to the introduction of hosted accommodation and housing stock and to the creation of the night shelter network in 2008, the Boaz Trust has been continually expanding, revising, and re-working its services. Like the opening of the evening drop-in centre, these changes were often attempts to extend support and services into the times and spaces of destitution. This extension of support to those left abandoned by state policies returns to my discussion in the previous chapter on the 'outworking of the Kingdom of God' in the here and now or, in more secularised and more explicitly politicised terms, the work of *agape* and the work of justice, where political goals are constantly concretised and revised in practice and in the encounter with injustice. As I argued in the opening chapter, via Gillian Rose, justice is an incomplete notion that needs continual adapting to the uneven social terrain of the present. It is also a risky and messy work, with the possibility of mistakes as well as the potential to enact positive transformation. As an 'outsider' organisation the Boaz Trust was also seen to be heavily reliant on volunteers. In the night shelters these volunteers had little formal training and often had little or no contact, or even knowledge, of the Boaz Trust as they worked within their particular church communities.

As I argued in the previous chapter, the dramatic language of revolutionary Christian hope, justice, and utopia that characterises the Boaz Trust is underscored by the mundane, banal, and messy day-to-day work of its shelter volunteers. Cloke, May, and Johnsen have termed such work as 'performing care'.² Performing care is

² Cloke, May, and Johnsen, *Swept Up Lives?*, pp.143-5.

an ethics performatively brought into being through routines, revisions to routines, improvisations, and the often unreflexive and banal everyday work of serving in homeless support provision.³ In the following section I present an overview of this day-to-day work, and of the routines and changing routines that I encountered while serving as a night shelter manager over the course of two winter seasons. This discussion draws on both my participant observations within the LCC, and on conversations I had with volunteers and employees working across the shelter network.

3. Routines and Revised Routines within the Night Shelters

My first example of the incomplete nature and adaptations often required in 'justice work' concerns the spaces within which the Boaz Trust has to work. As a night shelter manager at the Longsight Community Church [LCC] I had a key to the venue, although this was rarely used to open the building. Like other venues in the shelter network, the LCC hosted a wide variety of activities, both affiliated and non-affiliated to the church, and every Friday evening the building was also used by a local meeting of Narcotics Anonymous [NA]. During the winter months there was an agreement with the NA group that they would finish their meeting fifteen minutes early, at 8.45 pm, in order for the night shelter to open at 9.00 pm. This often meant a brief cross-over between the two groups as night shelter volunteers

³ Ibid.

would arrive while NA members were leaving their meeting. While not always an issue, there were occasions when NA group leaders expressed concerns to the night shelter co-ordinator, Carlos, and myself, that this might compromise the anonymity of its members. Similarly, Carlos raised concerns that the NA group was not leaving the building promptly, which put pressure on the volunteers setting up the shelter. As a result, towards the end of the first year undertaking this research, arrangements were made for volunteers to enter the church from a side entrance in the church annex, in order to unpack shelter supplies out of sight from the exiting NA meeting. Yet, even this did not quite resolve issues surrounding the overlap of the two groups. NA leaders would sometimes debrief in the annex. Shelter volunteers would sometimes still arrive through the main entrance, including those bringing in food and needing access to the kitchen. NA members would often congregate outside the main entrance after 8.45 pm. In the end, a sort of unspoken compromise was reached that recognised avoiding any overlap was difficult and the situation returned to its original state of play.

Yet, even this did not last. Substantial changes were made to the shelter opening times during the 2014-15 winter season as the Boaz Trust looked for ways to open the shelters earlier in order that the evening meals would not be served so late at night, which had typically been between 9.30-9.45 pm. As the Boaz Trust sought to maintain a uniform opening time among the different shelters, another compromise was reached at the LCC and a new routine created in which the annex would be used to serve meals to shelter residents just after 8.30 pm, while the NA meeting was still taking place in the main hall of the church. The two groups would briefly co-exist in separate spaces within the same building and this meant that all

the shelters on the network were now able to open earlier. This transition from an NA meeting to a night shelter for refused and destitute asylum seekers, including their eventual overlap, is indicative of the multi-functional nature of the building. It was not only a church, in the strict sense of being a site of formal Christian worship, but also a community centre, with all the spatial, temporal and material pressures that this entailed.

As I detailed in chapter 3, the LCC belongs to an evangelical denomination, the Church of the Nazarene, which itself is an offshoot of the Methodist Church. Although the LCC traces its roots back to Victorian-era industrial Manchester, its current building dates back only to 1985 and has been described as a ‘purpose built church hall’.⁴ The red-brick building is situated in Longsight, an inner-city area of Manchester just south of the city centre, and centres on a large hall alongside a small foyer, kitchen, children’s play area, toilets and a small office. The small size of the adjacent rooms has meant that most activities have taken place in the hall, ranging from Christian worship services, homework clubs, youth clubs, circuit training, boxercise, Zumba!, and NA meetings. In 2015 the church also began to host branch meetings of the left-wing Spanish political party, Podemos. In 2011, a double portacabin annex was added to the building that offered additional storage, kitchen and activity space. This also included the addition of a shower room and washing machine which were installed to directly improve the night shelter facilities. It meant that men staying in the shelters had laundry facilities and an opportunity to wash and shower.

⁴ Tom Noble, *Called to be Saints: A Centenary History of the Church of the Nazarene in the British Isles 1906-2006* (Manchester: Didsbury Press, 2006), p.275.

The LCC wasn't the only venue to face time constraints or undergo structural changes while operating as a night shelter. The Heaton Park Methodist Church hosted the night shelter on Tuesday evenings, leading to a sometimes rushed 8.30 am exit from the church on Wednesday morning as the building had a short 'turnover' time before a 'Mums and Toddlers' group arrived at 9.00 am. The building manager of the Methodist church explained this to me one morning as the volunteers and men cleared the breakfast tables, washed the dishes, cleaned the hall and packed away shelter supplies before a minibus arrived to take the men back to Manchester city centre. The building manager then pointed towards a schedule pinned to the wall in the first of the churches' two ground floor halls. It was a weekly schedule of activities that, alongside church services, included language classes, community choir practices, Sure Start, Zumba!, salsa and other dance classes, Scouts, Brownies, and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. This conversation took place in late November 2013, and the Heaton Park Methodist Church had recently installed a new shower room on the ground floor of the building. I mentioned to the building manager that some of the others staying in the shelters had said it was now the best shower in the network, which he then proudly shared to the other volunteers. Like the LCC the Heaton Park Methodist Church had made a considered effort to improve their facilities in direct response to the needs of the men arriving in the shelters.

These references to the spatial and temporal pressures faced by venues such as the LCC and the Heaton Park Methodist Church, and their subsequent need to adapt routines and structures, opens out to the key theme of performing care that this section seeks to address. These routines and revised routines, however,

are not only the result of time and space constraints, but are also and at the same time a means to express and develop ethical, faith and political values. As Cloke, May and Johnsen have argued in their analyses of volunteers working within homeless service provision in the UK, ethical positions and motivations are not simply declared, but are embodied in practice.⁵ They are enacted, developed and revised through interactions and routines and changes to routines. Cloke, May and Johnsen use the term 'ethical citizenship' to describe the way in which ordinary ethics – the complex everyday acts of caring and relations with others that are widespread through society – are brought into extraordinary circumstances.⁶ This ordinary, everyday care and responsibility for others becomes a platform for more specific and situated acts of ethical practice that are not reducible to either faith or politics.⁷ It is within the flexible practices and changing routines that ethical positions are developed and worked through, while at the same time volunteers recognise the severe limitations on what can be achieved and what support can be given in such a context. Volunteering in the Boaz Trust night shelters is both a mundane and fragile work, offering a bare minimum of provision through everyday acts such as cooking, cleaning, hoovering and packing and unpacking shelter supplies. This minimal provision is not based on a vision of shelter life as dependent 'bare life' to be kept alive without further resources or support, as Leonard Feldman would argue, but on resource constraints – financial, material,

⁵ Cloke, May, and Johnsen, *Swept Up Lives?*, p.101; Cloke, Johnsen, and May, 'Ethical Citizenship?: Faith-based Volunteers and the Ethics of Providing Services for Homeless People', in *Faith-based Organisations and Exclusions in European Cities*, pp.127-154 (p.130).

⁶ Cloke, May, and Johnsen, *Swept Up Lives?*, p.250; Cloke, Johnsen, and May, 'Ethical Citizenship?', p.138.

⁷ *Ibid*, p.251; *Ibid*, p.133.

spatial, temporal and voluntary – and a network structure that necessitates a daily rotation among different venues.⁸ The shelters provide temporary refuge in response to wider legal-social abandonment and policies linked to enforced destitution. They are a mechanism of support that at once accommodate and dislocate through daily movement between venues. They are spaces where volunteers are able to act-out and develop ethical positions that stand in contrast to the reduced agency of the men staying in the shelters, accentuating a host/guest relationship, despite attempts to foster an unconditional openness. They are spaces where different forms of waiting take place as volunteers ‘prepare for’ and ‘wait alongside’ those staying in the shelters. ‘Waiting alongside’ is a temporary co-presence rooted in a welcome and acceptance of the other, but weights agency towards the volunteer who is able to opt-in and opt-out of such work. This stands in contrast to the weaponised time faced by the men accessing the shelters, shaped as enforced destitution, forming a push towards dependency, and a reduced agency through a lack of right to work or remain in the UK.

In her comparative study of two homeless shelters in Sacramento California at the turn of the Millennium, Rebecca Allahyari directly linked the built environment of the shelters to messages of moral worth towards charity recipients.⁹ The Loaves and Fishes shelter operated by the Catholic Workers – a group rooted in Christian Anarchism and personalism – had a welcoming façade and landscaped courtyard that reflected a progressive vision of social change in which

⁸ Leonard Feldman, *Citizens Without Shelter: Homelessness, Democracy, and Political Exclusion*, pp.95-97.

⁹ Allahyari, *Visions of Charity*, p.104.

the poor merited dignity, love and respect.¹⁰ In contrast, the Salvation Army shelter was an 'institutionally spare' environment enclosed by a chain-link fence that reflected a conservative vision of redemption through hard-work, self-discipline, and sacrifice.¹¹ I wish to loosen such singularly determined links between the built environment and moral worth in the following account, particularly as the venues on the shelter network are multi-functional and not directed towards a single purpose.

Like the LCC, the Heaton Park Methodist shelter, Mount Chapel shelter, and Kingsburn Hall shelter were all based in purpose built church halls which eschewed traditional forms of sacred space that may be found in Roman Catholic, Church of England and Eastern Orthodox churches. Night shelter activities were focused on these halls, although other rooms were also used if space was available. The Emmanuel Church of England shelter was based in a modern two-floor annex to the rear of the 19th century church and had kitchen and shower facilities, a games area, and sleeping areas on the upper floor which were demarcated by mobile wall dividers. The St. Clements Church of England shelter served its meals in a modern foyer, and used a large converted Victorian balcony space as a sleeping area, which also functioned as a storage and activity space throughout the week. The Ashton Church of the Nazarene occupied a former bank and the open area on the ground floor, where worship services would take place, was used to serve meals and socialise, while the former offices on the upper floor were used as separate sleeping areas for the volunteers and men. The buildings that made up the Boaz

¹⁰ Ibid, p.10, pp.103-14.

¹¹ Ibid, p.10, p.33.

Trust shelters were designed or retro-fitted to be multi-functional spaces where various activities could take place.

The LCC sits on Toll Gate Close, Longsight, and is nestled within an area of council housing and Victorian-era streets. On evenings when I managed the Friday night shelter, I would normally arrive at 8.45 pm, just as the NA meeting was breaking up and just before or alongside the one or two other volunteers who would be staying in the shelter for the night. The first tasks were to switch on the radiators in the church annex and shower room and then remove the shelter supplies from storage, which included sleeping bags, pillows, floor mats and air mattresses, as well as toiletries and towels. The toiletries and towels were set on a table in the annex next to the shower room and, once the NA meeting had left, the boxed supplies were then taken in to the main hall where the men would unpack their sleeping gear after their arrival. Other shelters, like Ashton Church of the Nazarene and Heaton Park Methodist Church laid out the bedding in advance, based on the expected numbers provided to the night shelter coordinators by the Boaz Trust, while the St. Clements shelter had a volunteer hand out bedding on a name-by-name basis. This added a personalised element to the shelters as each person staying overnight had their own personal sheets, pillow cover and sleeping bag that they could re-use the following week. New arrivals would be given fresh bedding, which would be stored away for the following weeks, and once people departed the shelters their bedding could be washed. While preparing bedding in advance could be viewed as a form of welcome and service by volunteers towards those arriving in the shelters, it was also dependent on having the available time

and space to organise beforehand, which venues under pressured schedules, like LCC, did not have.

In the kitchen of LCC, coffee and tea would be brewed as tables, chairs, cutlery, and dishes were laid out in the hall in preparation for the meal. Around 9.00 pm the meal would be delivered to the church. It was usually prepared off-site in a volunteer's home, and those who prepared the meals tended to drop it off and leave it for the other two or three overnight volunteers to warm in the oven or on the hob if needed. As most of the volunteers involved with meal preparation were regular attenders of the LCC, they would pick up their pots, pans, and any other personal dishes the following Sunday. In the years since the night shelters were founded, it became more and more of an established practice to prepare vegetarian or *halal* meals, with meat sourced from a local butchers in Longsight or a supermarket selling *halal* meat. The LCC was unique among the shelters in that food was prepared off-site in volunteer homes. In other shelters, meals were prepared in kitchens within the venues by a dedicated team of volunteers. This meant there was typically much more volunteer activity at the other shelters in contrast to the two or three volunteers who remained at the LCC. At the Ashton Church of the Nazarene, the local pastor and night shelter coordinator had organised food donations from the local supermarket and the meal would be prepared by volunteers in the church kitchen based on the donations that had arrived.

Between 9.15 and 9.30 pm a minibus would arrive with the men who were staying in the shelter for the night. LCC borrowed a minibus from another church in south Manchester which was driven by a volunteer, although on occasions when

the minibus was already in use, cars were arranged to drive people to the shelter. Other shelters provided similar transport, either hiring a minibus, using their own minibus or by driving men from the city centre to the shelters in a fleet of personal cars driven by volunteers. As the men arrived at the LCC, they would be greeted by the volunteers and most often would begin to set up their bedding for the night before sitting down for the evening meal. Some would head to the shower or use the washing machine to clean their laundry. Unlike most other shelters that had showers, the LCC had no timetable, sign-up sheet or time limits for the shower and its use was self-regulated by the men. While this could lead to occasional complaints about shower use, it also meant there was a certain flexibility for the men using the shelters. This flexibility also included smoking. As LCC had a back garden, leading out of the annex, people were able to smoke throughout the night if they wanted, whereas other shelters most often had curfews about smoking and being outside.

At the LCC, due to the time pressures between the NA meeting finishing and the night shelter opening, the welcome and arrival almost always took place amid the activity of volunteers setting up the space. In other shelters, the welcome and arrival could be much more prepared, particularly in the Heaton Park shelter which had a welcome team wearing name tags and offering hugs to those arriving in the shelter. Alongside the newly installed shower, the Heaton Park shelter had looked at ways to improve the experience for service users, and improving the bedding supplies and placing emphasis on a friendly, sociable welcome and atmosphere became a part of this. One evening, the shelter coordinator – also an employee of

the church – explained how the shelter had now become a focal point of church life and had reinvigorated the church community.

Between 9.00 pm and 9.30 pm the shelter coordinator, Carlos, would usually arrive at the LCC. Carlos was in his early 30s and an ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene. He served on the LCC pastoral team with a role focusing on the church's community projects, which included the night shelter. Being the night shelter coordinator involved recruiting volunteers, preparing rotas for overnight volunteers, cooks and drivers, organising shelter supplies, and being a direct point of contact between the LCC and Boaz Trust. Carlos had taken on the role in 2011 and began introducing immediate changes to the night shelters.

These changes included how meals were served. Previously, men had lined up at the kitchen counter where volunteers would dish out the meal, before taking it back into the main hall. However, Carlos asked the volunteers to set the meal on the tables, with everyone, including the volunteers, sitting together to eat. In this respect, shelter meals were not so much 'served' as 'shared', and for Carlos this helped create more of a 'family, community, atmosphere'. Indeed, it was Carlos' decision to change the meal arrangements that led me to reflect on Kierkegaard's *Works of Love* and the central position 'the feast' takes as an articulation of *agape* in the text. The meal was a focal point of shelter life at all venues, and a key point of volunteer interaction with the men. Each venue had their own routines. At Kingsburn Hall volunteers would bring plates of food into a side room where the meal was served, while at Heaton Park, Emmanuel and St. Clements, the food would be served over the kitchen counter by dedicated meal teams. The meals could be social occasions, and often at St. Clements a large group of volunteers

would stay to eat, talking, listening to music and socialising with the men. In other venues, like Kingsburn Hall and LCC, where only 2-3 volunteers would be involved, it was often up to the volunteers to balance developing conversations with men and serving the meals. For the volunteers who regularly worked in the shelters, and for the men who were staying in the shelters for an extended time, meals could be a chance to catch up with familiar faces, while new volunteers and new arrivals could introduce themselves. After the meals, volunteers began clearing the tables and would start washing up, often with the help of some of those staying in the shelters.

Each venue had different sleeping arrangements, based on the space and facilities available in the buildings. At LCC, Kingsburn Hall, Heaton Park Methodist, St. Clements, and Emmanuel, the men shared the same space, whether a large room or church hall, while in Mount Chapel the men were able to sleep in separate rooms of two to four people each. At LCC, the annex became a flexible space that shifted function throughout the seasons. It was often used as a social space, separate from the main hall, where people could gather together, drink tea and coffee, talk, and play games while others slept in the hall. However, at other times it was used as a separate sleeping area, meaning that not everyone had to sleep in the same space. It was often up to the men staying in the shelter how the space would be used.

Between 7.00 am and 7.30 am, the volunteers at LCC would wake up and brew coffee and prepare a breakfast of toast and cereal for the morning. The men would wake up shortly after, have breakfast, shower, pray, and pack away their sleeping supplies. Although some had their own arrangements for the day and

would leave the shelter on their own, most of the men would wait for transport provided by the Manchester International Church of Christ who would arrive and take people to their Saturday drop-in centre for the day. During the wait, it was a chance for volunteers to clean up the hall, pack away supplies, wash the dishes, and Hoover the hall and annex, often with the help of the men staying in the shelters. Other venues had different morning arrangements which often included a 'morning team' arriving to make and serve breakfast, and providing bus fare or transport back to the city centre.

4. Reflecting on Service within the Night Shelters

In their study of service provision for homeless persons in the UK, Cloke, May, and Johnsen describe how voluntary organisations offer a device through which to both serve homeless persons and to help foster a broader politics of hope that stands in contrast to the forms of exclusion and abandonment that can characterise the city.¹² My discussions in the previous chapter have shown how such notions of hope – structured as a utopian condemnation-proclamation – and *agape* – in its varying sacred, secular and politicised forms – are not only helpful in understanding the wider aims of the Boaz Trust, but are also understood as embodied in the everyday, mundane activities taking place in the night shelters which I described in the preceding section. For this reason, Cloke, May, and

¹² Cloke, May, and Johnsen, *Swept Up Lives?*, p.97, p.251.

Johnsen write that volunteering can be viewed as a way of bringing ordinary ethics, understood as the complex everyday caring and relations with others that are widespread in society, into extraordinary circumstances.¹³ They also warn against any easy or simplistic reading of these acts of care within FBOs as mere acts of ‘moral selving’, or attempts to proselytise.

Within FBOs there are in fact many forms of involvement that eschew oversimplified accusations of proselytising, and include more ‘relational’ and ‘incarnational’ forms of service.¹⁴ The term ‘incarnational’ has strong religious connotations, meaning ‘divine manifestation’ or embodiment, and in Christianity refers to Christ as God-becoming-man and his dwelling among the people, including the marginalised and outcast, without judgement and with unconditional love.¹⁵ In their separate accounts of Christian ministry in ‘marginalised’ and ‘challenging’ neighbourhoods, in which small teams of Christians move into deprived areas to live, Mike Pears and Sam Thomas define ‘incarnational’ as embodying the values of unconditional service, living out faith in deprived communities, and reflecting Christ’s witness by identifying with the poor.¹⁶

Sharing the sacred in one’s life, and living out the values and principles associated with one’s faith, can be important motivating factors for volunteers working within FBOs.¹⁷ When reflecting on their work in the night shelters, for example, some volunteers described it along incarnational lines, even if rarely using

¹³ Ibid, p.250.

¹⁴ Ibid, p.253.

¹⁵ John 1.14; Sam Thomas, ‘Re-engaging with the Margins: The Salvation Army 614UK Network and Incarnational Praxis’, in *Working Faith*, pp.66-84 (p.79).

¹⁶ Sam Thomas, ‘Re-engaging with the Margins’; Mike Pears, ‘Urban Expression: Convictional Communities and Urban Social Justice’, in *Working Faith*, pp.85-110.

¹⁷ Allahyari, *Visions of Charity*, pp.109-111; Chapman and Hamalainen, ‘Understanding Faith-based Engagement and Volunteering’, p.188.

that exact term. It was a means to share their faith through the act of service or, 'showing Christ to those in need'. During a group interview in the LCC one volunteer stated, 'I think just being able to show God to someone [is important]. It's not like you're Bible bashing. I like the idea that if you meet needs, through that you can show a little bit of Christ'.

Yet, there can also be obvious difficulties with an overemphasis on 'incarnational service'. In Thomas' and Pears' descriptions of different Evangelical Christians moving into disadvantaged communities to minister and work, there is certainly a lack of reflection on and recognition of the uneven social-relations within this downward mobility. Underlying their accounts of 'incarnational service' is an unacknowledged assumption that it is only wealthier people who can participate in such work, and there is a lack of critical engagement on why those within 'disadvantaged' communities are not able to perform a similar 'upward' move and minister and live among the wealthy. This privileged, one-way traffic is amplified in Thomas' use of semi-Biblical language to describe Christians 'journeying into the wilderness' and 'reaching forgotten places'.¹⁸ At the same time, there is a near exclusive emphasis on faith as a motivating factor within Thomas and Pears' accounts. As I have argued in relation to *agape* – it can be difficult to make such clear distinctions between faith and non-faith when looking at motivations behind FBO social action, and as Chapman and Hamalainen suggest, although faith can play an important role, it is by no means the only factor

¹⁸ Thomas, 'Re-engaging with the Margins', p.84.

motivating such work and it is better understood as forming only one part of a complex myriad of reasons for volunteer action.¹⁹

Whatever the precise nature of their motivation, however, it is clear that acts of *agape* - those acts of 'helping people, whoever they are' and 'believing that every person has worth and that they need to be treated as if they have worth', in the words of night shelter volunteers - can also break out into expressions of community solidarity, moments of giving, receiving and learning, and an increased willingness to speak out and act on perceived injustices with the asylum system.²⁰

During a group interview with volunteers at the Longsight Community Church [LCC], Glenn described how it was an ethical responsibility of the church to respond to the needs of the surrounding community. Although now working as an academic, Glenn was an ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene, and an active member of the LCC. As mentioned above, he was also involved in creating the initial links between the LCC and Boaz Trust:

It's part of this church particularly that it exists for the sake of the community around it. [...] It's our responsibility to the people who are there. I didn't go out looking for asylum seekers, they came through the door. So then we realised what the situation was and [asked] what do we do?²¹

Glenn's comment about meeting the needs of those arriving at the church was significant. Rather than looking for ways to parachute into communities (in the

¹⁹ Chapman and Hamalainen, 'Understanding Faith-Based Engagement and Volunteering'.

²⁰ Volunteer Interviews, 30 June 2013. See Appendix.

²¹ Ibid.

manner that Thomas and Pears describe), LCC's involvement with the Boaz Trust originated in response to a present need within its own community and members, some of whom were refugees, asylum seekers, or refused asylum seekers. Glenn continued by stating, 'we were interested in being better at what we do. So we began contacting the Boaz Trust and it [the night shelter] has been an outgrowing of that personal contact'.²² In this respect the church was 'becoming neighbour' in the manner described by Kierkegaard, not only in regarding others marginalised through social-legal status as meriting welcome and support, but also in attempting to engage people at the point of need. Glenn suggested that such a community ethic should be a model for wider state welfare support, well beyond the boundaries of faith-based work. The neoliberal roll-back of state welfare, and reliance on faith-based groups to meet needs, was a 'step back' to Victorian times according to Glenn.

In a similar manner, an overnight volunteer named Andy stated in a separate interview that if the government and wider society were failing people, then charities and churches needed to 'step in'.²³ Although Andy did not attend the LCC, he regularly volunteered in the night shelter and his father was an ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene. For Andy, such community work allowed for a critical perspective on the wider denomination:

I do think it is important that the churches do outreach, work in the community, help the poor. It's really what the Nazarene Church was based

²² Ibid.

²³ Interview, 'Andy', 5 August 2013. See Appendix.

on – being in the inner city and helping the poor and weakest. Now that some of the churches have prospered a little – got a bit more middle class – it’s important to get back to these roots.²⁴

‘From a church point of view’, Andy argued, ‘it is whether the church should be insular or doing other things and looking out towards the community. If it’s not interacting with or helping the community is there any point in being there?’²⁵ To return to D.W. Bebbington’s terminology, in these comments by Andy and Glenn, the ‘social gospel’ was being cast as an unconditional ethical responsibility to the community, rather than a staging point for proselytising and conversion.

However, the points of view emerging from interviews with LCC volunteers were not necessarily repeated throughout the network. Over the course of staying in the night shelters, I would often have conversations with night shelter coordinators and other volunteers about my research, explaining that there was a significant debate over the role of FBOs in service provision, particularly over whether or not FBOs take advantage of situations in order to proselytise to the marginalised. During these conversations, some volunteers preferred to describe their work as ‘missional’ – that ‘we have to demonstrate and reflect the love the Jesus has for us’. While for others running the night shelters was described as a form of ‘witnessing’ through community work, in place of openly or verbally proselytising. At St. Clements, the Vicar, who did not stay overnight but was

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

present at the evening meal and at breakfast, explained that their community work was rooted in a strong 'missional' ethic:

We have an important role to play [...] Non-believers and secularists don't see all the good that comes from God. If you don't have God then you can't have a distinction between good and evil - and then, why would you help people? You wouldn't. There is an afterlife. There is a Judgement Day on which our lives will be held to account and this is the basis of our ethics. This is why we help and this is why faith-groups are at the forefront of this type of work. Others can't fulfil this ethical call, grounded in the Christian faith.

When I mentioned that some volunteers, in other shelters, are non-believers or atheists, which might suggest that other ethics can be formed around empathy for the situation people are in, he replied that he would like to talk to these volunteers as 'their motivations would reveal a God-based kernel'. This somewhat intense conversation, while the shelter meal was being served in late 2012, highlighted a quite exclusivist missional ethic and, in comparison with some of the conversations emerging with volunteers and leaders at the LCC, indicated what a wide spectrum of positions fall within such a term as 'social gospel', or, in other words, how *agape* as a work of love can stretch from the most singularly Christian concept to a model for a wider secular sphere.

These accounts of community engagement have so far been grounded in the corporate work of the church, although they also take shape in much more individualised forms. At the LCC shelter it was common for regular volunteers to

invite friends, flatmates, and work colleagues to help in the shelter overnight. Carlos, the night shelter coordinator, would often invite people from his own extensive network of personal acquaintances and friends. On one evening, in March 2014, while I was managing the night shelter, a student in his mid-twenties arrived late in the evening to help out at the LCC. He said that he was an international student from Spain and that Carlos had asked him to stop by the shelter. He had been studying in Manchester on an exchange programme for three months, and would be returning to Spain in three weeks, and wanted to find different ways of 'giving back' to the community before he left the city. Although he was not Christian, or religious, Carlos had recommended he visit the night shelter to see if he wanted to get involved over the next three weeks before moving back home. Similarly, on another occasion that same month, a new volunteer arrived at the Friday night shelter. He had grown up on the local council estate and had spent time at the LCC youth club as a teenager. Now a student in London, he had bumped into Carlos on the street the day before the shelter opened during a visit to Manchester. Carlos had invited him to work overnight at the shelter. Although he was an atheist and had no religious affiliation, he said that he had fond memories of the youth club at the LCC and thought working at the shelter was a good way of giving something back to his own community.

According to Cloke, May, and Johnsen, key components of the relational, ordinary ethics that are brought into circumstances such as homeless service provision were not only everyday acts of 'giving and receiving' but also identifying with the plight of others 'and that the participation of volunteers reflects that identification; not in terms of guilt, but in terms of identifying with, and giving

something of themselves, to others'.²⁶ Many of the volunteers at the LCC, like myself, were migrants to the UK or from second generation immigrant families and had their own experiences of the UK immigration system and border agency which helped form moments of solidarity and understanding with the men staying in the shelters. Glenn, who was originally from the USA, but had lived between the UK and other countries for a number of years, stated

I've also found, that almost unanimously, in my contact with people in the immigration system, they believe the worst of every single person. They are not helpful, because they don't believe these people should be here. They've got a whole system that is inherently against anybody coming into the country, right across the board. This is what I have found.²⁷

Glenn's comment jumps between his personal experiences and the perceived experience of asylum seekers, in view of an immigration system that he perceives as seeing the worst in everybody and working on the presumption that asylum seekers 'should not be here'. For Glenn, the immigration system is positioned against immigrants, 'right across the board'. Another volunteer, Kate, who was also originally from the USA, made similar comments,

As an immigrant here, I'm on countless visas. I think I'm on my sixth visa application now and it's just a lot of money and a lot of paperwork. And I'll

²⁶ Cloke, May, and Johnsen, *Swept Up Lives?*, p.250.

²⁷ Interview, 'Glen', 30 June 2013.

whinge about it. And when I'm in the middle of the experience, I'll think about it [the night shelter] a lot. It's a slap in the face. I mean, at least I have the ability to do this. I'm ridiculously lucky in the fact that I have a home to go back to if it doesn't work out here. And also the finances, the means, and every box that they need ticked. It's personally quite convicting to have conversations and hear how spoiled I am sometimes.²⁸

Kate's comments not only describe her own difficult experiences, but also recognise the unevenness of the border and how she occupies a more privileged position within it than many others, including the men in the night shelters. Drawing further on her experience, and that of her father, who immigrated to the USA from India, Kate continued,

My dad was an immigrant from India to the USA. And I've seen how difficult and frustrating that is, even if you have the means, finances and paperwork. And the right degree and speak the right language. If that's frustrating for me on this level, how much more frustrating is it if you have all these other barriers, or people just won't listen to you or you can't speak the language or whatever? That was a big thing for me. The personal connection.²⁹

Like Kate, others drew on their own family and personal histories of migration to connect with the situation of those using the night shelters. Lisa, a volunteer with a

²⁸ Interview, 'Kate', 6 August 2013.

²⁹ Ibid.

mixed Kenyan and English heritage stated, 'It's a big part of my life [volunteering]. [...] With the refugees in particular, it was more familiar to me because it's more similar to home. A lot of the people are from Africa and around the world and it was something that I was able to relate to a lot more'.³⁰ Andy also drew on his family background and commented, 'being a second generation immigrant, with my Dad coming over and seeking work – obviously that's different from asylum – but it's interesting about being accepted into the country'.³¹

Working in the night shelters was also a learning process for many of the volunteers. As Cloke, May, and Johnsen write, such 'ordinary ethics' of giving and receiving are also 'didactically worked out' as volunteers bring themselves into contact with others. Creating a space of 'reception' not only means engaging with people with unconditional welcome and meeting them at the point of need, but also learning and building on these encounters. Andy commented,

I think you gain a lot personally, from interacting and finding out about the situation in a different country than your own. You can find out the situation that got them to where they are, without any media intervention on their stories. Often you can be very surprised. There are very educated guys who have done a lot in their lives and have ended up in a situation through no fault of their own.³²

³⁰ Interview, 'Lisa', 10 June 2013. See Appendix.

³¹ Interview, 'Andy', 5 August 2013. See Appendix.

³² Ibid.

Other volunteers spoke in similar terms about how working in the night shelters brought them in contact with people and situations that are most often portrayed negatively in the media – a point that I will discuss in more detail below. Rita, an international student from Argentina studying in Manchester, described how volunteering helped widen her view and open her eyes. Although Rita also regularly volunteered at Refugee Action in central Manchester, working in the night shelters gave her further insight into the daily situation and conditions that some of the men she encountered at the Refugee Action offices were living under. In her interview she seemed to view the night shelters as a particularly interactional space and continued,

The whole relationship with the guys sleeping there, it was eye-opening. [...] Being outside the office [at Refugee Action], sharing that time with them, talking to them, getting to know some of them. [...] Seeing how they deal with the whole situation. Coming and organising the church and the whole organisation that it's already in. It was definitely a new perspective. It's something that you don't stop and think about in your everyday basis.³³

Volunteers also often spoke about how difficult and emotionally draining it was to see the conditions the men were living in. Lisa mentioned how hard it was to see men the same age as her dad 'sleeping on the floor' of a church. Volunteering in

³³ Interview, 'Rita', 10 June 2013. See Appendix.

the night shelters also allowed her to witness and understand the persistent boredom experienced by the men:

I was struck by how bored they were. I was talking to one guy. It was near Christmas and he said he would normally go and sit in the library but it was shut because it was Christmas. That really struck a chord with me. [...] They can't do anything'.³⁴

Volunteering alongside refused asylum seekers, and learning about the situations that many of the men had faced and continued to face, prompted some volunteers to engage in further research about asylum policies in the UK. One volunteer spoke about reading government statistics and policy to better understand the circumstances underpinning the shelters, while for Lisa the experience led to more formal research as her MA dissertation would address issues of asylum and migration. Volunteers also spoke about how their experience allowed them to speak out against stereotypes and negative views of asylum seekers that came up in everyday conversations. Kate said that, 'people complain about foreigners all the time. To be able to tell some of these stories and try and counteract some of those assumptions [is important]. [...] It's nice to have specific, personal evidence when people speak against it'.³⁵ Another regular volunteer at the shelter said,

³⁴ Interview, 'Lisa', 10 June 2013.

³⁵ Ibid.

My grandparents were going on a big rant about it [asylum and ‘illegal’ immigration] and I was like, “Have you ever met an asylum seeker, a refugee, an illegal immigrant? Where are you getting this negative impression of people you have never met?”³⁶

In the conclusion to their study on homeless service provision in the UK, Cloke, May, and Johnsen argue that there are multiple reasons and motivations behind individuals volunteering in the sector and that the motivation of volunteers is ‘far more complex’ than the old stereotype of ‘self-righteous-do-gooders’ can convey.³⁷ Self-serving motivations – in the case of the Boaz Trust night shelters this may include the desire to ‘witness’ – intertwine with desires to serve the local community, to learn from the people they are serving, and participate in everyday acts of giving. Working in the night shelters also often instigated a critical reflection on the immigration system, and the situations and desperate circumstances it forces some individual into. Like my own reflections on my status as an immigrant to the UK that I presented in chapter 3, working in night shelters also provoked some volunteers to think about their own experiences as immigrants, or their own family histories. This not only led to reflective moments of identification with the men living in the shelters, but also a clear recognition – a ‘slap in the face’, as Kate put it - that the immigration system had the capacity to treat some people fundamentally different than others. In other words, the ‘immigration line’ became a key point of reflection for volunteers working in the shelters.

³⁶ Interview, ‘David’, 30 June 2013.

³⁷ Cloke, May, and Johnsen, *Swept Up Lives?*, p.250.

This section not only discussed individual motivations, but also more 'corporate' or 'collective' motivations among the wider church communities involved in the Boaz Trust shelter network. These discussions oscillated between the view that 'mission' and 'witnessing' were important motivations for the church when engaging in community work, and the view that it was the ethical responsibility of a church to engage with and respond to the needs of a community in order to help transform it. Essentially, the discussion returned to the historic and ongoing debate within the Evangelical church between 'evangelising' and the 'social gospel' highlighted by D.W. Bebbington, and while all the churches involved in the night shelter network were active in the transformational community work of the 'social gospel' there were differing accounts of the importance of 'witnessing' within this framework. In the next section, I will take up the issue of ethics and community work more precisely as I discuss the notions of 'justice' and 'injustice' from the perspective of the night shelter volunteers and Boaz Trust employees.

5. The Fragility of Justice: The Limitations of Night Shelter Work

'What we do isn't justice. It's just the bare minimum', Carlos said to me as we left the café in the more affluent south Manchester suburb of Didsbury. He continued, 'a floor mat, some sleeping bags, two meals, and a roof over your head for the night isn't justice. It's just the bare minimum'. I had just interviewed Carlos about his role in coordinating the LCC night shelter. We had worked closely

together over the past two years as I regularly managed the shelter on a Friday night. His post-interview comments reflected some of the wider concerns I encountered among the volunteers that I had spoken with over the course of the research. These concerns related not only to the limited service and support that a night shelter could provide to men facing much wider issues of enforced destitution, but also the way the network required men to move from building to building each night while also closing over the summer months. In their interviews, both Andy and Kate questioned why space was not made available year-round with Kate asking, 'why does it have to end in April? It's Britain. You're not guaranteed warm weather. I understand that it's a volunteer based network and might fall apart at certain times in the year'. Kate's answer to her own question exposed some of the fragility of a network that relied solely on volunteers and multiple, but connected venues. While some Boaz Trust employees suggested in their interviews that a permanent venue was a distant goal for the Boaz Trust night shelters, it remained a network built on the foundations of a disparate set of churches across Greater Manchester.

In chapters 1 and 5 I developed a working notion of 'justice' that moved away from viewing the concept as an abstract ideal or transcendent principle and instead argued that 'justice' is an activity that is worked out in practice. It is a political and ethical action that must be revised and concretised constantly. As I argued via Gillian Rose, justice is a speculative action. It is not defined in advance, but gains meaning through conflict and experience, and particularly through encounters with 'injustice'. As such, I argued that justice is an incomplete concept and an incomplete action characterised by a continued struggle for the upbuilding

of a better society, qualitatively different from the present. This approach to justice, which draws on the work of Gillian Rose and Gustavo Gutiérrez, was developed in tandem with my work alongside other volunteers and employees in the night shelters.

Over the course of my research semi-structured interviews were carried out with both night shelter volunteers and Boaz Trust employees. These interviews often touched on the notion of justice. Sometimes participants brought up the topic themselves, while other times I introduced the term directly into the conversation by asking what justice meant to them, if anything at all, in their volunteer work. As I argued in chapter 1, one of the important aspects of speculative dialectics as a practical and theoretical method is that it recognises that language and experience continually outstrip the concepts we deploy and try to definitively fix. There were a variety of responses and answers to the question of justice. Often related concepts such as 'respect', 'dignity', and 'equality' were used to understand justice, while at other times it was described more clearly in relation to the perceived injustices that were encountered in the shelters and the conditions faced by men living under an enforced destitution.

During his interview, Andy offered some very clear comments on what he felt constituted 'justice':

Justice is not being presumed that you are conning the system immediately.

Justice is getting a fair representation and a fair chance of getting your voice

heard. And having some quality of life while they are there, and this is what is lacking at the moment.³⁸

For Andy, justice connected to equality and fairness, which he considered to be lacking within the asylum system. He followed this comment by stating that, 'in the shelter, people are treated respectfully and not judged on the situations they have found themselves in. There's justice in the equality that way'.³⁹ For Andy, the importance of the shelter was that it was a non-judgemental space where the men could find a respect from others that was missing in the immigration system. Peter, a volunteer in the Saturday drop-in centre and co-ordinator of the Thursday night shelter in Broughton, Salford, viewed justice in reference to Christian principles of equality by directly referencing the Great Commandments that, as discussed in the previous chapter, informed Kierkegaard's own view of *agape*. Peter stated, 'my sense of justice is basically looking at the way Jesus taught us to treat others as you would have them treat you. And although I don't often quite do that, this is a worthy aim'.⁴⁰

Yet, questions about justice often slipped into the issue of 'injustice'. During their interviews many volunteers spoke out against the negative portrayal of asylum seekers in the media. David, an overnight volunteer in the LCC who took part in a group interview stated,

³⁸ Interview, 'Andy', 5 August 2013. See Appendix.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Interview, 'Peter', 7 December 2013. See Appendix.

They [asylum seekers] are used as scapegoats. They are vilified by the media. I think what I saw was that there were 13,000 cases. That's like 0.001% of the population. It's such an insignificant number. But because of the way the media portrays it, they think it is rife, that they [asylum seekers] are everywhere.⁴¹

In the same interview, another overnight volunteer, Emma, asked, 'I wonder if you can put media portrayal in the unjust category. It's just one side and if there isn't equal weight being given to people's stories then that just placates people's opinions all in one direction. [...] The need for justice is also in how it is represented'.⁴² During our interview in the Saturday drop-in centre in late 2013, Joy similarly took issue with the media portrayal of asylum seekers, saying that 'the papers are highly biased' and that 'it's just brain-washing'. In his interviews Andy expanded on media portrayals of asylum seekers to include the UK government's own media campaigns surrounding immigration. This included the so-called 'Go Home' vans that were deployed in areas of London in 2013 warning 'illegal immigrants' that they should 'go home or face arrest':

Even recently, those vans that were going around London, even if there were one or two, that said "go home or we will find you". Then there is the Home Office Twitter account which tweets things like "seventy illegal immigrants have been sent home" which is a real scaremongering thing,

⁴¹ Interview, 'David', 30 June 2013.

⁴² Interview, 'Emma', 30 June 2013.

y'know. It's seventy people who have no other choice than overstay their visa, or stay in the country when they shouldn't do. It's not like they are living the highlife here.⁴³

It was such negative portrayals of asylum seekers and immigrants in general, that led some volunteers to speak out in favour of asylum seekers to friends, co-workers, and family as I have discussed above. I have also discussed how many volunteers also reflected on their own experiences of immigration, and how the UK immigration and asylum system was positioned, as Glenn stated, against everyone 'across the board'. In the same interview Glenn described the immigration system as 'a system that says, "I refuse you the right" and takes away everything and that's it. And you're left to do what? How do you expect people to exist?'.⁴⁴ Similarly, Peter, in our interview at the Saturday drop-in centre in 2013, stated,

There is definitely injustice. That's why I'm involved. The injustice that I see is that it is literally a lottery sometimes based on someone's individual experience. Being able to prove it is sometimes difficult. And some of the judgements are actually arbitrary which is why I support people to appeal.⁴⁵

Peter's comment, 'that's why I'm involved', returns to some of the issues that opened this section and in particular that 'justice', conceived speculatively as an incomplete action, often involves an initial encounter with perceived injustice. In

⁴³ Interview, 'Andy', 5 August 2013.

⁴⁴ Interview, 'Glenn', 30 June 2013.

⁴⁵ Interview, 'Peter', 7 December 2013.

the case of the night shelters this meant volunteers confronting and reflecting on the situation of men whose asylum claims had been refused and had been rendered destitute as direct result of the actions of the UK government. I have argued that 'justice' is an incomplete notion that gains meaning through different and conflicting experiences. In the night shelters this meant justice was often equated with respect, dignity, and a non-judgemental orientation towards the men using the shelters which was in contrast to the refusal and denial offered by the UK immigration system. Yet, 'justice' is also a fragile work. The perceived injustices highlighted by the volunteers – ranging from media portrayals of asylum seekers to the immigration policies of the UK – meant that working in the shelters also often felt like offering only the 'bare minimum' in the face of such systematic exclusion, as Carlos had suggested outside the café, following our interview,

a floor mat, some sleeping bags, two meals, and a roof over your head for the night isn't justice. It's just the bare minimum.

Chapter 7: Time in the Shelter

1. Introduction

This final ethnographic chapter returns to the experiences of refused asylum seekers. It relocates the issues of weaponised time, waiting, and dignity and indignity from the streets to the shelters. In doing so, it figures these accounts through three separate descriptions of shelter life: the shelter as 'waiting room', the shelter as a point of 'arrival and departure', and the shelter as a 'locked room'. What is important in these descriptions is that they are bound up to the legal-social status of 'refused asylum seeker' carried by those staying in the shelters rather than being limited descriptions of the shelter spaces themselves. The shelters are spaces of asylum with all the contradictions and tensions that this term entails, and the shelters are inseparable from the bordering processes that give rise to their need.

In the first section, 'The Waiting Room', initial focus is given to the Friends Meeting House in Manchester city centre which offers a drop-in space each evening between the hours of 6.00 pm and 9.00 pm as the men staying in the shelters wait for transport to the new shelter for the night. Like chapter 4, 'Time on the Street', 'waiting' takes on a bifurcated form. It is both the mundane experience of seeing out each evening waiting for transport to arrive, while also being caught-up in a vicious and antagonistic bureaucratic process. The shelters become 'waiting rooms' as people wait for a change in circumstance or status.

This first section leads into the second as the shelters are also spaces of constant arrival and departure. They are points of transition from the street, to the more stable, but still unsettled, experience of living between different shelters, and ultimately towards a transition out of the shelters. People may leave the shelters for a variety of reasons. Men staying in the shelters may be provided with hosted accommodation or housing by the Boaz Trust, they may receive government support and accommodation through obtaining Section 4 status, they may find other forms of accommodation, or they may return to the street. Departing from the shelters does not necessarily mean a change in status and both arrival and departure remain clouded in legal uncertainty.

The final section is titled 'The Locked Room' and is a phrase drawn from an interview with one of the men staying in the shelters. 'The Locked Room' is not a reference to the shelters in particular, but rather a description of the limited rights and possibilities of those faced with the legal-social status of 'refused asylum seeker'. Nonetheless, the shelters are connected to this experience, as this status often pushes people to seek support from charity. 'The Locked Room' is the meshing together of legal-social status and daily shelter life. In the shelters a person is subject to rhythms and scheduling that are not one's own as they move to a new venue each night of the week and are locked into a routine of early mornings and late nights. The shelters become spaces of restlessness in the sense of both constant movement and persistent tiredness.

This concluding chapter acts as a sobering compliment to the two previous chapters which focused on the politics and practice of the Boaz Trust and the motivations, ethics, and routine work of the volunteers in the night shelters. Read

together, these chapters re-iterate that the Boaz Trust night shelters are fundamentally 'spaces of asylum' with all the tensions that this term entails. They are spaces of care and restriction, movement and fixity, dignity and indignity. Ultimately, the shelters press against the vicious work of bordering processes, yet at the same time they cannot escape these same processes.

2. The Waiting Room

The Friends Meeting House is a historic building on Mount Street in central Manchester, on a site where the Society of Friends, or Quakers, have had a presence dating back nearly 200 years. The building's neo-classical front gives way to a lengthy red-brick structure that is not only used for Quaker worship, but is also a multi-functional space that hosts community activities, political meetings, and for-hire events. As detailed in the previous chapter, every night of the week, throughout the winter months between November and April, the Friends Meeting House opens its doors between 6.00 and 9.00 pm as a drop-in centre for the men using the Boaz Trust shelters as they wait for transport to a new venue for the night. Importantly, for those arriving in the shelters for the first time, the Friends Meeting House is often the first experience of the Boaz Trust shelter network and effectively serves as a 'waiting room' as men see out the evening hours before they are taken to a new shelter for the night.

I first arrived at the Friends Meeting House in late November, 2013. It was a visit that I would repeat each night over the course of the next two weeks, during

my second stay in the shelters. Inside the Friends Meeting House, immediately to the right of the entrance, is a small reception desk where a staff member sits in front of a large plasma screen detailing which activities are taking place in which rooms. Arriving in the drop-in centre often meant passing other activities such as Quaker meetings, small-scale corporate events or a Socialist Worker's Party branch meeting. That first night, I arrived in the drop-in before the other men. In the room was a small table with flasks of tea, water, biscuits and sandwiches. A set of chairs were arranged in a semi-circle around a mobile plasma screen and DVD player. When the first of the men arrived in the drop-in, a volunteer turned on the DVD player. It was the recent James Bond film, *Quantum of Solace*, which continued playing in the background as more men arrived and mingled over mugs of tea or had conversations with the volunteers.¹ Amid this activity of men arriving off the street, waiting out the evening hours before transport to the night shelter arrived, a scene flashed up on the plasma screen. While driving through the streets of La Paz, Bolivia, James Bond is pulled over by two police officers. Bond steps out of his Range Rover holding fake identity documents and then proceeds to shoot both Bolivian police officers in the head and dump a body in a bin, before driving off again. Here was James Bond, not only as an undocumented migrant, but also the fictional Hollywood embodiment of British sovereignty, complete with an extra-territorial 'license to kill'. The screen spectacle contrasted with the concrete circumstances of the drop-in centre where men – stripped of their rights – exist on the edge of destitution. It marked out the poles of the politics of abandonment,

¹ *Quantum of Solace*, dir. By Marc Forster (MGM, 2008).

with one extreme as a fantasy image of British sovereignty and the other as the ongoing, lived reality of those on a slide towards bare life. The scene brought into stark relief the legal and social fault lines that created the need for the night shelters, and also the more subtle ways those fault lines continue to operate in these spaces.

Victor was the first to arrive that evening in the Friend's Meeting House drop-in. Victor had lived between the Ivory Coast and Ghana, holding dual nationality between the two nations, before arriving in the UK and claiming asylum. It was his first time in the Boaz Trust night shelters. He cut a lonely figure as he walked into the room and greeted the three volunteers, before placing his two full bags – his possessions – along the wall beside the table. He then sat quietly in the semi-circle of chairs as the film began to play. About twenty minutes later, Victor would let out a deep and anguished sigh. It pierced the room. It was not an attempt to get the attention of the volunteers, as he remained in a sunken position on the chair, his head lowered, almost facing the floor. Rather, it expressed a moment of deep, introspective uncertainty. Victor had just spent three nights sleeping rough on the Manchester streets following weeks living an itinerant life among friends after being released from Harmondsworth Immigration Removal Centre [IRC].

Victor's sigh that first evening resonated across my time in the shelters and over the course of the research. It exposed a moment of deep anguish in someone who otherwise maintained a friendly, talkative and engaging presence in the always public space of the night shelters. It is here that we can locate an important aspect of the Friends Meeting House drop-in. It was the first point of entry into the

shelters for the men, many of whom had arrived directly from the street and with little contact with the Boaz Trust beyond the referral forms exchanged between the Boaz Trust and other agencies such as Refugee Action or Freedom from Torture. The Friends Meeting House was a site of transition from the street to the more stable, but still dislocating situation of the night shelters. Those arriving in the night shelters for the first time had little idea what to expect. They were waiting on the unexpected, which was another point of transition along the wider trajectory of displacement, rejection and refusal faced by the 'refused asylum seeker'.

Victor's initial despair was repeated by other men arriving in the shelters for the first time. Adil, a smartly dressed and well-presented surgeon, originally from the Sudan, arrived later that week. He appeared an isolated figure as he sat slouched in his chair amid a full room of men and volunteers who were talking and drinking tea. I introduced myself to Adil and then introduced him to another Sudanese man staying in the shelters. Adil immediately brightened up and became involved in a conversation that would continue into the shelter later that night. Like Victor's hopes of becoming a licensed accountant, Adil had hopes for the future and was taking ESOL classes during the day in order to improve his English in view of one day working in the NHS. Similarly, Izad, a former bodyguard from Tehran, arrived in the drop-in for the first time with a look of hopelessness and isolation. He had lived in both Japan and the UK, working illicitly before a car-accident severely damaged his body – an event which had, alongside his precarious legal status, pushed him into destitution. Izad would speak with pride about his former working life in Japan and Manchester and also his tense escape from Iran which involved a physical confrontation with his arresting police officer. One

evening, as we sat talking in the shelter late into the night after all the others had gone to sleep, Izad would put me in a simple arm-lock and topple me off my chair in order to prove that despite his fragile, post-accident condition he knew martial arts well enough to escape from a uniformed officer in Tehran.

Victor, Adil, and Izad – the accountant, the surgeon, and the bodyguard – would all talk of their hopes for the future, or past achievements, with pride. Yet, all entered the shelters as isolated, discouraged figures, and not all the men arriving in the drop-in would pick themselves up as quickly as Adil, Victor, and Izad. One evening a young man, originally from Egypt, in his late twenties or early thirties, arrived in the drop-in. Speaking very little English he struggled to communicate with myself or the other volunteers or the mainly Farsi speakers who were already waiting in the drop-in space. Visibly nervous and worried, he would get up and leave and then return whenever one of the others stepped outside for a cigarette. On one occasion he did not return. As transport arrived to take us to the shelter at St. Clement's Church in Openshaw for the night, he was nowhere to be seen. Volunteers and other men searched the building. I called him on his mobile, but it rang out. Arriving in the drop-in for the first time, the young man had simply opted to walk back out into the Manchester night.

Victor would spend the next few months living in the night shelters, where he would wait in the Friends Meeting House each evening before moving on to a different venue each night of the week. In these churches hearty meals would be provided by volunteers, and sleeping bags, sleeping mats, air mattresses, and blankets would be used to turn a church hall into temporary, but safe,

accommodation for the night. These shelters were at once welcoming social spaces of shared meals, volunteer interaction and conversation, and spaces of restless movement between different venues throughout the week. Victor, like many others in the shelters, would eventually be offered Boaz Trust housing when spaces became available, although this transition to more stable accommodation did not mean his status as a refused asylum seeker was necessarily resolved. He would arrive and depart the shelters under the same legal uncertainties.

Two years after his stay in the night shelters, during which time he moved into Boaz Trust housing, I would meet with Samar for lunch and coffee in Chinatown in central Manchester. Samar was a former engineering student and originally from Tehran and this was one of several occasions that we would meet over that time. Although he was now living in shared Boaz Trust housing in east Manchester, Samar's status had not changed since he had lived in the shelters. This was despite attempts to mount a judicial review in order to challenge the refusal of his asylum claim. Two years of inertia had weighed on him. He mentioned that he had not spoken to other volunteers from the shelters for a long while, adding that as his status had not changed 'there was little to say'. Samar had previously spoken about how the shelters had been an opportunity to build contacts with volunteers and others, as well as overcome his shyness. The isolation he began to feel after leaving the shelters and moving into hosted accommodation had continued on. He spoke further about these feelings. Samar had recently attended a filming of the BBC's Big Questions in Media City, Salford. Queuing with others before the filming and participating in the studio audience had made him feel 'part of society' again, however brief.

Over the past three years Samar had undergone significant shifts in status – from ‘international student’ to ‘asylum seeker’ to ‘refused asylum seeker’ – with the depreciating rights that each entails. These can be loosely mapped on to the uncertain temporalities identified by Melanie Griffiths, particularly as the goal-oriented ‘sticky time’ of waiting during the asylum claims process gives way to the ‘suspended time’ of directionless stasis encountered by the refused asylum seeker. These shifts were, in turn, overlaid with changes in accommodation, from state-backed but privatised NASS accommodation, to the prospect of living on the street, to reliance on the Boaz Trust night shelters and housing. Samar’s goal was to now re-engage in the appeals process and gather fresh evidence for a judicial review of his case. Effectively, it would mean shifting from the ‘suspended time’ of stasis back to the ‘sticky time’ of waiting, which offered the small hope of a change in status, yet also remained firmly within the temporal uncertainty of the asylum claims process. This uncertainty forms a temporal difference or disjunction not only between the refused asylum seeker and those around them, but also between expectations of progress and efficiency and the experience of the immigration system in practice.² The rhythms of weaponised time – whether through the asylum claims process, or the push into dependency on charitable support – subjects individuals to temporalities outside their own control and making, and further entrenches the marginalisation of refused asylum seekers who are legally and socially constructed as different from those around them.³

² Griffiths, ‘Out of Time: The Temporal Uncertainties of Refused Asylum Seekers and Immigration Detainees’, p.1999.

³ *Ibid*, p.1998.

In figuring the Boaz Trust night shelters as ‘waiting rooms’, I do not wish to view them as discrete sites, but rather as sites of transition along wider trajectories that may include time in detention, time on the street, time in NASS accommodation, or a potential move into more stable Boaz Trust housing. Yet, these transitions do not necessarily imply a change in status and, while the Boaz Trust shelters are at once spaces of welcome and care, there remains an underlying experience of weaponised time that maintains people in legal uncertainty, with severely depreciated rights, and producing forms of marginalisation.

3. Arrivals and Departures

Remember this evening we were having a conversation about being alive-dead? Being alive-dead. I said to him [Samar], “I don’t feel alive”. I said, “Sometimes I have this feeling, I don’t feel alive”. So how can I fight, y’know? How can people fight for their life? You are losing everyday hope, everyday faith, everything. It’s very hard. It’s really hard. But I can’t see the future, I really can’t. If it goes by planning, the planning I do, I can’t really see the future. Because, when you know what to do, you always see the future. When you don’t know what to do, you never see the future. Right now I don’t know what to do, so how can I see the future? I know that there is my future, but how can I really show that it’s mine?⁴

– Temir

⁴ Interview, ‘Temir’, 12 April 2013. See Appendix.

I would last see Naveed in late January, 2013. We were both in the Longsight Community Church which opens its doors as an emergency night shelter every Friday over the winter months between November and April. Naveed was holding documents for an upcoming immigration hearing. It was his last chance to 'get papers', he said. Naveed pulled out letters, London bound train tickets, and a tube map and began to meticulously go through his upcoming journey, including train times, the tube stations he would need to use and the travel time between them, and finally, his arrival at the hearing. Naveed was visibly anxious and a friend of his, Wasim, would later tell me privately that Naveed had begun talking to himself and had become remote and withdrawn on the street and in the shelters. As detailed in chapter 4, I had spent a lot of time with Naveed in the night shelters and walking around Manchester. In his mid-sixties, Naveed had spent years living precariously in the UK as an asylum seeker and then refused asylum seeker, before arriving in the Boaz Trust night shelters where he would spend the next three months sleeping on different church floors. Just like his arrival, Naveed's departure from the shelters would be clouded in legal uncertainty.

Jacob arrived in the shelters in early December, 2013. He was a middle-aged man and former state-level civil servant in Zimbabwe, but had already spent twelve years living in the UK. Jacob was someone I immediately got along with, as did others in the shelter. His friendly, engaging and easy-going style meant he was quick to join in conversations with volunteers and other men using the shelters. Jacob arrived in the shelters after delays in processing his Section 4 application. A response had been due a month earlier, but he was still waiting. He had been

informed by Refugee Action, who had been in touch with the United Kingdom Border Agency [UKBA], that a decision would be given the day that he arrived in the night shelter. He heard nothing. Jacob explained this all to Victor and I as we sat together one evening in the Friends Meeting House drop-in. Like Victor, he found the most difficult part of this experience to be the waiting. The lengths of time for decisions to be made and received were always unknown and, in Jacob's words, this led to a 'delayed life'.

Victor echoed Jacob's feelings, adding that it was all about power. 'Absolute power absolutely corrupts', he said in reference to the UKBA. According to Victor, when an organisation like the UKBA is set up to 'please the government' and meet set targets on asylum, it gains an unaccountable power over the lives of individuals. This power was directly attached to their experiences of 'waiting'. Victor did not bring up his time in detention during our conversation with Jacob, but he often talked about it with me on other occasions. Like Jacob waiting for his Section 4 support, Victor found 'waiting' to be one of the most difficult aspects of being detained. Comparing his experience to that of a criminal, Victor said that while criminals are given sentences and know when they will be released, the asylum seeker is given no sentence if and when they are detained and have no idea when they will be released. For Victor it was five months. He was released without explanation. After being released he found that a 'friend' had sold all his possessions, including his laptop, and, as explained in the previous section, he then spent time living with friends and time on the street before arriving in the night shelters.

The following day, Jacob would learn that his Section 4 application had been accepted and accommodation would be available in Sheffield in a day's time. That night we were taken to the Mount Chapel shelter in Broughton, Salford and in the morning a volunteer would drive the men, in his car, to the Boaz Trust offices in a series of return journeys. I was not in the same ride as Jacob and by the time I arrived at the offices he had already left. I quickly realised that there would be no chance to say 'good-bye' to Jacob and wish him well with his move to Sheffield. Jacob's stay in the shelters was fleeting. It was only two days, but these two days were defined by a dysfunctional bureaucratic process. In this respect, it was similar to the experience of other men staying in the shelters, albeit the length of time spent sleeping on church floors might extend to days, weeks or months. As Shahram Khosravi writes,

One aspect of migrant illegality is that one's life is unsettled, unpredictable and erratic. Migrant illegality means abrupt and dramatic interruptions in one's life, interruptions such as detention, deportation or simply sudden opportunities to move.⁵

Arrival and departure are to be understood in this unsettled context. In the Boaz Trust night shelters, among refused asylum seekers, these terms take on multiple and layered meanings. Arrival and departure are not only the repetitive and routine activities of leaving one shelter each morning and arriving at another in the

⁵ Khosravi, *'Illegal Traveller': An Auto-Ethnography of Borders*, p.69.

evening, but are also the more singular moments of first arrival in the shelter network and eventual departure from the network, moments which are themselves defined by much wider processes of irregular migration and claiming asylum. As we have seen in the previous section, with reference to Victor, Adil, and Izad, and with reference to Jacob above, initial arrival in the shelters is often clouded in uncertainty. Those arriving in the shelters may have been released from an IRC or forced to vacate NASS accommodation following the refusal of their asylum claim. They may have exhausted the hospitality of friends. It may be a combination of these and most often involves time spent living on the street. Entering the shelters is a transition from the street to the more secure, but still unsettled life of moving between the seven Boaz Trust shelters.

Eventual departure from the shelter may also be for a variety of reasons. Someone may have been offered a room in Boaz Trust housing or hosted accommodation, or they may have been offered state support through Section 4 of the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act. In some circumstances, as we will see below, a person may leave the shelters simply because they are closed for the season. Just like arrival, departure is also a moment of transition and this transition is not always attached to a sense of progress or resolution. Jacob's move into state-backed, but privatised, accommodation through Section 4 support was a route out of the shelters taken by many men. Section 4 support is essentially a compromise between the state and the refused asylum seeker. It is made available to a refused asylum seeker who is destitute and 'taking all reasonable steps to leave the UK', but is unable to leave. Rejected, but accommodated with voucher support, Section 4 maintains individuals in a state of legal and social abandonment and, as Jacob's

move indicates, often requires refused asylum seekers to be dispersed to other cities at short notice. In the unsettled situation of the refused asylum seeker, arrival and departure become blurred amid constant movement, displacement and transition.

Neither arrival, nor departure are stable concepts. Writing on the travels and travel writing of Jacques Derrida, Catherine Malabou locates a contradictory meaning within the word 'arrival':

To arrive is first and foremost to reach a destination and attain one's goal, reach the end of one's voyage, succeed. But *arriver* is also the term for what happens, what comes to, surprises, or galls from the event in general what is anticipated as well as what is not expected. What "arrives" – or befalls – can thus sometimes contradict, upset or prevent arrival in the sense of the accomplishment or completion of a process.⁶

Essentially, 'arrival' carries the dual meaning of accomplishing a goal and the unexpected interruptions, deferrals and redirections that prevent its accomplishment. The first meaning aligns with what Malabou and Derrida regard as the standard model of travel in Western literature – the journey of Ulysses in Homer's *The Odyssey*. Here, 'the traveller derives or even drifts from a fixed assignable origin in order to arrive somewhere, always maintaining the possibility of

⁶ Catherine Malabou and Jacques Derrida, *Counterpath: Travelling with Jacques Derrida*, trans. by David Wills (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p.2.

returning home, of again reaching the shore of departure'.⁷ In this model, travel is a closed circuit where points of departure and arrival are fixed and encounters with the 'foreign other' are reduced to a prop.⁸ For Malabou and Derrida this model is indicative of a textual and metaphysical paradigm within Western thought that locks out encounters with the other, maintains closed readings and immediately leads back to the safety of the 'frontier of the same'.⁹ In the second meaning, arrival is what is unanticipated and unexpected. What arrives cannot be incorporated back into the calculation of the journey and disturbs sedentary notions of 'arrival' and 'departure'. In this second meaning, '*travel takes the origin away with it*', and arrival and departure take on an incompleteness.¹⁰ The differences between arrival and departure are never given, always remaining to be produced. For Derrida, this 'end of continuity' opens up an ethics of hospitality. As he writes in *Specters of Marx*:

[...] awaiting without the horizon of the wait, awaiting what one does not expect any longer, hospitality without reserve, welcoming salutation accorded in advance in the absolute surprise of the *arrivant* from whom or from which one will not ask anything in return.¹¹

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid, p.4.

⁹ Ibid, p.8.

¹⁰ Ibid, p.12.

¹¹ Malabou and Derrida, *Counterpaths*, p.12; Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of Debt, The Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf (London: Routledge, 1994), p.65.

This 'hospitality without reserve' based on an unexpected 'arrival' brings us back to my previous discussion on eschatology in Gutiérrez and Westhelle. The ethics of hospitality is at work in Westhelle's notion of the space of 'reception' as a tangential space that opens towards an unexpected otherness. Yet, as I indicated in the previous chapters, these notions are still underscored by mundane, messy and often resource-limited practices within the shelters. Alongside this, drawing on criticism I developed in chapter 1, I also wish to argue that although Derrida's account of hospitality has its uses, it can only take us so far. It helps destabilise sedentary notions of arrival and departure, yet a tension still remains. This tension is not between sedentary and nomadic notions of arrival and departure, but within the nomadic and incomplete notion of arrival itself. It at once opens out to radical hospitality, but also, and at the same time, denies this as a possibility. As I argued via Gillian Rose in the opening chapter, Derrida's notion of 'hospitality' becomes elevated to a transcendent position and barricades itself from any connection to concrete and actual experience. Disturbed notions of arrival and departure may lead conceptually to an ethics of hospitality, but in actuality they simply remain, more concretely, disturbing experiences. As bell hooks writes, 'theories of travel produced outside conventional understandings of borders may evoke playful and diverse understandings of the journey, but from certain standpoints travel will continue to be shaped by fear and the prospect of racist terror'.¹²

I opened this section with a quote from Temir, a refused asylum seeker in his mid-twenties originally from Iraq. Temir spoke of 'being alive-dead'. 'Being

¹² bell hooks, 'Representing Whiteness in the Black Imagination', in *Cultural Studies*, ed. by Lawrence Grossberg, Carey Nelson and Paula Treichler (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 338-346 (pp.343-344)

alive-dead' was a way of expressing his unsettled and unpredictable life spent in the 'viscous spatial-temporal zone of the border'. Temir had been staying in the Boaz Trust night shelters towards the end of the 2013 winter season and his comments were made during a recorded interview alongside Samar and also Samuel, who was originally from Sri Lanka. It was late on a Friday night in the Longsight Community Church of the Nazarene and the three men were offering their thoughts and opinions on their experiences in the night shelters. Earlier that day Temir had walked for two hours to a solicitor's office where he waited for hours before being told to return in two weeks time. According to Temir, this would mean his application for Section 4 support would be delayed for at least one month. As the shelters were closing in two weeks time, Temir was facing the prospect of a fortnight living on the street. While Samuel and Samar had been informed that they would be placed in hosted accommodation by the Boaz Trust after the shelters closed, Temir, who was a recent arrival to the shelters, had been informed that accommodation could not be guaranteed. This weighed heavily on Temir during the interview, and it was in this specific context that he spoke of 'being alive-dead'.

'Being alive-dead' is an existence shaped by legal and social abandonment, where time is weaponised and the future foreclosed to the refused asylum seeker. Like Victor's description of his time spent in detention, and Jacob's 'delayed life' waiting for Section 4 support, Temir no longer had agency over his future and the bitter prospect of destitution and a return to the street was a distinct possibility. By repeating, 'I can't see the future', Temir communicated what de Genova describes as an 'enforced orientation to the present' where uncertainty and an inability to

make long-term plans lead to anxiety over both the present and the future.¹³ For Temir, this meant that although he had a presence in the shelters and on the Manchester street, he did not feel he belonged to ‘normal’ society:

We are not normal people. We have engaged in so many problems. We engage in so many problems that are not normal at all. [...] People I see every day, they have problems. But it’s very far from our problems, y’know. So I see a guy who is in a rush because he’s late to meet his girlfriend and he’s got some problems with her. I see another guy and he don’t have the money because he lost it. And I see somebody else who is crying because their father just died. *We don’t have these kinds of problems.*¹⁴

Temir’s observations of the problems faced by ‘normal’ people became evidence of his own exclusion from everyday social life. His own problems centred on getting a ‘passport’ and ‘papers’ which he described as a fight ‘which takes a lot of anger and waiting, but I feel it doesn’t exist’. ‘A life in exile’, Khosravi writes, ‘is like being condemned to purgatory, a state between life and death, a limbo between here and there’.¹⁵ Temir’s description of his external landscape, watching people go about their lives with ‘normal’ problems – and here we must picture him seeing out the day in Manchester Central Library, Piccadilly train station or walking the streets – becomes a description of his inner landscape. Arrival and departure had collapsed into each other for Temir, not in a way that opened up an ethics of

¹³ De Genova, ‘Migrant “Illegality” and Deportability in Everyday Life’, p.422.

¹⁴ Interview, ‘Temir’, 12 April 2013.

¹⁵ Khosravi, *Illegal Traveller*, p.74.

hospitality, as suggested by Derrida, but rather as an expression of legal and social abandonment, a purgatory between life and death.

4. The Locked Room

Kingsburn Hall is a large and very drab building located in Burnage, on Kingsway Road – a major, four-lane transport artery linking south Manchester to the city centre. Its plain architecture and interior design reflects its past as a meeting hall of the Brethren – a socially conservative Protestant sect in the Puritan tradition. The building is now owned by the evangelical South Manchester Family Church [SMFC] and although SMFC worships in the gymnasium of a local high school, it uses Kingsburn Hall as an office space as well as for church and community activities. This includes the Boaz Trust night shelter. Every Saturday the doors are open to men using the emergency shelters and, like other venues on the shelter network, volunteers from SMFC and the surrounding community help in the shelter by preparing and serving meals, providing transport and sleeping overnight.

The main feature of Kingsburn Hall is its large hall with a gentle sloping floor that leads down to a raised stage. There is little about the space that gives it away as a site of Christian community. Apart from the odd poster in the upper rooms, or church-related notes written on the whiteboard of the ground floor meeting room, there is no overt Christian imagery and little sense of the 'sacred space' that a person would find in the interior design of Anglican, Roman Catholic or Orthodox churches. The large hall feels more like a theatrical space, but without the seating.

In winter, the hall becomes damp and cold. In December, 2013, I spent my third night sleeping in Kingsburn Hall and although the previous winter we had slept in the more crowded space of the upper rooms, this winter we slept in the large hall. A hearty meal of curry, rice, salad and kofte skewers had been prepared by volunteers and served in the ground floor meeting room on a long table. Some men finished their meals quickly and began preparing their bedding for the night, while others continued to talk around the table. When I entered the hall later, Reza – a former butcher from Shiraz, Iran – had already set out a floor mat, sleeping bag and blankets for me. The bedding was laid out in front of a radiator, directly between Reza and Hoza, a young Kurdish man originally from Iran. Our sleeping bags and blankets fanned out from the heat along the wall. In the large hall most of the men arranged their bedding in this way to keep as warm as possible. However, if clustering next to two or three other people with the dry blast of the radiator was too much, men also laid out their bedding in the middle of the hall. Victor did so that night, sleeping in a pile of blankets, a semi-personal space detached from everyone else.

By 11.00 pm, the large hall was warm as the heaters had been on since the shelter had opened. At midnight, with the men now sleeping, or half-asleep, a volunteer came to check the room. Deciding that it was now too hot, he made his way to each radiator, stepping between our sleeping bags, in order to switch them off. The cold and damp soon returned and the night became uncomfortable. Hoza did not keep us awake with his usual loud snoring, as he didn't sleep that night. No one seemed to. My own blanket and sleeping bag were not enough to keep the cold from running through me, so I got up in the dark to rummage through the

sleeping supplies at the entrance of the hall, using the light of my mobile phone to search for more blankets. There were none and I returned with only a thin, spare bed sheet.

In the morning, the volunteers woke us up with a 'good morning' and a gentle nudge, if needed. 'This morning is *not* good!', Hoza replied from within his blankets and wrapped head-to-toe in his sleeping bag. Over breakfast the mood was foul, as we had just spent a sleepless night in the bitter cold. Adil suggested that it would have been better to spend the night on the street. He knew some cafés that were open 24 hours and, while we would not have gotten any sleep, we would at least have been warm. Outside the meeting room, we could hear Hoza and the volunteer argue about the heating with the volunteer saying that he thought the hall had been too hot, before adding that switching the heat off had been a mistake and that it wouldn't happen again. As we left the breakfast table and returned to the large hall to pick up our belongings, Adil turned to me and said, 'Mark, when you write, you need to write about this'.

My point here is not to take issue with the efforts of a volunteer who had given up his Saturday night and Sunday morning to drive a minibus to and from the shelter, serve meals, spend time with the men and sleep overnight in the hall . Rather, it is to highlight how the shelters exist at the sharp end of a politics of abandonment in which the wider tensions within 'spaces of asylum', including the tensions between refuge and restriction, become manifest in day-to-day shelter life. This section explores, in more detail, the connection between legal-social status and the experience of living in the shelters, where the disentanglements and economic and mobility restrictions inherent in the category 'refused asylum seeker'

produce a dependency on others. The experience of the arbitrary is crucial here. It filters down from a seemingly capricious bureaucratic process that constitutes an individual as a 'refused asylum seeker', to the finer details of shelter life where individuals have little or no say in what meals they eat, their waking times, shower times, and smoking and sleeping arrangements – all of which vary from venue to venue or even among different volunteers. Alongside this experience of the arbitrary is the experience of restlessness. This is understood in two ways. It is 'restlessness' in the sense of continued movement, where the wider experience of displacement across international boundaries and dispersal across the UK permeates down into a daily movement between venues in the Boaz Trust shelter network. This restlessness is the inability to settle into a particular space or have a place to call one's one – a continuous and harried oscillation between arrival and departure. Secondly, and attached to the first, it is 'restlessness' in the sense of sleepless or semi-sleepless nights spent on different church floors.

It is at this intersection of legal-social status and daily shelter life, or the macro and the micro, which are never so distinct, that I wish to situate Adil's imperative to 'write about this'. That specific and frustrating moment following a cold and sleepless Saturday night opens up to wider issues both inside and outside the shelter. It is the meshing together of forced dependency, passivity, restlessness and experiences of the arbitrary, alongside the physical experience of using the shelters as a living space which includes the very raw experience of sleeping on different church floors. This intersection of legal-social status and shelter life is also the coming together of multiple temporalities as the weaponised, uncertain time of waiting faced by the refused asylum seeker folds into the cyclical and mundane

time of arriving and departing shelters each day. It is where the temporality of legal status meets the temporality of dependency, the whole being framed by a sense of ‘incarceration’.

During his interview alongside Samar and Samuel in early 2013, Temir expanded on this sense of incarceration, likening his situation to being in a ‘locked room’, saying:

I want to have a shower every morning, but I can’t. I want to eat whatever I want, but I can’t. I want to have money in my pocket, but I haven’t had money in my pocket for a while, so long I can’t remember. It doesn’t mean that I don’t like to work or I’m using drugs or gambling. It’s because they don’t let me work. That’s the problem, y’know.¹⁶

Similar analogies to incarceration were not uncommon in research carried out by Alice Bloch among Kurdish and Zimbabwean refused asylum seekers.¹⁷ According to Bloch, interviewees spoke of, ‘being trapped’, ‘locked up’, ‘in prison’, and of being ‘unable to do anything’, due to status.¹⁸ Importantly, Temir’s metaphor of the ‘locked room’ moves between everyday constraints encountered in the shelters and restrictions based on legal status. His frustration at not being able to shower each day or have a say in the meals he eats quickly slides into frustration over his lack of money and, ultimately, his lack of the right to work. The ‘locked room’

¹⁶ Interview, ‘Temir’, 12 April 2013. See Appendix.

¹⁷ Alice Bloch, ‘Rejected Asylum Seekers Living as Irregular Migrants in England’, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 40:10 (2014) 1507-1525 (p.1520).

¹⁸ Ibid.

extends from the minutiae of day-to-day shelter life, where access to showers varies from venue to venue and meals are provided by volunteers, out towards more general limitations on the right to work and right to remain. The lived experience of the shelters, however temporary or extended, becomes a component of the lived experience of the legal-social status faced by refused asylum seekers and, in Temir's experience, they tend to collapse into each other.

Temir was not the only person to utilise the metaphor of incarceration over the course of this research. Following my lunch with Samar in Chinatown two years after he had left the night shelters, which I mentioned in the second section of this chapter, we made our way through St. Peter's Square so that I could catch my tram and Samar could continue on to his bus stop. Standing at the tram stop, and before we went our separate ways, Samar commented that he felt like he had been 'let out of prison' for the afternoon.

In their study of status change amongst both long-term and refused asylum seekers, Brad Blitz and Miguel Otero-Iglesias found that for 'those who had received a negative decision their isolation was total'.¹⁹ While 'total' may be too sweeping a term, it does express the sense of social exclusion faced by the refused asylum seeker. Blitz and Otero-Iglesias had conducted interviews and a focus group with 19 long-term and refused asylum seekers in Oxford and London, commenting that, 'participants emphasised the denial of the right to work as one factor that permeated their entire existence'.²⁰ This was accompanied by denied access to formal education, to open a bank account, and to lease a mobile phone as well as

¹⁹ Brad K. Blitz and Miguel Otero-Iglesias, 'Stateless by Any Other Name: Refused Asylum Seekers in the United Kingdom', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 37:4 (2011) 657-673 (pp.665-666).

²⁰ *Ibid*, p.664.

very blurred lines over the right to access healthcare.²¹ Similarly, Alice Bloch has argued that among refused asylum seekers ‘working and housing represent two of the main and intersecting sites where illegality is produced and the effects are acutely felt’.²² The act of doing paid work pushes the refused asylum seeker further into the social-political condition of ‘illegality’, and closer to potential confrontation with border authorities, beyond the simple act of remaining in the UK. The combined effects of denied access to housing support and work are not only to curtail avenues towards self-sufficiency, but also push individuals into destitution and consequently render them dependent on the support of friends, family, charities and/or FBOs.

In a key chapter of her 2005 work *Human Cargo*, Caroline Moorehead investigates the final months in the life of Suleiman Dialo and, following his dispersal to Newcastle, the refusal of his asylum claim and eventual suicide on New Year’s Eve 2002. Moorehead presents a situation where lack of work, idleness, loneliness, waiting, dependency and the threat of deportation coalesce together. She writes that a ‘lack of work’ was the ‘worst aspect of waiting to most of those applying for asylum’, and was the single hardest thing for Dialo to bear. Dialo had been ‘condemned to do nothing’ and forced into dependency but ‘wanted a private life of his own, not to be treated as a child, and he could no longer bear to be dependent on others for everything’.²³

²¹ Ibid.

²² Alice Bloch, ‘Rejected Asylum Seekers Living as Irregular Migrants in England’, p.1513.

²³ Moorehead, *Human Cargo*, p.138, p.132.

The analyses provided by Moorehead, Bloch, Blitz and Otero-Iglesias, have foregrounded the lack of right to work in pushing refused asylum-seekers into forced idleness, forced dependency, and isolation. The lack of right to work was also crucial in Temir's description of the 'locked room'. During conversations in the Longsight Community Church shelter, Temir had described his own experience of working in the UK, prior to arriving in the shelters. As discussed in chapter 4, he had worked in a restaurant in Stoke-on-Trent, where he was given a key to open and close the premises. Temir spent each night in the cellar, sleeping. His boss was unaware that he was homeless and living in the building. Due to its illicit nature, work was not often discussed and descriptions were often vague, unspecific and sometimes second hand. During my first stay in the shelters in 2012, we would often wait for transport on the street in front of the Boaz Trust offices and sometimes discuss how we spent the day. One young man who had arrived in the UK from Iran, via people traffickers who claimed he was on his way to Canada, said that he had been delivering take-away leaflets door-to-door all day. He had been paid £10.00. That same week a heated argument had taken place over sleeping arrangements in the shelter in Broughton, Salford. It was diffused by a volunteer who took aside Basem, a former police officer from Iraq, to sit with him while he calmed down. Later, as a few of us discussed what had happened, it was Naveed who said to the group, 'of course Basem was stressed. He'd been working in the chicken factory all day'. While managing the Longsight shelter in 2014, I was approached by one man on behalf of another who needed bus fare to get to his work at a shisha café the following day. It happened that the church had recently received a donation specifically for morning bus fares which all the men would

receive. Later that same month, another man, originally from Sudan, spoke about his time working at a butcher's on Lewisham High Street, London. His boss had abruptly fired him, fearing an imminent raid by the UKBA. These examples of mentions of work were part hearsay, part-direct, and most often discrete. The lack of authorisation for refused asylum seekers to work means participation in the labour market is a criminal activity which effectively sanctions the exploitative working conditions and these examples highlight how precarious low-paid work could be for asylum-seekers, particularly if they remained destitute and in need of the shelters.²⁴ However, it must also be emphasised that work was rare and joblessness remained a key condition of those staying in the shelters.

I first met Arif in early November, 2012, while managing the Longsight Community Church shelter. It was the evening meal and we were gathered around the tables in the main hall with other volunteers and men. Arif, originally from the West Bank, had spent years as an itinerant labourer on building sites in Spain and France, before arriving in the UK. He had a long greying beard and wore a red winter cap that was an almost permanent feature atop his head. Two other men, from the Gaza Strip, were sitting alongside Arif and jokingly introduced him as 'Osama', a reference to his beard and visual likeness to Osama bin Laden. Although serving as a volunteer when I first met Arif, later that same month I would live in the shelter network. Arif was also staying in the shelters at that time and he continued to use them throughout the 2012-13 winter season. Arif was solitary and very introspective. On the street he tended to drift off on his own and in the

²⁴ Bloch, 'Rejected Asylum Seekers Living as Irregular Migrants in England', p.1514.

shelters he could become very private, often talking to himself and sometimes becoming agitated. Despite being withdrawn, he often repeated his desire to work, to have a home and to find a wife. 'I need a job. I need a home. I need a wife', became a constant refrain and one that vocalised the wide crevice between his everyday desires and the severely truncated opportunities that were available to him.

Like Temir's comment about being 'alive-dead' and being in a 'locked room', Arif's statements reflected fundamental problems attached to legal status. On more than one occasion, I would misunderstand Arif's frustrations and take them for more immediate and superficial concerns. Later that winter, in 2013, while managing the LCC shelter, Arif approached me soon after the shelter had opened. As the tables were being set up and bedding laid out, he gripped my arm and said, 'Mark, I need space'. Assuming that he wanted to sleep separately from the others that night, especially as the hall lacked privacy, I suggested to another volunteer that we may need to set up a space in the annex for Arif. To double-check these concerns, I asked another Arabic speaker to see if Arif was ok. After speaking to Arif, he turned to me and shrugged his shoulders to say it wasn't clear what Arif was wanting. Later, Arif would again approach me and say, 'I need a job. I need a home. I need a wife. *Insha'Allah*'. He would repeat it again at the dinner table to others. His need for space hadn't been a request for some minor adjustments to his sleeping arrangements for the night, but deep-seated issues about work, status and domestic life.

Later that summer, as I walked through Manchester city centre, along Shudehill Road on the edge of the Northern Quarter, I would bump into Arif on the

street. It had been four months since the shelters had closed. We shook hands and greeted each other in English and Arabic. Arif said he now had housing, but then gripped my upper arm saying, 'It's no good. It's no good. I need money'. Thinking he was in need of cash, I instinctively pulled out my wallet saying, 'All I've got with me is a fiver'. As I did, Arif stepped back, almost recoiling. He gestured that he didn't want my money. He looked disappointed in me. He was not looking for a handout or a bit of cash. Like the previous misunderstanding, this was not about momentary help, but deep-rooted concerns he wished to express to me. However, this time the fragile line between dignity and indignity had been briefly frayed.

Depreciating rights walk hand-in-hand with destitution and dependency and the severe restrictions faced by refused asylum seekers mean they have, 'no control over their major life decisions'.²⁵ It leads to the pain of dependency and need to constantly rely on others to meet basic needs. References to the 'locked room' and 'prison' were bound to legal and social status and extended beyond mere descriptions of the night shelters and towards wider issues of idleness, joblessness, and isolation. However, we should always be aware that in deploying this metaphor of incarceration, incarceration remains a very real possibility and very real experience for those staying in the shelters, including Victor who had spent five months in Harmondsworth IRC prior to arriving in the shelters.

This section opened with an account of a particularly cold night in Kingsburn Hall. It included a description of three sleeping bags fanning out from the radiator as Reza, Hoza, and I clustered along the wall for warmth. I would like to return to

²⁵ Blitz and Otero-Iglesias, 'Stateless by Any Other Name', p.666.

this moment. Not only does it reveal the subtle host/guest relations that operate within the shelters, to the effect that no one sleeping in the hall turned the radiators back on, but it is also emblematic of the hard physical conditions of living in the shelters. It opens our discussions on status and dependency to include the experience of the arbitrary and restlessness, experiences which are interwoven with the temporal uncertainty of waiting and the mundane, cyclical time of shelter life.

Lining sleeping bags alongside radiators was a recurring formation in the shelters, particularly in venues that used large halls. In Kingsburn Hall, Longsight Community Church and Prestwich Methodist Church, men often arranged or rearranged their bedding to adjust to the uncomfortable space. In Prestwich Methodist Church, men would sometimes move their bedding out of the designated sleeping area, marked by mobile wall dividers, and around the space occupied by tables and chairs for eating meals, in order to get closer to a wall heater. Similarly, in the Longsight shelter, men would often place their bedding near radiators along the wall, laying it out before the meal was served. It was also common for the church's padded chairs to be used to make a raised, provisional bed. Eight chairs, placed together and facing each other in two rows of four, with sleeping mats and sleeping bags on top, provided a slightly more comfortable arrangement than the floor. After their use as beds, the same chairs would be stacked away for later use in church services and other activities. The sleeping area of St. Clements in Openshaw was a converted balcony on the top floor of the 19th century church. The space also functioned as a children's area and a storage area, with aluminium heaters mounted along both sides of the ceiling. During my stays,

there was usually discussion among the other men over whether or not to turn on all eight heaters. It was either a night spent in the constant dry blast of the powerful heaters or a night that some might find too cold. Sleeping in the shelters was to sleep in places that could vary between being too cold and too hot, and were wide open halls or more tightly packed spaces, both with little or no privacy. The smells of close-quartered humans living in spaces with little ventilation were a feature of shelter life and at night there was near-constant snoring, the glow of mobile phones, music being played from phones, and sometimes late night conversations using Skype, Viber or pay-as-you-go credit.

As Samar stated during his interview in 2013, 'the shelters are not a place for sleeping'.²⁶ This restlessness was mentioned by others too. One man showed me how he stuffed wads of tissue paper into his ears each night in order to cut out any noise. Paul, originally from Cameroon, and staying in the shelters in early 2015, said he did not sleep the first three nights after arriving. Betin, a young Kurdish man who had arrived in the UK from Iran at the age of fourteen, only to have his asylum claim rejected when he became an adult, spoke about a friend who had only recently left the shelters for hosted accommodation. His friend, so used to being woken up each morning at 7.00 am, after a short sleep on a church floor, had woken up at that exact same time again only to realise he was in his own bed and could sleep in. He stayed in bed until the afternoon, catching up on much needed sleep. Betin told the story with a smile, saying that he couldn't wait for the opportunity to sleep in a bed and sleep in. Another young man, who had arrived in

²⁶ Interview, 'Samar', 12 April 2013. See Appendix.

the UK from Palestine as a teenager, was away from the Longsight shelter one Friday only to return the next week. During a conversation, while I was managing the shelter, he mentioned that he had spent the previous Friday at his friend's house, who lived in Boaz Trust accommodation. He was able to sleep in until 1.00 pm. These accounts of sleeplessness were reflected in my own experience of the shelters. During my stay in the shelters in late 2013, I began to develop my own, awkward sleeping routine. It would include one night of little or no sleep, while the following night I would sleep out of pure exhaustion, however uncomfortable I was. This pattern dominated my time in the shelters. As I discussed in chapter 4, during the day Victor and I would often visit Manchester Central Library and on occasion would take turns sleeping at the reading table, falling in to deep slumber after a night in the shelter. The shelters were spaces of tired and aching bodies. The hard floors, sleeping mats and air mattresses, along with the constant change in venue, could wear the body down. Adil would sometimes say that we would all need Thai massages after leaving the shelters, and we would sometimes follow this up by giving a shoulder rub to someone following a night on the shelter floor. Victor often made comparisons between the shelters and detention centres, and once mentioned that having a bed and access to a gym in detention meant he could at least stay physically fit. In the shelters he was aching and constantly tired and, as he once pointed out to me, along with the hearty but late meals, his fitness gave way to an expanding waist line.. Victor was careful to qualify any comparisons by saying in no uncertain terms would he wish to return to a detention centre and that 'no one should have their freedom taken away'.

Yet restlessness is more than just sleeplessness. It is also the temporality of dependency. It is the constant and unsettled movement between shelters, arriving at and departing from a different venue each day, and rotating through the seven venues each week, all of which is set within a wider, harried time of waiting and uncertainty. The shelters can only operate as provisional spaces, located, as discussed in chapter 5, at the threshold of planning law. As much as the different venues were designed or retro-fitted to become provisional spaces – whether a church hall, converted balcony or modern annex, they were not designed for living in. Restlessness becomes the cyclical time of rotating through these provisional spaces as the days and nights bleed into each other. Unlike Desjarlais' account of the State Service Centre in Boston, where shelter routines became instructional rhythms intended to re-integrate people into working society, this circulation around different venues was ajar from mainstream society, becoming a further force behind the refused asylum seeker's isolation.²⁷ As one man explained to a volunteer, 'we don't look forward to the weekend like you do'. Public buildings were closed, and it did not offer the break from day-to-day working life that those outside the shelters experienced. There were other moments that brought this clash of temporalities into relief. It was the minibus pulling out of the Friends Meeting House on Mount Street on a Saturday night as it weaved its way through city centre streets, packed with weekend revellers and pub crowds, before driving on to Kingsburn Hall; and it was leaving the Ashton-Under-Lyne Church of the Nazarene shelter early on Monday morning, riding the bus along the A635 to

²⁷ Desjarlais, *Shelter Blues*, pp.38-39.

Manchester in rush-hour traffic as it slowly filled with commuters on their way to work in the city centre.

Restlessness is also adjusting to the unique spatial-temporalities of each venue. As such it becomes an experience of the arbitrary as rules, routines and practices change from venue to venue and among different volunteers. In Longsight Community Church and Prestwich Methodist Church there were no schedules for shower times, while venues like Ashton Church of the Nazarene and Emmanuel C of E in Didsbury, had sign-up sheets or clear time-limits. In the former venues, men were able to work out shower times themselves, which may cause complaints for those who are waiting, while in the latter venues there was a precise schedule to follow. Similarly, the Longsight Community Church had a back garden and the men staying in the shelter were able to step outside and smoke throughout the night, while in other shelters there was a curfew or no access to a smoking area. These differences between shelters were not only based on the spatial configuration of each venue, but also on the smooth functioning of the shelter for the volunteers. In venues like Prestwich Methodist Church and St. Clements, Openshaw, the shelters typically involved large groups of volunteers, turning the evening into a social occasion for both those using the shelter and those who were volunteering, while in the Longsight shelter there were only two or three volunteers working in the venue. The differing routines, regulations and welcomes were not attempts to implement forms of correction or instruction, but nonetheless placed the men in to a series of changing rhythms that were not of their own making. Restlessness could become the constant adjustment to the different, seemingly arbitrary, routines of each venue.

Yet, while the shelters are provisional spaces, so too are the statuses of the men using them. For the asylum seeker it is waiting for a decisive change of status, for the refused asylum seeker it is the expectation to leave the country, waiting to lodge an appeal or apply for provisional Section 4 support which effectively maintains a person in a state of legal limbo. The experience of the arbitrary is also an experience of provisional status. It is being determined as an asylum seeker or refused asylum seeker. It is the experience of having decisions made about you by a seemingly distant, capricious and dysfunctional bureaucracy that effect fundamental aspects of your life including the right to remain and the right to work. The cyclical and mundane rhythms of shelter life were the result of determinations of status that pushed people into dependency on the shelters and often resulted in frustration and anxiety. Keeping one's documentation close to hand was an example of this frustration and anxiety. Not only was keeping documentation on one's person often necessary as many of the men in the shelters had no alternative space of their own to keep their belongings, but also because these documents were important proofs of mismanagement and contradictory decisions by the Home Office, or were a hope for mounting further appeals and Section 4 applications.

Paul was normally a cheerful and relaxed presence in the shelters, but one Friday night in early 2015 he expressed his frustration to me about a recent set of contradictory decisions that had now prolonged his stay in the shelters. Paul had received notification that he had been granted accommodation support, but following a recent meeting in London, had been told by a different set of Home Office officials that he had no such support. Paul took me to his bedding and pulled

out two documents from his bag, each contradicting the other. When I asked him if he always kept the documents with him, he explained how necessary it was as they remained the only evidence of his offer of accommodation and his chance to leave the shelters. That same evening others spoke of their frustrations. This included Betin. During his asylum application, Betin submitted his driver's license as evidence of identification, only for the Home Office to lose it. Betin had given up pursuing them over it and, along with his refused asylum claim, he was now lacking proof of his right to drive.

The 'locked room' was a term used by Temir that I have used to describe the restrictions, frustrations, and isolation felt by those living in the Boaz Trust night shelters. This metaphor of incarceration applied to the degraded social-legal status of 'refused asylum seeker', with all the restrictions that this category entails, as much as it was about the night shelters in particular. Like the other thematic terms I have used to describe the experience of living in the night shelters – 'the waiting room', 'arrivals and departures' – it crosses the macro and the micro, the day-to-day experience of moving between different venues each night of the week, and the wider processes of bordering that shape and restrict the lives of individuals in vicious ways. In conclusion, I would like to re-iterate a point I made at the opening of this chapter; that the night shelters are 'spaces of asylum' that carry all the tensions this term entails. They are spaces of movement and fixity, dignity and indignity, of care, concern and welcome; but also of tiredness, restlessness, and anxiety. Whilst the night shelters are spaces that offer support to those whom the state as abandoned, they also cannot escape these same processes of bordering

and the fault-lines these processes create between those who hold fundamentally different legal-social statuses.

Conclusion

1. *The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada*

Pete Perkins and the *coyote* sit on a ridge overlooking the Rio Grande, towards Mexico. 'Can you get us across?', Perkins asks. 'Yes, but I've never crossed people from this side to that side', the *coyote* replies. He tells Perkins that it will be \$1,000 per person for his assistance. 'I don't have a thousand dollars', the aging ranch hand responds. '\$3,000', the *coyote* insists, 'a thousand for you, a thousand for the *gringo*, and a thousand for the dead guy'. Pete Perkins is travelling with a small caravan of three horses, one of which carries the body of his friend and fellow ranch hand Melquiades Estrada whom he intends to return to Mexico in order to bury him in his hometown of Jimenez. On the third horse is Mike Norton, the US border guard who shot and killed Estrada. Perkins has taken him hostage, forcing him to help with the cross-border burial of his friend. Perkins initially refuses the assistance of the *coyote*, but as an American border patrol helicopter comes into view and follows the line of the river, they begin to negotiate a reduced fee. In the end Perkins offers the *coyote* one of his horses. With only two horses left, Mike Norton will be making the journey into Mexico with the corpse of Estrada strapped beside him.

In the film *The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada* Pete Perkins is played by the actor Tommy Lee Jones.¹ Jones is also the director of the film. Commenting on the film at the Austin Film Festival, Jones explained that it explores the concept of the border and specifically the international border that violently and obtrusively divides the connected cultures of southern Texas and northern Mexico. Jones states,

The border may not exist all the time. And sometimes it may. And it leads to the questions and an interest in other concepts of borders between the hearts and minds, desire and reality, and it just goes on and on.²

In her writings on *La Frontera*, the same border between Mexico and the United States that is depicted in the film, the cultural theorist Gloria Anzaldúa writes that 'a borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and the forbidden are its inhabitants'.³ For Anzaldúa a 'borderland' is the more fluid space that hugs the fixed line of the national border which is set up to 'to distinguish *us* from *them*'.⁴ A borderland is also a no-mans' land where 'illegal refugees' are 'caught between being treated as criminals and being able to eat, between resistance and deportation'.⁵

¹ *The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada*, dir. by Tommy Lee Jones (Sony Pictures, 2005).

² 'Tommy Lee Jones: Bringing The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada to Life', *On Story*, 511 (2015) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrHBGGXRe2U>> [accessed 29 September 2016].

³ Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/ La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987), p.3.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.12.

In this thesis I have argued that the border is a 'concrete abstraction', that it is at once an idealised object, detached from colonial histories and contingencies, while also being a vicious spatial temporal zone that produces widely differential legal and social statuses that diffuse into everyday life. I have argued that this abstract image of the border often bears down on individuals in malign and antagonistic ways. My argument here is that the 'borderland', to use Anzaldúa's term, is not only an area that surrounds the fixed boundary of the nation-state, but is essentially a part of all social space which it shapes and re-shapes in often hostile ways. The 'borderland' has shifted from the exterior of a nation state, to its interior. *La Frontera* is a borderland and so are the streets of a post-industrial city in the North of England.

One of the tragedies of the border is that the social stratifications it produces are often concealed within everyday life. The border is activated differently for different people, depending on who you are and your social and legal status. 'The border may not exist all the time. And sometimes it may', as Tommy Lee Jones said. The border becomes part of the 'enchanted ordinary', elevated to a taken-for-granted status that assumes that this is just the way things are, even on the occasions when the full violence of the border confronts us, such as the 2013 Lampedusa disaster and the continuing deaths of migrants on the Mediterranean Sea. Yet, the reification of the border also makes it an ideal, fantasy object that is not only accepted as natural and neutral, but as something that needs to be protected and controlled. At the time of writing this conclusion, Donald Trump has won the Republican nomination for President of the United States of America and is campaigning for this position under the slogans 'Make America Great Again' and

'We're going to build a wall and Mexico's going to pay for it'. This fetishizing of the border is deeply rooted in 'state thought' and the idealisation of the nation state, which is also its own form of 'concrete abstraction'. The nation state has been reified to also become an idealised object that is assumed to be natural, fixed, and in need of protection. In many ways Donald Trump's presidential campaign was reflected in the concurrent Vote Leave campaign in UK, in the build up to the EU Referendum. As I discussed in the introduction to this thesis, Vote Leave's campaign slogan was 'Take Control', which included the desire to take back 'control' of the border – a desire which was ultimately attached to the idea that the UK's sovereignty was somehow under threat from the European Union and immigration from the European Union. The fiction of the border is deeply attached to the fiction of the nation-state, and in the end the criticisms I have directed towards the border as 'concrete abstraction' in this thesis must also be directed at the nation state as 'concrete abstraction'.

2. Borderlands

This thesis was an ethnographic study that focused on the Boaz Trust night shelters in Manchester, UK. A key part of this research was the time I spent living in the night shelters, alongside men whose asylum claims had been rejected and who had been rendered destitute as a result. Time in the shelter also became time on the street as I was able to spend days on the streets of Manchester with some of the men as they saw out each day, waiting for the shelters to open and close, whether by walking the streets or sitting in the Central Library or waiting in the

Friends Meeting House. It was during these moments that the crucial notion of the 'weaponisation of time' emerged in my research. The border had a temporal dimension through which the social stratifications of legal and social status took shape. Weaponised time was a bifurcated 'waiting' as men coped with the boredom attached to destitution and the need to see out each day without the right to work and therefore without money and without the prospects of full participation in society; while also and at the same time being subject to an antagonistic and often dysfunctional asylum claims process over the long term. Weaponised time was also the experience of temporal uncertainty as the men staying in the shelters could be subject to sudden changes of circumstances, sometimes moving to another city at short notice on account of the UK government's policy of dispersal. Time in the shelter could be as short as a single day, or last for multiple days, or weeks, or months, and to those living in the shelters it was often not clear how long their situation would last. Yet, as I argued in the final ethnographic chapter, arrival to and departure from the night shelters did not necessarily mean a change in legal status. Time in the shelter and time on the street were clouded with legal and temporal uncertainty. As Gloria Anzaldúa stated, the borderland is inhabited by the 'prohibited' and the 'forbidden', and those caught between being treated as criminals and being able to eat. If the 'borderland' is now everywhere, as I have argued, its expression often takes shape in the temporal differentiations produced by the border. These differentiations can easily go unnoticed in the day-to-day life of a city. The border can become visible or invisible, malign or benign, depending on who you are and your particular social-legal status. The immigration line is a fundamental part of social life, even if it isn't

always recognised. Part of the tragedy of the border is in its forms of concealment and that forms of social marginalisation can take place right alongside us, without necessarily confronting us.

3. Law and Justice Revisited

Much more needs to be said about this, and not least about how we might seek both to expose, but also challenge the ubiquitous inequities of the border, to bring in to relief the taken-for-granted 'enchanted ordinary' and strive for justice. In *The Three Burials of Malquiades Estrada* the murder of Estrada at the hands of the border guard Mike Norton confronted Pete Perkins with the tragedy of the border. It pushed the increasingly unstable Perkins to exhume the corpse of Estrada in order to repatriate him to Mexico, with the help of his hostage, Mike Norton. As the film progresses Perkins slowly comes to the realisation that Estrada has fabricated his personal history. The town of Jimenez doesn't exist, and the woman who Estrada carried a picture of in his wallet denies any knowledge of him. Together Mike Norton and Pete Perkins find a ruined stone cottage in rural northern Mexico and build a makeshift roof over the structure and then bury Estrada inside. They leave a sign reading 'Jimenez' at the door. Perkins provides Norton with a horse and the ranch hand and the border guard go their separate ways. The film *The Three Burials of Malquiades Estrada* was inspired, in part, by the 1997 death of the American student Esequiel Hernandez, who was shot dead by United States Marines while herding goats one mile from the Mexican-American

border. In this respect the film could be seen as a re-imagining of these events, where the violence of the border is re-worked as Pete Perkins forces Mike Norton – a representative figure of the authority of the border – to repatriate Estrada to Mexico.

Pete Perkins is a tragic figure in the classical meaning of the term. Perkins' personal actions while confronting the violence of the state border leave him in a state of legal ambiguity and uncertainty as he rides off into the sunset after releasing his hostage Mike Norton. In chapter 1 of this thesis I turned to the work of Gillian Rose, and in particular to her account of 'ethical life' that recognises the fundamental fractures of social life that we are situated in both institutionally and relationally. An important reference point for Rose, throughout her writings, is the tragic figure of Antigone. Antigone is central character of Sophocles' tragedy of the same name.⁶ In this ancient drama Antigone challenges the authority of Creon, King of Thebes, over the burial rites of her brother, Polynices, who has been declared a traitor following his death after waging war on the city in an attempt to seize power. While Creon orders the body of Polynices to be left unburied and unmourned on the outskirts of the city, Antigone insists on burying him. In Hegel's reading, which Rose draws upon, Antigone's action exposes a fundamental fracture within ancient Greek ethical life as Antigone positions the 'Divine Law' of kinship relations and burial rites against the 'Human Law' of the *polis*.⁷ For Rose, Antigone's actions against the 'current will of the city' serve to 'reinvent the political life of the community'.⁸ In her act of mourning for her brother, in Rose's

⁶ Sophocles, 'Antigone', in *The Theban Plays*, pp.126-162.

⁷ Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §444-476.

⁸ Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law*, p.35.

re-telling of the text, Antigone returns to the city, 'renewed and reinvigorated' and ready to negotiate and challenge the changing boundaries of the city, the relations between Divine and Human Law, and the nature of justice.⁹ For Rose, and as I have argued throughout this thesis, Antigone's search for justice reveals justice not as a transcendent ideal, but a socially embedded and speculative concept; an arduous and anxious work that is constantly revised and remoulded in everyday practice.

While dramatic figures such as Antigone and Pete Perkins provide accentuated examples of challenges to the borders and boundaries of the city or state, so throwing open our understanding of justice – albeit as speculative and always a work in progress – in to equally sharp relief, my research was set within the much more grounded but no less significant work of the Boaz Trust and its night shelter network. Here, I argued that while notions of 'Justice' and revolutionary Christian hope were key to the work of the Boaz Trust, providing organising principles around which the Trust's volunteers might seek to expose and press against the 'enchanted ordinary' and the tragedy of the border, here too these grand concepts were often put into practice in the most mundane ways. In fact, it is only through such apparently mundane, even banal everyday practices - examined here in the work of shelter volunteers, and the interactions between shelter volunteers and residents - that the taken for granted enchanted ordinary of the border may be challenged and the work of justice proceed, even as such practices

⁹ Ibid, p.36.

reveal the ambiguities and contradictions of 'spaces of asylum' and the fragile and, in the end always incomplete, nature of justice.

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Appendix: Interview Table

DATE	NAME(s) / Pseudonym	Position	ORGANISATION	LOCATION	RECORDED	LENGTH
12/03/2013		Chief Executive	Boaz Trust	Boaz Trust Offices	Yes	45.00 min
12/03/2013		Senior Case Worker	Boaz Trust	Boaz Trust Offices	Yes	55.26 min
12/03/2013		Treasurer/ Trustee	Boaz Trust	Boaz Trust Offices	Yes	45.12 min
12/03/2013		Project Manager	Boaz Trust	Boaz Trust Offices	Yes	59.51 min
5/04/2013	Dave Smith	Director/ Founder	Boaz Trust	Boaz Trust Offices	Yes	62.36 min
12/04/2013	'Leon'	Male Case Worker / Night Shelter Coordinator	Boaz Trust	Boaz Trust Offices	Yes	37.56 min
12/04/2013	'Temir' / 'Samar' / 'Samuel'	Night Shelter Users		Longsight Community Church	Yes	60.30 min
5/06/2013		General Manager	Barnabus / Beacon Centre	Beacon Centre	Yes	33.02 mins
10/06/2013	'Rita' / 'Lisa'	Volunteers	Longsight Community Church Night Shelter	Interviewee Residence	Yes	37.39 mins
30/06/2013	'Becky' / 'David' / 'Emma' / 'Glenn'	Volunteers	Longsight Community Church Night Shelter	Longsight Community Church	Yes	31.46 mins
02/07/2013	'Carlos'	Night Shelter Coordinator	Longsight Community Church	Café	Yes	32.40 mins
19/03/2014		Manager, One Stop Shop	Refugee Action, Manchester	Refugee Action Offices, Manchester	Yes	24.14 mis
5/08/2013	'Andy'	Volunteer	Longsight Community Church Night Shelter	Café	Yes	45.21 mins
5/06/2013		Volunteer / Client	Lesbian Immigration Support Group	Manchester Lesbian and Gay Federation Offices	No	
7/12/2013	'Joy'	Volunteer	Manchester International	Manchester International	Yes	28.42 mins

			Church of Christ Drop-in Centre	Church of Christ		
7/12/2013	'Peter'	Shelter Coordinator / Volunteer	Mount Chapel Night Shelter / Manchester International Church of Christ Drop-in Centre	Manchester International Church of Christ	Yes	18.45 mins
5/12/2013	'Victor'	Night Shelter User		Royal Exchange Theatre	Yes	43.20 mins
06/08/2013	'Kate'	Volunteer	Longsight Community Church of the Nazarene Night Shelter	Interviewee workplace	Yes	37.25 mins
27/03/2014		NSNOM Coordinator	No Second Night Out Manchester, Riverside	NSNOM Riverside offices	Yes	32.42 mins
26/03/2014		Just Life Assistant Centre Manager	Just Life Openshaw	Just Life Openshaw offices	Yes	37.30 mins
22/10/2015		Heritage Access Manager / Interim Customer Service Manager	Manchester Central Library	Manchester Central Library Café	Yes	24.15 mins
13/03/2014		Night Shelter Coordinator	Boaz Trust	Boaz Trust Offices	Yes	38.24 mins
13/03/2014		Housing Support Manager	Boaz Trust	Boaz Trust Offices	Yes	35.46 mins
13/03/2014		Office and Volunteer Manager	Boaz Trust	Boaz Trust Offices	Yes	26.34 mins
14/03/2014		Freedom Team Manager	Mustard Tree	Mustard Tree Offices	Yes	34.51 mins
05/06/2013		North West Regional Strategic Migration	Manchester City Council	Manchester Town Hall Extension	No	

		Partnership / Asylum, Refugee and Migration Services				
1/08/2013		Project Team Manager	Multi-Agency Refugee Integration in Manchester	MARIM Offices	No	
05/03/2014		Director	Lalley Centre Manchester	Lalley Centre	No	
06/03/2014		Volunteer	Salford Loaves and Fishes Drop-in Centre	Loaves and Fishes Drop-in Centre	No	
13/03/2014		Employee	Rainbow Haven Drop-in, Gorton, Manchester	Rainbow Haven Drop-In Centre	No	