

**Reimagining Masculinity in South Africa:
The “Blurring Line” Between Homosexuality and Male Rape in Prison**

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For more than two decades after the apartheid, South Africa has been navigating its world of what it means to be a newly born democratic nation. Nelson Mandela, as the first president of apartheid-free South Africa, persistently negotiated with all the fractured realities of the people in the country: racial segregation, gender discrimination, wealth disparity, and political tension. He hoped to rebuild South Africa with the belief of non-racialism, leaving every shadow of the Calvinist dictatorship behind. However, this does not mean that the legacy of violence done by the apartheid is entirely erased from the lives of the people. Racial discrimination is still an issue, and it is manifested in the genetic passage of PTSD and families facing cyclical poverty, immense cultural rifts, and language barriers. While reimagining itself in the new chapter of “Rainbow Nation,” South Africa also needs to reimagine its masculinity. With democracy, the nation took a giant step in ensuring the equality of the queer community. During the apartheid, the government discriminated against homosexuality and punished same-sex relationships. Years later, under the Civil Unions Act in 2006, South Africa became the first and only country in the African continent today that has legalized same-sex marriage. This humanitarian strive for equality demonstrates the efficiency of the country in recovering itself after a long period of violence. The toleration of queer sexuality symbolizes the liberation and modernization of the nation. Nevertheless, there remains an unfortunate truth about homosexuality in South Africa. To the world, South Africa is glorious and open, being the fifth nation to legislate same-sex marriage in the constitution globally. South Africans who are identified as queer or homosexual, they feel trapped by the masked freedom the world perceives of the country. Homosexuality is still institutionalized and framed negatively. In enclosed facilities, specifically prisons, homosexuality is understood as a violent and sexual identity. Behind the bars, men are raped by their inmates and forced to commit in sexual acts. Due to this representation, outsiders associate

homosexuality with violence and sex, reinforcing the discrimination against the people. Consequently, the issue leaves a blurring line between homosexuality and prison male rape in South Africa.

The legalization of same-sex marriage in 2006 enforces the South African nationalism as an accepting nation. At the same time, it raises the question about homosexuality, whether the sexual identity is an influence of Western culture or ideology. The discourse specifically ponders the question whether homosexuality is “African” or “unAfrican”—meaning imported from the Western culture through colonialism and imperialism. “Historical and anthropological literature even by African scholars shows that homosexuality existed in Africa prior to the colonial encounter.”¹ However, native people of Africa have never seen homosexuality as a label or category that is perceived by Europeans. People “who describe homosexuality as “Western” are unaware of its historical demonization, pathologization, and medicalization, which rendered it a subject of psychiatry in Western societies.”² Under the apartheid government, homosexuality is a crime. Different bodies of the institution, including churches, schools, prisons, hospitals, and households pathologized queer identity as a commitment of sin, crime, and mental illness. For pre-colonial Africa, however, the native people of the Continent understood homosexuality in regards to the way of living—an integral part of sustaining their cultures, traditions, and the connections between people in various tribes and communities.³ For instance, in the case of

¹ Jaji, Rose. “Homosexuality: ‘Unafrianness’ and Vulnerability.” Zimbabwe, University of Zimbabwe, (2017), 2.

² Ibid.

³ See Rose. “Homosexuality: ‘Unafrianness’ and Vulnerability,” 3. Homosexuality in pre-colonial Africa served an endless amount of function of a society. It is even beyond the religious and spiritual purposes not to mean the age-structure, erotic pleasure, and medicinal and economic purposes. “What mattered about homosexuality was not the act itself but its rationale. Homosexuality existed in the military Azande state of South Sudan in the form of age-differentiated sexual relations among warriors [...] Visual evidence of homosexuality in Zimbabwe is provided by an explicit Khoisan painting of homosexual intimacy in addition to “oral traditions” or customary “cures” and “punishments.”

izangoma, *izinyanga*, and other traditional healers present in Africa, “homosexual relations carry some spiritual and religious significance.”⁴ Therefore, the categorization of queer identity is undeniably an experience of colonialism. To explain in a more comprehensible manner, the people of Africa see homosexuality as “adjectives rather than nouns.”⁵ Returning to the main question about “African-ness” and “unAfrican-ness” on homosexuality, it is evident that the identity existed in Africa before the invasion of Western ideology that changed it into a category. In addition, the term “homosexuality” is a European invention embedded with a specific perception and definition. “Homosexuality is not something one often hears people talking about, to such an extent that there is no known term directly referring to it.”⁶ The explanation of the terminology here reiterates on queer and homosexual relations as an “adjective,” describing the way of life of the people in Africa. The nonexistence of a set term for homosexual relations reveals that African communities accept, recognize, and accommodate homosexuality.⁷ Through historical awareness, the proof of homosexuality in Africa prior colonialism discredits the power of Western influence. Africa was already at a state of acceptance and integration of same-sex interactions long before the label and categorization by the colonizers.

In discussing homosexuality in the African continent, the rejection of “unAfrican-ess” on the queer identity is a misleading concept. Although same-sex relation is present during pre-colonial Africa, the claim of the identity as “African” further projects the specific image of the people living in the Continent. This is a familiar manner done by colonial domination in

⁴ Dlamini, Busangokwakhe. “Homosexuality in the African context.” *Agenda* 20, no. 67 (2006), 129.

⁵ Busangokwakhe. “Homosexuality in the African context,” 130.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 128

⁷ While writing this research paper, I discovered the language barrier in searching for a multitude of dictions or terms that are synonymous to “homosexuality”. Therefore, throughout the entire research, I will use the term “homosexuality” excessively because it appears the most accurate. However, terms and phrases, such as “same-sex,” “homosexual,” “queer,” and “gay” are used interchangeably as well to describe relationships, interactions, contacts, and identities related to homosexuality.

which it categorizes, exoticizes, and otherizes cultures and people that are different from the European world. Since the Continent had gone through the Western forced control, it is implausible for only investigating sexual identity and relation as an “African” culture. Addressing colonial history is equally important because pre-colonial Africa is not the only part of the history alone. That says, homosexuality in Africa is also “unAfrican.”⁸ Looking into South Africa, the Western dominance in the country is demonstrated by the apartheid government. The Afrikaner Broederbond,⁹ with an exclusive Calvinist mindset, inflicted an unimaginable amount of pressure on queer people in the country. “The apartheid regime, as an extension of the colonial state, uses classification and naming as a means through which to deny humanity and citizenship.”¹⁰ Particularly, the issue of labeling of distinct sexual identities expresses that queer community does not have an acceptable place in the society of South Africa. Sex, gender, and sexuality were regulated and institutionalized by different branches of the government body. “Western construction of homosexuality is strongly tied to a politicization of sexuality which constructs the homosexual as pathological to the rest of heteronormative society.”¹¹ The issue of label construction on homosexuality here in South Africa supports the French philosopher

⁸ The terms “unAfrican,” “unAfricanness,” and “unAfrican-ess” obtains identical meaning and context in the research. To clarify my point here further, I believe that discussing homosexuality as “African” during the pre-colonial era is not sufficient. It is a manner that rejects the colonial history that existed on the Continent. Ultimately, what I mean is that homosexuality in Africa is an “unAfrican” concept as well because of that colonial history. Therefore, it is necessary to address the western influence on sexuality in Africa because at the end, it is an “African” concept as well.

⁹ Broederbond is an Afrikaans word that means “Brother bond.”

¹⁰ Fortuin, Bernard Nolen. “Institutionalised homosexuality in South Africa: Queering same-sex desire.” PhD diss., Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University, (2015), 13.

¹¹ Fortuin, Bernard Nolen. “Institutionalised homosexuality in South Africa: Queering same-sex desire,” 14. The apartheid is an extension of European colonization in South Africa.

Michel Foucault's¹² ideology of "biopower" and "biopolitics."¹³ In a capitalistic society like South Africa where there is racial segregation, the utilization of biopower to administer the population is essential. Foucault illuminates that, it is to ensure "the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic process."¹⁴ The "machinery of production" refers to the multitude of institutions (family, schools, hospitals, churches, etc.) that help to achieve the goal or "phenomena" of a society. For the apartheid government, that is the establishment of a heteronormative society: the patriarchy. In the 1980s, there was a military obligation called "The South African Defence Force" or SADF. It was a mandatory duty for every white South African man above the age of 18 to be trained with a horrendous reality as soldiers and ultimately fought the Border War.¹⁵ In 1948, to "unify" the apartheid constitution, the Dutch Reformed Church reverend D. F. Malan criminalized sodomy.¹⁶ A few years later, in the 1950s, there was a "homophobic youth subculture of violent "moffie-bashing"¹⁷ emerged in South African cities. Homophobia was not

¹² Michel Foucault's concept is relevant here because his work is entirely Eurocentric, which means it applies to the investigation of homosexuality in South Africa. As stated in the footnote above, apartheid is an extension of European control of South Africa. Therefore, Foucault's notions of "biopower" and "biopolitics" is a crucial component to the understanding of institutionalized systems in South Africa on the queer community.

¹³ Foucault, Michel. "The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Volume I." *Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage 95* (1990), 141

¹⁴ See Michel. "The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Volume I," 141. "The rudiments of anatomo- and bio-politics [...] present at every level of the social body and [are] utilized by very diverse institutions (the family and the army, schools and the police, individual medicine and administration of collective bodies) [...]"

¹⁵ Van der Merwe, André Carl. *Moffie. Europa Editions UK*, 2012. This is a novel, written by André Carl Van der Merwe, a South African author, that follows the story of a boy named Nicholas whose conscription to the SADF in 1981 leads him into the deep void of oppressive reality in the military during the Apartheid. Nicholas is a White South African who grew up in Stellenbosch. He is identified as gay. The novel contributes to a major discussion of how the Apartheid government treats their homosexual citizens and at the same explains the different reality that white gay men live in South Africa compared to the men from other racial identities.

¹⁶ Bernard Nolen. "Institutionalised homosexuality in South Africa: Queering same-sex desire," 25.

¹⁷ "Moffie" is an offensive and derogatory slang in South Africa that means "an effeminate or homosexual man."

limited to white communities. Homosexuality was openly discussed and portrayed as disgraceful and evil. In addition, homosexuality was and still is associated with mental disorder or illness. The people who are found with “symptoms” must be sent to psychiatric hospitals or mental asylums.¹⁸ These are the examples for the definition of Foucault’s “biopower” and “biopolitics.” The strategic regulations of homosexuality were done via diverse institutions. In conclusion, same-sex relationship and identity is applied to both “African-ess” and “unAfrican-ess.” South Africa, as a country in Africa, embodies the understanding of homosexuality as a way of life and the repressive sexual identity constructed by the apartheid.

The investigation of queer identity in South Africa unfolds a more shameful reality. Prison, often forgotten, is another extension of the apartheid’s regime in condemning homosexuality. “Prison is an important location for the production of ideas about homosexuality”¹⁹ “It is an observation further affirmed by the fact that the prison functions as a dominant theme in gay erotica.”²⁰ The term “erotica” shows that homosexuality is associated with sexual activities, but it is specifically perceived with “gay” or male-male sexual interaction. Unfortunately, there is an assumed connection between same-sex identity and sex in prison. The discourses on prison sex and sexual violence then become “a blurring [that] occurs between ‘homosexuality’ and ‘male rape’.”²¹ The association between a sexual identity and sexual

¹⁸ Duiker, K. Sello. *The Quiet Violence Of Dreams*. Kwela Books, 2001. It is a novel that unfolds the journey of a young, black, South African boy named Tshepo. His journey is about coming to an understanding of his sexuality through his trauma. The story sets in the post-apartheid era and specially follows the experience of black, queer homosexuality, which contrasts the novel Moffie mentioned previously, which is solely about white same-sex identity. Tshepo, besides being a character in the novel, is also a representation of contemporary South Africa, who remains evolving and trying to understand themselves after the Apartheid. Tshepo was in the mental health hospital called “Valkenburg.” His queerness and homosexuality are diagnosed with “cannabis induced psychosis.”

¹⁹ Munro, Brenna M. *South Africa and the Dream of Love to Come: Queer Sexuality and the Struggle for Freedom*. U of Minnesota Press, 2012, xxxvi

²⁰ Bernard Nolen. “Institutionalised homosexuality in South Africa: Queering same-sex desire,” 11.

²¹ Gear, Sasha. “Behind the bars of masculinity: Male rape and homophobia in and about South African men's prisons.” *Sexualities* 10, no. 2 (2007), 209.

violence induces a severe damage to queer community in South Africa, being targeted and labeled as “rapists.” Simultaneously, the victims of prison rape are silent due to the discrimination of homosexuality that is linked with the violence. In 2005, the topic of sex in prison erupted in the country. It occurred when the Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, known as “the prison watchdog body,” and the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) did not criminalize rapes in men’s prison.²² The constitutional decision ruffled the public's attention and resulted in a public disagreement. The opposition believed that the tolerance of male sex in prison would proliferate the violence and numbers of crime in South Africa. Clearly, this reason amplifies the oppressive view on and fear of homosexuality that is deemed as vicious and sexual. With a slightly different view for opposition, the other perspective is the worry that the tolerance of male-sex in prison would weaken the purpose of imprisonment. A certain population of South Africans believes incarcerated life should be as open and free as the outside world. The conjoined reality between homosexual identity and male sex in prison presents the brutality of the South African government. By permitting the “consensual” sex between a man and another man in jail, the government fails to recognize the violence of prison sex. The rape in the incarceration is masked by the term “consensual.” Consequently, the victims remain silent for the damage that is done to them.

Male prisons in South Africa consist of a vast population of gangsters. Gang prisoners commit male rapes in prison. In gangsterism, there is an established hierarchy among the inmates. Within that establishment, violence is inevitable. “Prisoners sought to gain some control over their lives through their membership of prison gangs such as the Big Five, 26, 28 and Air

²² Sasha. “Behind the bars of masculinity: Male rape and homophobia in and about South African men's prisons,” 211.

Force.”²³ In a singular cell, gang members from distinguished gang groups are placed together. Competitions and exertion of masculine dominance occurs among the inmates. However, the core of the hierarchy between the gang prisoners presents a “comradeship,” which is “both a mode of collective resistance and a form of attachment between men.”²⁴ The “attachment between men” is not far different from the masculine ideology of a brotherhood in the white community in South Africa—relating to “Afrikaner Broederbond.” Underlying the comradeship, heteronormativity and patriarchy is structured among the gang members in prison cells. The nature of heteronormative masculinity is rooted in domination and oppression on women. It justifies the main issue South Africa is dealing contemporarily: the severe reality of gender-based violence and femicide. In parallel, the violent masculinity justifies the male rape in jails.

“Prisoners distinguish between consensual and coercive sex. Consensual sex was preceded by a proposal and normally took place within the framework of a formal relationship between a dominant *lebosa* (“the he one”) and a subordinate *picanini* (“boy”) or *mfana wa misa* (“boy wife”). Our interviewees’ estimates about the frequency of these relations vary from three men in a cell of twenty who kept juvenile wives, to two husbands and six wives in a cell of sixteen. Sexual partners were nearly always members of the same gang. They had sex within an enclosure in the cell, made from blankets and sheets (*madia dia*). But in the case of short-term liaisons the husband proposed to the boy in the quad, offered him a gift, and they then had sex at the end of the passage where nobody could see them.”²⁵

²³ Niehaus, Isak. “Renegotiating masculinity in the South African Lowveld: narratives of male-male sex in labour compounds and in prisons.” *African Studies* 61, no. 1 (2002), 89.

²⁴ Bernard Nolen. “Institutionalised homosexuality in South Africa: Queering same-sex desire,” 11. The comradeship among the gang members, who are black and “colored,” recalls the resemblance to the brotherhood in the military among white men in South Africa.

²⁵ Isak. “Renegotiating masculinity in the South African Lowveld: narratives of male-male sex in labour compounds and in prisons,” 91.

“Coercive sex or rape (*go kata*, “to push down”) was extremely pervasive. Bekker Malinga, a warden at the Baberton prison, sexually assaulted boys in the showers and gave them cigarettes or R10 not to report him to the authorities. Gang members frequently raped newcomers as a form of initiation.”²⁶

The system of a gang society in prison is known as the “dominant inmate culture.”²⁷ The heteronormative and patriarchal structure that existed in prison comes with the labeling system of a “boy wife” or a “wyfie.” Even though the relationship is men-to-men, the gender re-arrangement of male prisoners (turned into a wife) by the “husbands” imitates a heterosexual relationship structure. Specifically, the relationship follows a “longer-term relationship known as “marriages” [in which it is] the “correct” place for sex to occur.”²⁸ In a consensual sex,²⁹ the “wives” must perform their duty as a traditionally perceived woman, such as washing the husband’s clothes, sweeping the cell, and preparing food given by the warden. However, in coercive sex is regarded as an act of rape. Interestingly, rape is a mechanism for subordinating the targeted men into “woman.” First, particularly the new offender “accepts food, drugs or protection from another prisoner. [...] This then creates a debt, which he [the offender] will be expected to ‘repay’ with sex.”³⁰ Overall, both consensual and coercive sexes are rape. In the

²⁶ Ibid., 92.

²⁷ Sasha. “Behind the bars of masculinity: Male rape and homophobia in and about South African men's prisons,” 216.

²⁸ Ibid., 217.

²⁹ See Jina, R., M. Machisa, G. Labuschagne, L. Vetten, L. Loots, and R. Jewkes. “Unspoken victims: A national study of male rape incidents and police investigations in South Africa.” *South African Medical Journal* 110, no. 9 (2020), 927. The author says that, “Rape refers to the definition of rape in the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 as ‘an act of sexual penetration of a victim, without their consent’. This includes someone inserting their genital organ into the mouth, anus or genital organs of a victim; inserting a part of someone’s body, such as a finger, into the anus or genital organs of the victim; inserting any object, such as a stick or a bottle, into the anus or genital organs of the victim; or inserting genital organs of an animal into the mouth of the victim.” In other terms, this is a limited understanding of rape by the definition: focusing on penetration. Rape is not only about penetration since male victims in prison experienced rape from “thigh fuck,” for instance.

³⁰ Sasha. “Behind the bars of masculinity: Male rape and homophobia in and about South African men's prisons,” 217.

prison cell, the fear of being killed, violence, and abuse are inevitable. To survive, the targeted and “weak” inmates must conform to that hierarchical system created by the gang leaders in the prison. This is the truth behind the bars in South Africa. Homosexuality is confused with male in prison. There wasn't consent, attraction, or romance but force, rage, and violence between incarcerated men.

The prison-rape victims discover that the alteration of their gender by the rapists is an emasculation. The victims believe that they are no longer men after being raped. As a result, “the sense of demolished masculinity and imposed ‘womanhood’ is central to the immense stigma and shame that keeps most victims suffering in silence.”³¹ One reason is that since women are perceived to be vulnerable, which is assumed for a weak and feminine characteristic of a woman, the victims do not come out to speak about their experience. They are afraid to be further labeled as ‘women’ and be seen as a homosexual person.³² In addition, being turned into “women,” the victims understand rape in prison as a condemnation of their masculinity and manhood. It further proves their silence because society expects them to be invulnerable—the quality of a man. Unfortunately, from being abandoned in the silence and trauma, the victims must dwell in a world of confusion, experiencing identity crisis. They are in a discontinuous and ambiguous state of mind and position. Prison-rape survivors question their identity, feeling the indecision about their gender, whether they are a woman or a man. However, it is important to emphasize that not all the male-rape victims identify themselves as gay or homosexual. This clarification is applied to the perpetrators as well, not every rapist is gay or queer. Evidently, the heteronormative hierarchy in the cell exposes that the gang prisoners, especially the rapists, are heterosexual. In fact, before their incarceration, they have not been in any same-sex interactions or contacts.

³¹ Ibid., 216.

³² It is because the title “wyfie” is rooted in the terms “wife” and “moffie,” which mean there is an association of homosexual men with women's vulnerability.

“Some talk about ‘victims’ of homosexuality and people going into prison ‘afraid of homosexuality’ when it is clear that what they are afraid of is being forced into unwanted sex.”³³ This explains that homosexuality, from the outsider’s perspective, is all about sex and violence when homosexuality is only a sexual identity.

In addition to rape and abuse in prison being associated with homosexuality, gangsterism is another aspect that the South African society links with same-sex identity. Given the perpetrators of rape are gangsters, it is an opportunity for the government institutions to negatively frame the image of the gang communities with homosexuality. There was a case in South Africa, where posters of gang prisoners were posted publicly by the “Never Drink and Drive” campaign called Diageo Drive Dry Initiative.³⁴ On those posters, groups of gangsters—with tattoos, tanned skin, and prisoner uniforms—stare at the audience directly in the eyes. They sit and stand in the police cars and prison cells. There were also phrases and questions that suggest eroticism and sex. For examples, “Who’s Driving You Home Tonight?”; “They’d Love to Meet You.”; “They’d Love to Show You a Good Time.”³⁵ The campaign reveals how systematic the South African institution is in discriminating homosexuality in the country. Prison, gangsterism, rape, sex, and violence are the narratives and labels that the sexual identity is categorized with. For victims, those labels leave a wounded experience in which there isn’t a space for them to express.

At this point of the research, searching for solutions to prevent further misunderstanding between homosexuality and male rape prison is necessary. Equally, finding answers that would seek justice for the victims is extremely important. Behind the bars, male victims of rape themselves resist the violence inflicted on them. One way is the practice called “*ushintsha*

³³ Ibid., 215.

³⁴ See the official website: <https://www.drinkiq.com/en-za/> <https://www.facebook.com/Drivedry/>.

³⁵ There is also a video commercial released on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/4N8pNq1Mav0>.

ipondo,” which means “an equal exchange of sex for sex.”³⁶ There is a mutual agreement between participants to penetrate and receive; therefore, it is consensual. This practice disrupts the dominant-inmate system in the prison, where there is only a single gender identity. In other terms, the “husbands” are the penetrators, and the “wyfies” are being penetrated only. The prisoners who are involved in *ushintsha ipondo* express, “you do not know who is the husband and who’s the wife.”³⁷ This demonstrates a deviant behavior to the patriarchal structure in the cell. In a way, it is an offensive act to heteronormative men because their view of sex is entirely non-consensual and abusive. For *ushintsha ipondo*, it is a mutual participation. However, the downfall for victims to seek resistance is unavoidable. The patriarchy in the cell is extremely dominant in which the male victims feel extremely defeated. Instead, they want to “reclaim” their manhood that is stripped away from them during the rape: re-arrangement of their genders and penetration (strongly associated with a woman).

“Psychologists and rape counselors believe that the pent-up rage caused by these assaults can cause victims, especially if they don’t receive psychological treatment, to erupt in violence once they return to their communities. Some will become rapists, seeking to ‘regain their manhood’ through the same violent means by which they believe it was lost.”³⁸

As commonly stated, violence begets violence. To gain their manhood again, the victims become the perpetrators themselves, raping other women to claim the masculine power that was lost in the prison. Besides, they stab or kill their inmates in the cell to manifest the violent and “manly” competence. This is the unfortunate reality of victims of male rape while dealing with the

³⁶ Sasha. “Behind the bars of masculinity: Male rape and homophobia in and about South African men's prisons,” 220.

³⁷ Ibid., 220.

³⁸ Ibid., 221.

pressure of false perception of their sexual identity—seen as gay men—that is placed on them. Therefore, what are the solutions?

The answers to the blurring line between queer identity and prison rape remain as a question mark in South Africa. Nevertheless, previous attempts that focus on victimhood fail to address the victim's trauma and erase the false narratives surrounding homosexuality. "Sexual victimization regularly [takes] place in a framework of 'normal' gendered institutions. It has been argued that 'marriages' serve to obscure the abuse they contain."³⁹ This means that by paying attention to the male rape survivors, the view on women and "wyfies" as "victims" of gender-based violence and rape continues to perpetuate and normalize. It is like seeing "the husbands" in prison the same as husbands who are outside. Furthermore, in South African society, men are not yet accepted to be vulnerable. Therefore, the "wyfies" are afraid to expose their rape experience because the societal expectation of being a man. The victims must live in a duality: to be seen as homosexual because of being raped by another man and to be seen as a man because he is only a "wyfie"—not a "complete" woman.

It has not been a long time since South Africa started its democracy. The nation still searches itself every day. Since 1994, every leader and agent of the South African society has been devoting themselves to transform the country, making their home rehabilitable again for every citizen. The humanitarian crisis in South Africa amidst its democratic journey reveals a worrisome reality. Does South Africa live truly to the labels it obtains as a "nation-building," "free," "non-racial," "democratic," and "rainbow" nation. Leaving aside the romanticization, the answer is no. This research unfolds a hidden world in the country, where queer community is being repressed by the country's institution: prison. Male rape in jail is highly promoted and associated with homosexuality. It is even more detrimental that homosexuality is linked with

³⁹ Ibid., 222.

gangsters since they make up a massive size of the prison population. This is the story behind the mask of the first nation in South Africa to legalize same-sex marriage. Therefore, in settling the confusion surrounding same-sex sexuality, solutions are mandatory to ensure the quality of living for homosexual South Africans. It has been only more than twenty years since the end of apartheid; South Africa still dwells in the reimagination of itself. This means ensuring the equality of homosexuality remains as a challenge. What is the ideal way to clear that “blurring line?” In the most hopeless tone yet open to possibilities, it is acceptable that South Africa does not know the answer. Perhaps, the solution is what the future holds for South Africa and the country’s queer community.

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