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Holding Space: Friendship, Care and Carcerality in the UK Immigration Detention System

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Declaration of own work

This is to certify that the work contained within has been composed by me and is entirely my own work. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

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Abstract

Friendship and care are important as ideas and practices for people navigating the asylum and immigration system in Britain, but are conditioned by the carceral space of the Immigration Removal Centre (IRC). Detention, as it most commonly known, operates here as a legal, temporal, and social 'holding space' that is manifested in the physical walls of the IRC, but points to wider experiences of liminality and carcerality. Based on 12 months' of fieldwork with people going through the asylum system in Glasgow, along with several years of campaigning and organising, this thesis explores how people work through their 'detainability' and the relationships they form and maintain during this time, moving from the IRC itself, through people's homes and into the wider 'asylum dispersal' city. Here, friendship and care are drawn upon as vital, if contested, categories for understanding relatedness, solidarity, and political action, ranging from the codified 'humanitarian kinship' of detention visiting groups, to the informal support practices people enact every day. Such processes are interwoven with deeply racialized and colonial histories of immigration law and border enforcement, which produce particular categories and spaces of 'inside' and 'out'. Moving between the thresholds of such spaces can involve trying to discern what or who the Home Office and state are in ways that are charged with the threat of complicity, along with navigating medicalised notions of vulnerability and complex ideas of work and labour. Throughout, people 'hold space' for each other in different ways, finding collective ways to resist, refuse and live, beyond the crushing embrace of the UK immigration system.

Lay Summary

Friendship and care are important as ideas and practices for people navigating the asylum and immigration system in Britain, but are conditioned by the space of the Immigration Removal Centre (IRC). Detention, as it most commonly known, operates here as a legal, temporal, and social 'holding space' that is manifested in the physical walls of the IRC. These spaces are 'carceral' in the sense that they incarcerate people and are often materially akin to a prison, but operate through different processes, for instance in that people are held 'indefinitely', pending removal or release. Based on 12 months' of fieldwork with people going through the asylum system in Glasgow, along with several years of campaigning and organising against detention, this thesis explores how people work through their 'detainability' and the relationships they form and maintain during this time. The thesis moves from analysing the IRC itself, to looking at experiences of making a home after a release, and how detention manifests within the wider 'asylum dispersal' city. Here, friendship and care are drawn upon as vital, if contested, categories for understanding relatedness, solidarity, and political action, ranging from the codified 'humanitarian kinship' of detention visiting groups, to the informal support practices people enact every day. Such processes are interwoven with deeply racialized and colonial histories of immigration law and border enforcement, which produce particular categories and spaces of 'inside' and 'out'. Moving between the thresholds of such spaces can involve trying to discern what or who the Home Office and state are in ways that are charged with the threat of complicity, along with navigating medicalised notions of vulnerability and complex ideas of work and labour. Throughout, people 'hold space' for each other in different ways, finding collective ways to resist, refuse and live, beyond the crushing embrace of the UK immigration system.

Dedicated to Ibrahim

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Acknowledgements

I found myself worrying about this section at various times during my writing up, anxious about the impossibility of really acknowledging everyone who makes a project like this possible, and the clichés we turn to that express this problem. However, in happier moments I found myself running through lists of names in my mind feeling full of appreciation and thanks, in what I think some of my hippier friends would call a 'ritual of gratitude'. This reminded me of the Douglas Gordon art piece at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, which is just several walls (on the way down to the toilets!) covered with a list of names of every person he can remember meeting in his life. I hope these acknowledgements don't feel too much like such an exercise in listing, and that, despite the amount of names below (which I chose to keep without surnames for various reasons), people get a sense of how thankful and grateful I am to have had them around during this time.

Everything that follows in this thesis comes from involvement in struggles with friends from Unity, No Evictions Network & We Will Rise, so I wanted to start by acknowledging that, along with groups such as Docs Not Cops, Migrants Organise for Rights and Empowerment, Living Rent and the Participant Action Research Group. I hope I've done justice to some of the ideas we have all shared through these groups, and I have so much love and gratitude for everyone involved: Yvonne, Bashir, Babu, Bethan, Holly, Fenella, Alaa, Sanna, Kidist, Shazia, Aleena, Alex, Alieu, Ana, Sushma, Muhammad, Abid, Adeola, Lucy, Phe, Etzali, Lou, Smina, Lewis, Lotte, Hashim, Irial, Fiona, Safiya, Ise, Hannah, Leah, Lena, Aniela, Martha, Cadi, Sean, Sylvia, Simon, Leo, Neil, Bechaela, Dania, Ali, Lizzie, Mahmoud, Mark, Percy, Pinar, Sarah B, Savan, Sophie K, Soran, Yinka, Zoe, Virgine, Anna, Giscard, Isabella, Sam, Bola, Mary, Meno, Tilly, Tinu, Solomon, Patrice, Ishmael, and Joyce.

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Figure 1: Balloons at a protest at Dungavel IRC, 2017

Introduction

Vicarious Strength

"We use the word friend here. Not client, or service user. Not asylum seeker, or refugee. We try to say friend."

These words echo round my head as I go to meet Alyssa, at her favourite church café in town, on my first 'official' day of fieldwork.

This idea of the 'friend' had initially been explained to me in such terms years ago, as a new volunteer at a training session at the Unity Centre, an autonomously run drop-in space for people in the asylum and immigration system in Glasgow.

The words had stuck with me ever since, and I am keen to ask Alyssa - always a font of wisdom, humour and frankness - what she thinks about focusing on the topic. I float the question as our bowls of soup arrive, 'what does this idea of friendship mean to you?' 'Is it an important thing to look at?'

She thinks for a moment, taking a sip from a steaming mug of hot water and lemon, before she speaks:

> You know, in Yarlswood [an Immigration Removal Centre, in England], I didn't know about the Unity Centre. But without fail twice a week I'd get a call from them. I didn't know these people. I can say that. They would ask: 'How am I? How are things?' They listened to what I had to say. For me, that was important. People from Church would call too, and come to visit.
>
> So you know for me friendship means strength in the struggle, but vicariously. Vicarious support. If [you are inside and] two people get deported, nobody has any strength at all. But if we are outside, we are here, we are caring, you get … I don't know what to call it … like … vicarious strength?
>
> Does that make sense? There are times when you are lying there, and you are just lost. And that support encourages you, and you encourage other people, and there is a domino effect.
>
> In Yarlswood, I didn't know these people, but I could remember names. Laura, Diane, Patrick. Another woman, every time she calls Unity, to this day: "How is my friend Patrick?" she asks – she's never met Patrick!" *She laughs.* "That is the value of friendship!

Because, you know, sometimes we are coming from countries, with legacies of colonialism, capitalism, everything – that mean we cannot share things, cannot be ourselves. And at Unity, when these people see my file, or see my monthly report or whatever, they are seeing things about me that even my family don't know. But nobody judges nobody.

Friendship is being there for me, for people, not judging, not …. What's the word … taking away their autonomy - is deautonomizing a word?!

She laughs, loudly, before quickly turning back to a tone of serious reflection.

It is two people walking together on this journey, if I laugh you laugh, if I sit and rest you sit and rest, if I'm sad we are sad together.

[it's also about not forgetting] the importance of hanging out, at people's houses, talking rubbish! To be outside all that – we chat, we laugh. It has to be natural. You have to have a love for humanity, as opposed to it becoming a cause.

This person has become part of you.

***

This thesis is an attempt to hold onto Alyssa's ideas - and words like 'friendship', 'care' and 'solidarity' – to consider what they mean to people within the 'holding spaces' of British immigration control. I've spent a lot of time in the years since I first got involved with the Unity Centre trying to think through such ideas, charged as they are with ethical, political and relational weight. 'Friendship' was a question of political and ethical commitment, linking to the anarchist, anti-racist and 'no borders' ideals that animated places like Unity, but 'the friend' somehow seemed easier to grasp than overt political rhetoric: 'friendship' was here both prescriptive and open. This was always infused with active practices of befriending, of trying to meet the horrors of the world together, through the kind of 'vicarious strength' Alyssa describes. Such thinking, and friendships, are what led me to this PhD project, with a sense that to 'theorise' friendship academically was in some way a disservice to the ethos and processes encapsulated in such a collective attempt at relational levelling and mutuality. But that perhaps, it was still worth trying. As Alyssa asked me later during that café meal: "Can we professionalise this? That would be my question. Befriending? Can you pay for it? I think not." What she partly meant was, can *you* professionalise this, can you open up my words within an academic context, hold relationships with those people anthropologists like to call 'interlocutors', and not lose such

meanings. Because interpretation and academic professionalization involves a loss of certain meaning, whether we like it or not: to some degree, all emphases are partial eclipses.

The context for this thesis is the system of racialized violence that is the British asylum and immigration system, with a focus on spaces of detention and confinement, understood in broad terms but shaped by the particular material forms and techniques of control encapsulated by the Immigration Removal Centre (IRC). My friendship with Alyssa was formed through opposition to this system, through protests at Dungavel IRC, the only detention centre in Scotland, and support for people inside the system. These are places in which people like Alyssa are held, under the pretence of 'facilitating a removal' or establishing someone's identity and grounds for asylum, for indefinite periods of time. They are places of pain, isolation, trauma, racism and death, often situated 'out of sight' and near airports, at the edge-lands of large cities. But these are also places where people manage to sustain and form practices of care, friendship, mutual aid and political resistance, where recent strangers can become closest confidants, distant figures at the end of a phone line know "things about me that even my family don't know", and friendships forged within knotty "legacies of colonialism, capitalism, everything," can point to life 'outside' the barbed wire, and structures that sustain it.

I aim to show how immigration law and border enforcement is interwoven with such histories, and is deeply racialized and 'productive' (De Noronha, 2020: 25; Anderson, 2013: 2-3), with people experiencing their position in this system through particular spaces and relationships, often understood through notions of 'inside' and 'outside'. Borders, and the specific 'holding space' of detention, 'hold' but also 'mould' people's lives, despite being presented as neutral and timeless: as some kind of benign legal sorting mechanism. As Anderson, Sharma, & Wright (2009: 6) argue:

> While they are presented as filters, sorting people into desirable and non-desirable, skilled and unskilled, genuine and bogus, worker, wife, refuge, etc., national borders are better analysed as moulds, as attempts to create certain types of subjects and subjectivities. Thus borders and productive and generative. They place people in new types of power relations with others and they impart particular kinds of subjectivities.

Attending to the spaces in which such 'moulds' operate most acutely can help us learn about the kinds of subjectivities, narratives and concepts such systems helps produce, with

bordering always involving a historically contingent and shifting set of processes and effects. I argue through this thesis that one of the key things 'produced' by immigration law and border enforcement today is a protracted kind of liminality – a legal, temporal, social and physical 'holding space' that is manifested most clearly in immigration detention. If studying friendship and care immediately raises the question of *practicing* friendship and care, this is joined by questions of what kinds of relationality are produced or resisted through systems of border control.

Detention clearly works as a 'holding space' for those inside the physical IRC walls, but the idea or presence of detention percolates to wide range of people on the outside: from the friends, family and supporters of those incarcerated, to people who are potentially subject to being detained, or have been in the past, and 'hold' the memory of this space in their bodies and day-to-day lives. For Alyssa, friendship, care and 'hanging out' offered a way to 'to be outside' the lingering 'inside' of detention and control, or even, to be vicariously 'outside' the bounded self: "that person has become part of you". As I will argue throughout this thesis, Alyssa was far from alone in foregrounding a porosity of personal boundaries in her understanding of care and friendship, of drawing on ideas of 'inside' and 'out' to explore a blur between the two. 'Holding space' for friendship and care often involved contesting ideas of self and collectivity in this way, as we'll particularly see in Chapter 3 (on the city, affect and community) and Chapter 7 (on solidarity). Often, as I will argue, it is overlapping questions of proximity and boundary, sameness and difference, 'inside' and 'outside' that inform both ideas of the border (Ngai, 2004) and of different kinds of relatedness (Carsten, 2000, 2004), yet these are never easily demarcated. In Clara Han's terms: "relations are lived in degrees of intensity; they are not an all or nothing presence or absence" (2021: 232) and Alyssa's words speak to the intensities of both border and relation. This thesis attempts to consider such ideas in the everyday lives of a number of 'detainable' people, acknowledging the central role the IRC held for their conceptualisation of the system, along with how the 'carceral' extended beyond the prison-like walls of specific institutions. Detention, and the forms of racialized bordering that underpin it, produces particular experiences of 'inside', 'outside' and the threshold between the two, where even a 'successful' asylum application means the partial and oxymoronic status of 'Leave to

Remain'. Yet, for all their power, such systems are not encompassing, and being 'detainable' becomes a sometimes prosaic, if complicatedly present, part of life.

I approached my 12 months of fieldwork in Glasgow, Scotland's only asylum dispersal city, near to Dungavel IRC, with a range of questions around these topics, focused on particular ideas of 'care' and friendship' that I had encountered through several years of prior campaigning and organising. I asked: how do people build and interpret relationships in such a system, and how might I? How are these relational processes situated spatially, across sites of detention, but also across the city itself? What kinds of care and friendship emerge within such 'carceral' settings, and how might these involve forms of monitoring, enclosure and control that people interpret as 'carceral'? How can attending to people's experiences of 'detainability' help us to learn new things about care and friendship? Ultimately, these can be summarised in a central question: what role does friendship and care play in systems of 'detainability'?

The thesis moves through these questions as it moves through key sites of detention, asylum accommodation, and Glasgow as an asylum 'dispersal city', before considering how people's understandings of the state, healthcare and work are impacted by these 'holding spaces'. Throughout, I try not to lose sight of the importance that ideas of friendship and care had for people who gave up their time to work with me through the year. This was expressed through actions as much as words, with practices of friendship, support, and political work being vital to the sense of 'vicarious strength' and 'love of humanity' that Alyssa outlines. As I return to in the methods section and conclusion of the thesis, this included not only methodological questions and commitments to friendship and care, but also an understanding of when certain topics or experiences should remain 'outside' a project like this, and how respect for this can enrich the information that makes it 'in'. It was spending time with people like Alyssa that really shifted my thinking about what friendship and care meant, as well as making me question whether the terms could interact with anthropological practice. This thesis is a document of my attempt to work through these questions, whilst trying to understand how people turned to such ideas, and to each other, within situations of carcerality, racialisation and control. Before returning to my own fieldwork, I find it important to lay out several key contextual foundations for what follows: the legal and social ways in which someone is made 'detainable', the histories of colonialism

and racialisation that inform this, the porosity of the 'prison-like' space of carcerality that this all operates through, and how these threads link to ideas of care and friendship. I turn now to situate my thesis within a body of literature that helps us to interrogate such domains, along with wider connections between 'race', migration, borders, carcerality, care and friendship.

'Detainability'

Immigration detention is the administrative incarceration of people whose immigration status is contested by the state. According to Home Office figures, 24,443 people were detained in the UK in 2019, the year of my fieldwork, and around 1,600-1700 people were in detention at any one point (Home Office, 2020a). Around half of these people have sought asylum in the UK at some time (Home Office, 2020a). When detained, people are held in one of seven Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs), two Short Term Holding Facilities (STHF), or sometimes within mainstream prisons. The only detention centre in Scotland is Dungavel IRC, a former hunting lodge and prison situated about one hour's drive south from Glasgow, near the town of Strathaven. Dungavel was downsized during the year from 249 to 125 beds, following a number of years at "low capacity" (Scottish Detainee Visitors, 2020). Legally, in terms forged in the foundational 1969 and 1971 Immigration Acts, detention exists for a limited set of specified reasons: "to effect a removal"; "to establish a person's identity or basis of [asylum or immigration] claim"; or "if there is reason to believe that the person will fail to comply with any conditions attached to the grant of temporary admission or release" (Home Office, 2014: 3). Against this logic however, most people are simply released back into the community after a period of detention, with 63% of people left detention this way in 2019, though they may be re-detained at a later point (Home Office, 2020a). Decisions to detain are 'administrative', in that they are made by immigration enforcement officers and civil servants at the Home Office, without a trial or legal proceedings beyond the requisite paperwork. Often, as we'll see first-hand throughout the thesis, people are detained at the regular 'signing' appointments they must attend when seeking asylum, in workplace and home raids, and through street stops. The main categories of people who end up in detention include: those seeking asylum, when they first arrive, or

if their applications are refused; people classified as 'overstaying' or breaching the terms of work and study visas; people who are refused permission to enter on arrival in Britain; and people who have served a prison sentence but because of their citizenship status, become classified as 'foreign national offenders', and face deportation. 'Detainability' is policed in heavily racialized ways, as I will expand upon in the subsequent section, and disciplines and informs the lives of a far wider group than those physically inside detention.

Whether held on arrival, or 'captured' through raids, signing or prison, detention's key role in 'effecting removal' structures the space and experiences of everyone within it. All detained people are also 'deportable' to some degree, and as Nicholas De Genova argues, 'deportability' is itself an "attendant sociospatial condition" of being 'illegalised' in broader terms (2002: 440). In De Genova's US-focused work, rendering groups of people 'illegal' and subject to deportation serves a disciplinary function for those undocumented migrant labourers who continue to exist at the edges of 'illegality', which he describes as a "distinctly spatialized and typically racialized social condition" (2002: 439). De Genova's work on 'deportability', along with contemporary work on the 'deportation turn' (Gibney, 2008) within a British context informs this thesis in a range of ways. I choose, however, to foreground the attendant position of 'detainability' for number of reasons. Firstly, as previously mentioned, detention was the space that consistently hovered - like a shadow, or as we see in Chapter 3, a kind of affect - over the conversations and actions of people I did fieldwork with. Everyone knew someone who had been through detention, or had been detained themselves, and even for those inside detention the main focus seemed to be on critiquing the terms of their incarceration or the conditions of a particular IRC rather than facing the grim unknown of being deported.[1] Secondly, 'detainability' usefully points us towards a wider group of people (some of whom, as the statistics show, avoid deportation), along with forms of bordering that work to contain as well as expel, and resistance to this. As Luke De Noronha argues, people subject to deportation are 'illegalised' in multiple ways: "the law changes around people, and they are *made illegal"* (2020: 6; see also Anderson,

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[1] There were some exceptions to this, in terms of people I met who had been deported before, many of whom were from Eastern Europe and had managed to return to Britain without being flagged at the border on re-entry. A couple of people I met inside even talked openly about wanting to be deported so they could then travel back to places they'd been living in the UK at the point of their detention, a fact that highlights the partial and often symbolic use of deportation as a form of immigration control, as well as the persistence of 'detainability' throughout.

2013: 116-117) but detention is also a space where people push back against being rendered 'illegal' in multiple ways. This sense of struggle over cases and terms was key to the experience of 'detainability' for the majority of people I met both inside and outside the IRCs. This isn't to undermine how detention was a deeply painful and traumatic experience for almost everyone I encountered, but to be open to how the same indeterminacy and lack of closure built into the detention system could also offer some people space to question, resist and push back.

Lastly, I use the term 'detainability' partly in response De Genova's own important argument that "by constituting undocumented migrants (the people) as an epistemological and ethnographic "object" of study, social scientists, however unwittingly, become agents in an aspect of the everyday production of those migrants' "illegality" […] in effect, accomplices to the discursive power of immigration" (2002: 423). At a general level, this draws on Foucault's classically astute observation that "the existence of a legal prohibition creates around it a field of illegal practices" (1977: 280), but also makes this a serious methodological problem for researchers, who reaffirm and to some extent create the categories being scrutinized, contributing to the 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) facing people they write about. While detention is clearly a part of the "the spectacle of [border] 'enforcement'" (De Genova, 2002: 436), it is relatively invisibilised in comparison to other parts of this system, and as a liminal 'holding space' full of contested claims and debates over sovereign responsibility; it both performs state control and seems to question it. As such, focusing on 'detainability' opens out inquiry to a slightly different set of questions about the 'border spectacle', legal terminology and 'illegality'. People in detention are held within a space of withheld '(il)legality', and rather than replicating '(il)legalising' terms such as 'asylum seeker' or 'refugee', focusing on detention points to what De Noronha calls the 'multi-status' makeup of contemporary Britain (2020: 25). He uses this term to describe how everyday borders "get between people and follow them around, and this means that lines of difference and division – especially racial, national and cultural difference – are crosscut by migration and citizenship" (De Noronha, 2020: 24). As we will see throughout this thesis, an increasing number of people in the UK have been attributed essentially partial, undocumented citizenship or 'non-citizenship' (something that is bound

to increase more following the UK's departure from the EU), and can move in and out of 'detainability' through their lives. As I show in the coming methodology section, a focus on 'detainability', as itself a shifting, conceptual 'holding space', involving critical and ethical engagement with the terms being utilised, and it can add to existing scholarship on other forms of border enforcement in nuanced ways.

 'Detainability' is temporally indistinct, in ways that are manifested in detention itself. Unlike other countries in Europe, Britain currently has no time limit on how long someone can be detained for, with most people being released or removed within around 28 days, but a significant minority having to live in detention for months or even years. Importantly, people have no idea how long their detention will last when they are first detained, a situation that persists until the fateful 'removal' directions, 'immigration bail' proceedings, or release. Much research on detention has focused on this 'uncertainty' (Bosworth, 2014; Hasselberg, 2016; Griffiths, 2014), and forms of 'waiting' or 'stuckness' within such systems (Turnbull, 2015; Jefferson, Turner & Jensen, 2019; Russell & Rae, 2020). As we find throughout the thesis, question of temporality are central to 'detainability' in a broader sense: from the legal discussions of eviction and waiting in Chapter 2, to the conflicting medical ideas of providing long-term 'care' in Chapter 5, and the necessary obsession over time for people in precarious jobs in Chapter 6. Such examples and literature speak to how 'detainability' persists beyond incarceration, along with the shifting forms 'detainability' has taken historically. In 1993, the total capacity in the UK detention estate was 250, but by 2016 it was over ten times that figure, a highpoint in which 32,163 persons entered immigration detention annually (Home Office, 2016). Since then, a mixture of public and NGO pressure, shifting demographics of 'arrivals', and moves towards 'fast-track removals' and "community-based alternatives to detention" (Detention Forum, 2018: 1) have seen the numbers decrease, with several IRCs shut down. This was compounded with the onset of the Covid-19 in 2020, with the Home Office moving people to reconfigured budget 'hotels', and numbers at Dungavel slipping from the already very low (42 people in December 2019, 61 the year before), to almost empty (26 in March 2020; All figures via Scottish Detainee Visitors, 2020). Alongside this shift however, the Home Office moved to new zones of carceral control; disused army barracks, 'closed' detention centres reborn as 'arrival

accommodation' (see White, 2020b), and forms of housing equivalent to the 'open prison-like' Direct Provision Centres used in Ireland (See Breen, 2008). Detention is thus a key, if shifting, part of British immigration control, producing particular legal and relational categories that can be better understood when situated within a history of UK border controls and colonialism.

Empire's 'holding space'

What 'detainability' means - and its role in forms of care and friendship - has shifted over time, and it is worth outlining how histories of racism, colonialism and carcerality inform its current iteration. The contemporary detention estate was established through New Labour's 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, which also created a separate tier of monetary and housing support for asylum seekers, instead of access to mainstream welfare, with housing conditional on 'no choice' dispersal around the UK. The Home Secretary at the time, Jack Straw, made clear through speeches and the press that he was being guided by what Liz Fekete calls a symbolic "philosophy of deterrence" (2001: 29), aiming to detain and deport 30,000 people in the year 2000 alone, whilst opening a string of new, privately-run IRCs through the early 2000s. As will be examined more fully in Chapters 2 and 3, during this time Glasgow became the only city in Scotland to take part in the asylum dispersal system, leading to around 3000 people being sent to the city by 2001, the year that Dungavel IRC opened (see Wren, 2004). Dispersal itself, initially a 'temporary' measure to help deal with a 'backlog' of undecided asylum cases (see Robinson, Andersson & Musterd, 2003) became a central part of asylum policy in Britain until the present day. This drew on previous forms of internal 'resettlement' and encampment targeted at groups ranging from Polish soldiers post-WWII to 'Ugandan Asians' escaping Idi Amin's regime in 1972 (see Bailkin, 2018) and the subsequent use of 'cluster areas' to house people fleeing violence in Chile, Bosnia and Kosovo (Robinson, Andersson & Musterd, 2003: 103-149).

Of course, histories of expulsion, carcerality and control stretch far longer: exclusionary laws, racist violence and diverse forms of detention have been used to control and try to 'deter' people from coming to Britain throughout what Jordanna Bailkin frames as the 'afterlife of Empire' (2012). Seen in its long duration, the ending of Empire overlapped with

key acts focused on framing Britain's borders and who could be held or expelled within them. Mary Bosworth argues that 1905 Aliens Act is regularly seen as "the beginning of the contemporary system of border control" because "it gave responsibility to the Home Secretary for all matters concerning immigration and nationality, thus centralizing control and establishing immigration officers at ports" where people were held in specially purposed buildings and ships for the first time (Bosworth, 2014: 29). As Nadine El-Enany argues, the 1905 Act sought to protect 'white supremacy' and contain British "wealth accumulated through slavery and conquest" (2020: 46), initially aiming to prevent "the arrival in Britain of poor [and 'medically unfit'] Jewish refugees" fleeing pogroms in Europe, but providing grounds for a wider, racialized exclusion of those not deemed "free white men" (2020: 50). Throughout this time, colonial British governments expanded and experimented with prison and detention systems within the countries they were occupying. Camps and detention facilities were used extensively against Mau Mau people in Kenya (Duffy, 2015: 504), whilst in India, the prison functioned as an "archetypal colonial institution, not only reflecting and institutionalizing colonial ideas about essential social categories, but also constituting one of the key sites on which the ground rules of colonial engagement with Indian society were laid down" (Arnold, 1994: 170). 'Detainability' was informed through experiments in controlling racialized populations in both colony and metropole, and to this day, a large number of those inside the UK's detention estate "come from former colonies—India, Pakistan, Jamaica, Bangladesh" (Bosworth, 2014: 10). As we'll particularly see in Chapter 6, this colonial history was something people I met inside the detention system were acutely aware of, though it is also important to note that many also came from countries that were not former colonies, particularly Albania and Romania. Such differences of historical connection, often complicatedly racialized, are drawn upon and refracted through detention: sometimes illuminated, sometimes buried, in ways that mirror long histories of colonial incorporation and contradiction (See Burbank & Cooper, 2012).

Such questions of incorporation were particularly contested in the aftermath of World War II, with the advent of explicit decolonizing movements across the Empire, which precipitated a gradual shift from 'subjects' and 'aliens' to 'citizens' and 'migrants' (Anderson, 2013: 27). A proliferation of Parliamentary Acts, beginning with the British Nationality Act of 1948, "which created the category of Citizenship of the UK and Colonies" and therefore "included

those born outside the territory [the UK]" (Bosworth, 2014: 30) saw successive moves, with the Commonwealth Immigrants Acts of 1962 and 1968, to dramatically narrow access to British citizenship. While 1948 is often presented as a generous act of inclusion, or an economically motivated post-war push to fill gaps in the labour market, El-Enany argues that it was predominately an attempt "hold together what remained of the British Empire and the Commonwealth" and to maintain "white British supremacy" (2020: 73) in the face of polities such as Canada putting in place their own citizenry frameworks, which were seen as a threat to the primacy of the 'British Subject'. The subsequent arrival of racialised members of the new category of 'Citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies', including those on the HMS Windrush, was treated as an unexpected and unwelcome effect by the majority of those in government (El-Enany, 2020: 82). As racist agitation around these arrivals mounted, legislators moved from the officially 'race neutral' notion of equity in the eyes of the Empire, to more explicitly racialized categories. Such ideas percolated through both legal and everyday discourse, along with in those of social science. As Jordanna Bailkin argues, the British Empire "re-emerged not only in the postcolony, but also in the metropole" (2012: 15), with a proliferation of post-WWII 'migration studies' turning colonial methods of knowledge-gathering, interpretation and management onto the "adaptation, adjustment, and assimilation" (2012: 33) of new arrivals. As she frames it: "In an age of decolonization, the migrant was the ultimate expert creation" (Bailkin, 2012: 53) and anthropology, particularly at the London School of Economics and the University of Edinburgh, played a key role in these new disciplines of migration studies and 'race relations' (see Little, 1947, 1975; Banton, 1991).

Simultaneous to the 'birth' of this category of 'the migrant' was the gradual expansion of its "legal death through deportation" (Bailkin, 2012: 21), enacted through an increasingly overtly racialized set of immigration laws throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Codifying what had been a haphazard set of overlapping judicial, police and government deportation procedures, the 1962 Act was controversial for excluding Irish people from its purview – a group that had been included up to that point "largely for what the Home Office called "presentational" reasons: namely, to avoid the charge that deportation was racially discriminatory" (2012: 222). Similarly, as Mary Bosworth argues, the 'patrial' system, included in the 1968 Act, "offered a right of abode only to those members of the

Commonwealth who could boast a British father or grandfather, effectively linking the right to enter and reside with race" (2014: 30), stripping many of those who had entered the UK under the 1948 Act from access to citizenship. Following resistance and political concerns about such powers, the 1969 Immigration Appeals Act "created the right for Commonwealth citizens to lodge in-country appeals when denied entry", but in doing so, the "Act greatly expanded the Immigration Service and concomitant Tribunals" resulting "in the first purpose-built Immigration Detention Centre outside an airport or prison, the Harmondsworth Detention Unit" (Bosworth, 2014: 30). The first modern detention centre thus very clearly created as a racialized zone of exclusion and contestation, targeted mainly at people from former British colonies. It was also a response to resistance and demands for a right to appeal immigration decisions, linking to Ambalavaner Sivanandan's always pertinent reminder that racism itself does not "stay still, it changes shape, size, contours, purpose, function - with changes in the economy, the social structure, the system, and above all, the challenges, the resistances to that system" (1990: 64). Detention and 'detainaibility' works here as a 'holding space' for those who are not easily filtered into the demarcations of a slow 'afterlife of empire', creating the context for the forms of control, relationality and care we see today.

The IRC emerges then, at the twilight of a formalised British Empire, to hold people from former colonies after their arrival in Britain, within a wider regime of racialized legal and social controls. Such a history makes us pay particular attention to how "it is impossible to understand race and migration in isolation" (De Noronha, 2020: 23), putting this thesis in dialogue with increasing number of scholars who "argue that *race is produced by and through borders*, rather than existing in any stable way *a priori*" (De Noronha, 2020: 24). Such attention to histories of colonialism, class and 'race' has sometimes been lacking in anthropological attempts to consider the ways in which "since the 1990s, the detention of asylum seekers and other migrants has increased and is now widespread across Europe" (Bloch & Schuster, 2005: 500). Here, despite being insightful in multiple ways, "migration scholarship has demonstrated a certain aversion to discussing 'race' and racism", with analysis of 'race' parcelled off into 'race relations', in a way that reinforces "the strongly imagined norm of national and stable communities disrupted by migrants" and 'de-races' the category of migrant (Anderson, 2019: 8, 3).

In contrast, I aim through this thesis to consider how 'race' and racism are constituted in and through the British immigration system, analysing the particular ways that bordering and racialisation overlap for 'detainable' people. This entails being mindful of David Goldberg's warning that the term 'racialization,' should be applied with precision, not simply to signal "race-inflected social situations" (Goldberg 2009: 67, see Browne, 2015) and Karen & Barbara Fields' warning about the reifying magic of 'race thinking' (Fields & Fields, 2014). Understanding immigration controls as racializing processes points towards a range of techniques and categories, particularly Bridget Anderson's idea of a 'community of value', the way in which states portray themselves as "composed of people who share common ideas and (exemplary) patterns of behaviour" that are "defined from the outside by the non-citizen, but also from the inside, by the 'Failed Citizen'" (Anderson, 2013: 2-4). Navigating categories of the 'non-citizen' ('immigrant', 'foreigner') involves also contending with interlinked notions of the 'failed citizen' (sometimes 'scrounger', 'criminal', 'single mother' etc.), with all these shifting categories being racialized and racializing in complex ways. As we'll see, particularly in Chapters 4 and 6, ideas of 'race' and appeals to 'good' citizenship, whiteness and a 'work ethic' for people inside detention involved a far wider range of bodily and personal attributes than simply skin colour, though this was still important. As De Noronha argues, "deportation [and we can add 'detainability'] both is and is not about being black – not reducible to anti-black racism and neither explicable without it" (2020: 158) and the key thing is to focus on how "processes of differential exploitation, expropriation and expulsion become racializing processes" (Bhattacharyya, 2018: 179) in specific ways and contexts, without reifying the terms being used.

Detention targets racialized groups to be held and possibly expelled, emerging from a history of colonial containment and racist agitation against 'migrants'. But, it also exists to sort and categorise those who do not neatly fit into existing 'moulds' of non-citizen or citizen. This tension between a material 'prsion-like' carcerality and such legal or political ambiguities creates particular contexts for the relations of friendship and care that emerge within the IRC and its shadow. Often, these were interpreted by people I got to know through ideas of being 'inside', 'outside' and on the 'threshold' of particular spaces, systems or forms of collectivity.

As I articulate throughout this thesis, detention is understood as 'carceral' by many people who encounter it: almost everyone I met described it as 'like a prison' (see Detained Voices, 2017 for multiple examples of this) and those inside Dungavel were very aware of its physical history as a prison, reflected in how the space was organised, presented and experienced. While being attuned to the differences between detention and prison, it is thus important to situate 'detainability' within a wider literature on carcerality and prisons that has increasingly focused on the "prison–society nexus and the articulation between the internal and the external worlds" of incarceration (Cunha, 2014: 218). As we see particularly through Chapters 1-3, detention was experienced as both centred on the presence of particular IRCs and carceral spaces, with a centrifugal power to 'pull' people in; but also as a diffuse and dispersed thing that was difficult to ever really be 'outside'. This term carcerality, from *carcer*, for "jail, prison" and "to bend, turn, in the sense of an enclosure," (Engass, 2020), has seen popular usage in recent years through depictions of 'carceral feminism', "a reliance on policing, prosecution, and imprisonment to resolve gendered or sexual violence" (Press, 2018; see Terwiel, 2020) and through wider schemas such as Jackie Wang's idea of 'carceral capitalism', which argues that carcerality is increasingly central to a global regime of "neoliberal penality"(2018: 22). Such ideas found physical expression in my fieldwork through the large number of both staff and so-called 'foreign national offenders' who moved between the spheres of prison and detention, which I argue in Chapters 5 and 6 was important to how detainable people understood ideas of 'healthcare' and 'work'.

Rhodes's 2001 review of ethnographic work on the prison concludes that "little work in anthropology concerns prisons" (2001: 66), while prison abolitionists have long argued that "the invisibility of incarcerated populations" (Davis, 2003: 156) serves as one of the prison system's key tactics for subjugation and control. Loic Wacquant argues that "ethnography of the prison [...] went into eclipse at the very moment when it was most urgently needed" (2002: 385): namely, the dramatic post-1970s rise of prison populations across the UK and Europe, but also, for our purposes, the three decades in which immigration detention emerged and took hold. Key texts from the formative 'prison ethnography' era that

preceded this include Clemmer's (1940) theory of 'prisonization'; Sykes' (1958) and Sykes & Messinger's (1960) examinations of internal 'prison cultures'; Irwin & Cressey's (1962) argument that such 'cultures' were in fact 'imported' from the external world; and Goffman's famous study of asylums (1961). Many of these early 20th century studies came from a close and unethical arrangement between researcher and institution, viewing the prison as a perfect 'closed system' for sociological, functionalist experiments. Such a reliance on collusion with carceral institutions was anchored on a shared notion of 'progressive' penal reform and an imagined future shift away from physical incarceration: "no one imagined that the prison population would more than quintuple in their lifetime [from 350,000 prisoners nationwide in the US in 1972, to over 2 million today]. It seemed far more likely that prisons would fade away" (Alexander, 2012: 9). Though focused on the USA, Alexander's work speaks to a global trend towards increased incarceration and "bordered penality" (Aas, 2014: 520) in a growing international "carceral network" (Walia, 2013: 53).

The drift away from prison research coincided with an explosion of work on the 'carceral archipelago' following Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1977), which prompted studies of the 'logic of the prison' in a wide array of sites: particularly "schools, public aid offices and hospitals" (Wacquant, 2002: 385). Foucault presents us, in his famous analysis of Bentham's Panopticon, with "a diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal forms. It is in fact a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use" and is "polyvalent in its applications" (Foucault, 1977: 205). Yet, in a 'diagramatic' focus on an implicitly bounded population, Foucauldian analyses of power/resistance in prisons (Ugelvik, 2014; Rhodes, 2004; Bosworth 1999) raise questions about ways of life at the 'edges' and 'outside' of such systems that such a schema necessarily struggles to account for. As will be analysed thoroughly in Chapter 6 on work and what it means to exist at the edges of 'productivity', detention's liminal and non-reformative function does not easily fit into such a bounded, disciplinary logic. Writers following Giorgio Agamben (1998) and Achile Mbembe (2003, 2019) have responded to this problem through considering conditions of 'detainability' as forms of the 'camp' and 'bare life' (Kreichauf, 2018; Picker & Pasquetti, 2015; Davies, Arshad & Surindar, 2017). These theories posit a turn away from Foucault's 'bios' towards a logic of 'necros' or 'letting die' (Li, 2010), where in Mbembe's words, "vast

populations are subjected to living conditions that confer upon them the status of the living dead" (Mbembe, 2019: 89).

Such binaries between 'biopolis' and 'necropolis' map onto global forms of 'inside' and 'out' in a grim but important way, but as Gargi Bhattacharyya argues, while they, "serve a kind of descriptive sense, this formulation leads to a flattening out of some of the particularity of so-called noncapitalist spaces. In fact, this is a formulation that begins with the assumption that there is no space beyond the logic of capitalist production" (2018: 17). I found that people would regularly navigate their 'detainability' through ideas of 'inside', 'out' and on the threshold or edge, and that these were more useful than Agambian notions of 'inclusive exclusion' that are popular in much writing on migration (Agamben, 1998; see De Genova & Peutz, 2010) but often imply that "formal citizens are fully and equally included" (Anderson & Hughes, 2015: 2). As outlined in the last section, this is hardly the case, and attending to the 'inside' and 'outside' of detention for those who are pulled into its orbit means being open to the shifting forms 'detainability' can take. This means trying to understand how carcerality and confinement shape life outside the space of detention, and become the material 'holding spaces' for wider experiences of liminality, uncertainty and immobility.

As many of the people I introduce through this thesis attest, to be 'inside' detention is to be 'outside' key political, social and legal spheres, but this liminal experience persists beyond the walls of the IRC, seeping into people's homes, workplaces and intimate relations of care.

Carceral Care

Though they may initially seem at odds, my experience of trying to do fieldwork with detainable people led me to consider how carcerality interweaves with another key focus of this thesis: care. Buch argues that anthropology should avoid trying to pin down one definition of care, instead "embracing a polysemic understanding of care as simultaneously resource and relational practice" (Buch, 2015: 279). Yet, in the explosion of writing on the topic in recent years, care is often foregrounded as an implicit or overt ethical 'good' (see Care Collective, 2020). In opposition to this, following writers such as Miriam Ticktin (2011) and Ruben Andersson (2014), I outline through the thesis how care and techniques of

carcerality often come hand in hand, for example: in the 'caring' incursions of asylum accommodation providers in Chapter 2; the thorny narratives of 'self-care' in Chapter 4; and, perhaps most acutely, in the particular forms of detention healthcare outlined in Chapter 5. As Jessica Cooper reminds us, "violence in the course and name of care is hardly surprising" (2017: 128; see also: Feldman & Ticktin 2010; Mulla 2014; Stevenson 2014; Ticktin 2011), and Disability Rights activists have long pointed to the 'custodial overtones' of care regimes (Piepzna-Samarasinha 2018: 41).

Anthropologists such as Miriam Ticktin, have examined how such 'regimes of care' can reproduce hierarchies of a "new humanism" (2011: 13), forcing migrants to inhabit particular narrow constructions of what she calls the "morally legitimate suffering body" (2011: 3) in order to gain recognition, and potentially citizenship. This is done through the prism of a "politics of care" that "reproduces a second-class status for immigrants in France, particularly those of the Global South, exemplifying the "new humanity", worthy of rescue" (Ticktin, 2011: 24). Studies such as Ticktin's fit into wider analyses of "humanitarian bordering" (De Noronha, 2020: 203) and profiting from 'caring' interventions (see Andersson, 2014). Such work points to how the scholarly imperative should be to interrogate how "care, compassion and responsibility are mobilised in particular ways in particular contexts – sometimes for, sometimes against certain groups" (Dowling, 2021: 45). I attempt to present care through this thesis as a polyvalent concept, ethically unfixed and constantly contested, often used to understand practices associated with specific forms of relatedness ranging from friends and kin to doctors and state-actors.

The above literature points in multiple ways to how 'care' can both produce and undo bodies and life at the margins of the state. Expanding on the previous section, it is useful to consider how our very understanding of what constitutes a 'living' and thus 'careable' body is imbued with forms of 'bios' or 'necros'. Without having to adopt a binary notion of such concepts we can see in Foucault's genealogies of the topic that medicalised and reformist interventions have often involved procedures of containment and expulsion (Foucault, 1965, 1973). Crucially, the body in Foucault's description of 'the clinic' is dislocated from any individual human life: "It is when death became the concrete a priori of medical experience that death could detach itself from counter-nature and become *embodied* in the *living bodies* of individuals" (1973: 196). While some bodies are marked for 'life' through

diagnoses of that which is 'dying' but curable, others are rendered through the clinical gaze as pathological and closer to 'death' in themselves, linking to eugenicist hierarchies of 'race' and biopolitical notions of disease as increasingly part of the "social body itself" (Armstrong, 1983: 8). In Sylvia Wynter's analysis, this involves is a particular 'biologized' understanding of 'Man' that suppresses other forms of humanity, a genre or "mode of being" (2001: 32) that conditions and reflects hierarchical differentiations of 'race' (see Ferreira da Silva, 2015). Wynter finds particular expression of this in the colonial management of space, where what she calls a projected 'space of otherness':

> was now to be mapped on phenotypical and religio-cultural differences between human variations and / or population groups, while the new idea of order was now to be defined in terms of degrees of rational perfection / imperfection, as [….] that of the 'law of nature,' 'natural law': as a 'law' that allegedly functioned to order human societies in the same way as the newly discovered laws of nature served to regulate the processes of functioning of physical and organic levels of reality (2003: 296).

Wynter's analysis of 'biologised' Man and his pathologised, dehumanised Other allows us to consider how care is structured through underlying ideas of who should live, what counts *as* biological 'life' and concurrent teleologies of life and death. This discussion informs Chapters 4 and 5 in particular, where detainable people consider complex questions of 'self-harm' suicide, vulnerability and medical care within spaces they experience as harmful. Questions of life and death, harm and care can here involve a tension that was brutally summarised by a statement I witnessed from a woman at a meeting I attended, who said: "you know the Home Office is in my head, when I fight them, I fight myself, I hurt myself." Care and harm are not easily demarcated in such instances, within a system that distributes both in overlapping ways.

Carceral care involves certain techniques of containment, expulsion and control, but is also animated by an implicit sense that certain groups of people deserve and will respond differently to 'care', with specific practices of care becoming constituted through such assumptions. This is a sentiment that finds particular counter-expression in a range of "black feminist care ethics" (Samudzi, 2020), often anchored on Audre Lorde's famous formulation that, "caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare" (1988: 205). Sara Ahmed elaborates on her own understanding of Lorde's words and work: "In directing our care towards ourselves we are redirecting care away from its proper objects, we are not caring for those we are supposed to care for we are not caring

for the bodies deemed worth caring about" (2014). Here, an invitation to self-care is also an invitation to collective sisterhood, for the selves being spoken to are very much those precluded or buried in regimes of care focused on Wynter's 'Man'. This is an idea of 'self-care' already critically alive to Emma Dowling's warning that "the imperative to take care of oneself is a response to the experience of a growing care deficit in society" (2021: 185), and clearly infused with a feminist account of social reproduction, analysed in detail in Chapter 6. The "formative potential of care to generate and sustain social persons" (Buch, 2015: 281) thus highlights contestations over what kinds of selfhood and collectivity are being sustained, or supressed.

Questions of care's 'object' link to anthropological attempts to consider the particular practices of care, and how this builds certain forms of subjectivity and collectivity. Caring in this literature can range from feeding, giving and receiving nourishment (Carsten, 1997), conviviality as a 'skill' or 'art' (Overing and Passes 2002), the intimate sharing of space (Vilaça, 2002), to homemaking (hooks, 1990) and nurturing non-human pets and plants (Heuts & Mol, 2013; Mol et al, 2010). Such practices will be considered throughout this thesis, along with overlaps between 'welfare', 'carework' and migrant labour (Hochschild, 2000; Brijnath, 2009; Da Roit, 2007; Degiuli, 2007). Here, questions of care always involve unpacking distinctions of 'work' and 'non-work', and how certain practices get classed as such (see Chapter 6). This has been amplified in recent decades by what Emma Dowling calls a 'care crisis' that is "intricately linked with the Global Financial Crisis and its aftermath" (2020: 45), with states compelling people to voluntarily 'care', whilst cutting welfare and formalised care support. Privatisation and austerity structure both the spaces and practices of care in this thesis: from the multiple outsourcing firms depicted in Chapters 1 and 2, to the questions of voluntarism and NGO-ification in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. I find it useful to situate the 'Hostile Environment' - the particular iteration of bordering techniques that came into place during the time of my PhD (analysed particularly in Chapters 4 and 6) - within this context of austerity and diffused carceral care. Not only does such a context allow us to decentre the 'hostile environment' as particularly 'new' or novel, but it shows the connections between bordering and other forms of punitive conditionality across welfare and disability support (see Anderson, 2015: 188-191). We find a connection here to David Cameron's 'Big Society', that "smokescreen for austerity" (Dowling, 2021: 43), which

encouraged 'community' (IE, privatised and non-state) responsibility over state social service provision. The hostile environment compels people in traditionally 'caring' roles, such as healthcare or education, to police the status of so-called "false nationals" (Balibar & Wallerstein, 1991: 60), often presenting this through narratives of 'safeguarding' or 'duties of care'. Care becomes a form of surveillance in such instances, and knowledge of who is able to draw on the carceral institutions and techniques of the border becomes infused in the relationships people build and maintain.

I use the term 'care' with caution through the thesis then, allowing it to emerge in the divergent spaces I found it ethnographically, without arbitrating between 'good' or 'bad' care. Through its varied use certain commonalities did emerge: care as the maintenance of certain bodies, care as a reproductive labour at the edges of 'work' and 'non-work', care that fixes and care that transforms. Attending to these forms of care often meant understanding them within the context of specific relational modes: friends, families and other forms of kin.

Friends and Families

As pointed to in Alyssa's story, which opened this introduction, friendship was an important category for many people I worked with throughout my fieldwork. A 'friend', along with 'befriending' practices, are here far wider than many existing theoretical constructions of the term characterized by shared life experiences and "spontaneous and unconstrained sentiment" (Coleman, 2010: 200); raising questions of responsibility, political goals and solidarity through 'difference' (see Chapter 7). Yet despite the apparent omnipresence of 'friendship', the editors of one recent anthropological volume on the topic admit, "though it appears as a central feature of many people's lives around the world, friendship has received little intensive consideration" in the discipline (Desai & Killick, 2010: 4). The term has often been as a contrasting category to that of 'kinship', implied in given, 'biological' terms. Bell & Coleman's overview asserts that "the sense that friendship has little chance to flourish where kinship structures remain strong is reinforced by other ethnographic

evidence" (1999: 6) citing Pitt-River's (1973) analysis of Fortes's data on the west African Tallensi and Gulliver's (1971) work with the Ndendeuli of Tanzania. Such approaches link to a history of attempting to define and typologize friendship as a form of 'fictive' (Killick, 2010: 46, Norbeck & Befu, 1958; Okada, 1957), 'pseudo' (see Pitt-Rivers, 1968) or 'para' to Kinship (Viveiros de Castro, 1995: 14, cited in Desai & Killick, 2010: 4). Eric Wolf's (1966) attempt to establish a typology of friendship, divided into 'expressive' or 'emotive' and 'instrumental' types, harking back to the classic Aristotelian categories of Nicomachean ethics (2009), shows one of many attempts (see also Paine 1969, Cohen 1961, Adams & Allan 1998) to typologize different kinds of friendship through a contrast with particular structures of kinship. Such work requires scrutinising through the shift in focus epitomised by Schneider (1980, 1984) and Carsten (2000, 2004), away from 'function' and terminology, towards cultural meaning, and diverse forms of 'relatedness' that pay attention to how people themselves emphasise what is given and made.

Carsten's history of anthropological approaches to kinship also reminds us that "kinship was central" to foundational studies in the discipline such as Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown, Evans-Pritchard and Fortes in large part because of their central goal of attempting "to understand the basis for the orderly functioning of small-scale societies in the absence of the state" (Carsten, 2004: 10) (see Chapter 4). In contrast, studies of the 'West' depicted "kinship as divorced from the political" (Carsten, 2004: 15), something often mirrored in large parts of 'political' anthropological work that pay little attention to how forms of relatedness overlap with ideas of the state, governance and migration. As Susan McKinnon and Fenella Cannell argue, a particular conceptualization of 'modernity' has often seen kinship "relegated to the domestic domain" stripped of "its economic and political functions" (2013: 3), linking to the previous discussion of Wynter's critiques of normative, 'modern', 'Man' (see also Chakrabarty, 2000). Such approaches miss the deeply interlinked ways in which people blur politics and kinship in their daily lives, whilst this thesis is full of complicated entangled examples of both: contestations over 'befriending' inside an IRC (Chapter 1); experiences of a 'domestic' home that is a zone of state surveillance (Chapter 2); acute feelings of personal complicity and responsibility that come with sharing ways to 'think like the Home Office' (Chapter 4); or the constant, small ways in which people's

engagement in overt 'political' struggle rests on their friends and kin (Chapters 3 and 7). Such themes are often deeply gendered, as we find in the distinctions between family and friendship in Chapters 3 and 6, with certain ideals of masculinity and productivity reflecting De Noronha's assertion that "norms surrounding 'the family' are produced and enforced at the border" (2020: 140) and Anderson's work on au pairs and paid domestic labour (2013: 174). This may entail notions of masculine provision, feminised care work, and broader contestations over the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Article 8 'Right to respect for private and family life', with ideas of what counts as family or community having "profound implications in deportation cases" and for detainability more generally (De Noronha, 2020: 133).

Ideas of 'the friend' in this context should be understood alongside these structuring notions of 'family life', along with what I outline in Chapter 1 as 'humanitarian kinship', with a focus on NGO befriending. Friendship can offer an alternative to codified legal relatedness at times, but as we see in that chapter, can also draw on ideas of 'suffering', charity and humanitarian witnessing. In often overt opposition to this, it was telling to me that recent celebratory work on friendship as a Foucauldian 'way' or 'form' of life (1997: 138) was popular in the activist circles I moved in throughout my fieldwork. The writers of a zine on the subject, entitled, 'Friendship as a Form of Life', talk about friendship as a "destabilizing, empowering, desubjectifying process" (Anon, 2016: 8), a way to examine possibilities for collective subjectivities, affect and revolution (see Montgomery & bergman, 2017b). As Montgomery & bergman ask, "if capitalism works by dismembering transformative relationships, can friendship be revalued as a radical, transformative form of kinship?" (Montgomery & bergman: 2017a). Such writing is also highly attuned to the danger and violence implicit in friendship, "the space where everything becomes terribly proximate" (Wang, 2016: 38) and where trauma can resurface or particular abusive relationships can emerge. The risk of intimacy or miscommunication can be high and friendship can be a source of "coercion, manipulation, and exploitation" (Anon, 2017: 23). In its complex engagement with proximate 'difference', such literature speaks to wider "anthropolog[ical] aims to understand the terms in which people perceive and create difference and sameness in other human beings" (Carsten, 2004: 82). Sameness and difference, friends and

'strangers' (see Chapter 3), inside and out, it is often these productive oppositions that people evoke in their experiences of care and friendship when moving through the immigration system.

Summary

In summary then, this overview of literature – on relatedness, care, carcerality, and the historical and contemporary forms of 'detainability' - provides the scaffolding for the ethnography that follows in several important ways. Politically, I've positioned myself alongside those who act and write in resistance to the UK Border Regime and its wide-ranging forms of racialized violence. I place anti-racist and border critical literature into dialogue with work on prisons and carcerality because this allows for an ethnographically grounded and committed approach to specific spaces and forms of contemporary bordering. I ask my central question - what role does friendship and care play in systems of 'detainability'? – partly because I believe that both friendship and care have a key, if sometimes underappreciated, role to play in dismantling such systems. I treat both concepts as fraught however, a constant source of ethical contestation and possible divergence, and rather than aiming for an 'ideal' form of friendship or care, find the ethical questions and risks implied by both concepts to be part of what makes them so productive. As we see in Chapter 1, friendship can be ambivalent or unilateral, emerging from histories of white 'saviourdom' and coloniality, just as care can be deeply entangled in forms of institutional power and harm (Chapter 5). Yet, in seeing how contexts such as detainability make people vulnerable and mutually constituted in different ways, I outline a vision of friendship and care grounded in Judith Butler's reminder that: "vulnerability takes on another meaning at the moment it is recognized, and recognition wields the power to reconstitute vulnerability" (2006: 43). Political recognition and ethnographic recognition have an overlapping potential here: to acknowledge the ways people navigate shared vulnerability, friendship and care day-to-day, and to become implicated in such processes, not simply 'witnessing' but being relationality and politically "part of" (to return to Alyssa's words) the worlds and lives we encounter.

As such, the theoretical and critical insights that follow are always partly about the ways in which we are all already complicit in systems of violence such as 'detainability' and bordering, and whilst there is no non-complicit ethnography, I attempt to use the anthropological encounter to engage forms of what we might call critical complicity: questioning and resisting the system whilst acknowledging the impossibility of being 'outside' it. Of course, concerns about complicity were shared widely amongst the people I met, who made constant, difficult judgements about being 'part of' the system, 'learning the rules' of the Home Office and 'playing the game' (See Chapter 4). There are no clear lines between 'inside' and 'out', even when such lines are drawn in bricks and barbed wire, and unpacking the different manifestations of this fact requires theoretical and

ethnographic nuance. As such, the theoretical backdrop of this thesis includes work on racial capitalism, histories of Empire, prison literature, and anthropology of kinship and relatedness, all of which work to question different forms of boundary and threshold, inclusion and exclusion. Expanding on such literature through an ethnographic focus on 'detainability', friendship and care allows for a grounded, nuanced insight into everyday life within such systems: the spaces people inhabit, the connections they make, and the often conflicting ways in which they understand such 'thresholds'. This means pushing the late-Foucault of 'pastoral power' (1982: 213) and 'forms of life' (1997: 138) to consider questions of 'detainability', 'race' and coloniality as always implicated in 'the prison', whilst considering the overlap of carceral space and carceral affect: how it feels to be held, how people hold this feeling with them. 'Detainability', and the relations formed within it, points towards the contradictions and messy everyday realities of life within systems of exclusion and inclusion, rather than the reified binaries such systems operate upon. As such, I also unpack how a range of anthropological literature on law, work, and 'the state' theorises life at 'edges' or 'margins' of systems of power, but in ways that allow the critical insights of the people I worked with to come to the fore. Ultimately then, the theoretical and political questions I ask throughout this thesis are always also methodological ones: can ethnographic practice involve forms of mutual care and friendship? What does recognition and shared vulnerability mean in systems of differentiated and racialized violence? What is a methodology that works against – rather than within – the border? I turn to these questions now through a detailed outline of my methodological process, whilst acknowledging the importance - in congruence with the discussion above - of not reifying the boundary between 'theory' and 'methods'.

Methods

To explore how people in Glasgow built lives, friendships and forms of care in the 'holding spaces' of immigration detention, I undertook twelve months of ethnographic fieldwork in the city. This followed four years of extensive non-academic engagement with groups working around detention and migrant rights in Glasgow, particularly The Unity Centre – a drop-in and support space for people in the asylum and immigration system – and We Will Rise, a campaign to shut down Dungavel IRC. I began thinking about the research with a deep concern around issues of consent, confidentiality and the possible 'extractive' forms that academic work can take, having seen the frustration, fatigue and confusion caused by a large number of studies and research projects about 'migration' over the years. I don't pretend to have avoided all the pitfalls of studying a topic like immigration detention academically, having not experienced 'detainability' myself, nor (as a white, cisgender man) having been targeted by the racialized and gendered systems of violence that underpin it. I do hope, however, that my long-term engagement with the issues and people directly affected, continued attempts to divert my resources and time towards topics they felt were important to understand, open reflexivity about both the limits and possibilities of my project, and efforts to be 'available' for non-research support (filling out forms, applications, childcare, driving etc.) all helped mitigate some of problems people regularly experience when targeted by academic researchers. I embedded 'methodological' and 'ethical' questions of friendship, care, trust and accountability within my research questions, and despite having this distinct 'methods section' here, hope it will be evident how I threaded these concerns through my work and this thesis.

Thinking of friendship as a question of methodology as well as theory partly involved determining what would stay 'outside' this thesis, and listening to how people I got to know would articulate what Veena Das calls the 'bedrock': "when I reach bedrock I don't break through the resistance to the other, but in this gesture of waiting I allow the other to mark me" (2007: 17). I drew on the 'activist' notions of friendship outlined so far, but found that these often push against the very notion of a demarcated 'activist' (see the classic pamphlet 'Give Up Activism': Anonymous, 1999), with a focus instead on the kinds of shared experience and commitment advocated by Alyssa in my opening vignette. As such, though a

large number of people in this thesis were involved in what we might term 'activism', few would have described themselves to me as 'activists', and while I've gained much insight from anthropological 'activist' literature (see Speed, 2006; Dave, 2011; King, 2016) I find myself similarly minded to be wary of the way this word can distinguish a certain separation or identity, or an over-determine the scope of 'activist' academic work. For some I worked with, the word 'ally' or 'accomplice' (Indigenous Action, 2014) had become popular, with the former distinguished by one friend of mine who was going through the asylum system:

> It's different to friendship in your private life, [it's] not like close friends. With an ally, the level of your friendship is different, [it means] practical support, emotional support. It's [honest about being] 'not even' – allies try to break barriers to work as friends, it requires a lot of effort, skills, time to break these barriers. It requires a friend to be brave enough to trust this person.

I tried through my fieldwork to focus more on such practices of 'practical and emotional support', building trust and, in Alyssa's words, finding 'strength in the struggle' without 'de-autotomizing' people, rather than on the labels this afforded. This was a methodological approach that ultimately often meant simply being 'available' to people as described above and being honest about the 'unevenness' of power relations between us. I entered the field concerned whether 'friendship' and 'research' could overlap, but left it with a sense that this was very much contingent on each relationship, and being clear about boundaries and limits. This meant I ended up having lots of different kinds of friendships, overlapping with the research in different ways, and tried to focus on the practices and actions that seemed to sustain our interconnection, rather simply focusing on theoretical reflections about what made a 'friend', always a shifting methodological and theoretical possibility.

I decided from the outset that I would not attempt to gain permission from the Home Office to work inside a detention centre. Whilst the number of researchers granted such access is tiny and I would have almost certainly been denied, I felt that even asking for such permission would undermine my ability to form trusting relationships with people facing detention, and that such an approach was against my ethical and political principles. Having read a large number of ethnographies of prison, detention and policing in preparation for the fieldwork, I felt that state permission almost always situated researchers on the side of the state as far as incarcerated people were concerned, and while many of these studies are rich and insightful (particular when focused on the lives of guards and institutional figures),

this approach would be counterproductive for my research. I also decided not to attempt to study the existing campaign and support groups I was already a part of, as such a shift in my role within such groups would be confusing and raise issues of informed consent, using the power I held within such groups (which I continued to participate in throughout) to benefit myself. I made it clear to friends in these groups that I wouldn't have my 'research hat' on or take fieldnotes when engaging with these groups, but I continued learning and experiencing things (particularly as a Unity volunteer caseworker) that fed into my research in indirect ways.

While it seems strange to start a methods section outlining what I didn't study, these two important spaces of 'non-research' – the inside of detention, and my existing world of Unity organising - orientated and guided my academic work in important ways, and I feel confident that articulating these boundaries from the start allowed me to engage in richer and more ethical research overall. Ultimately, I felt (and feel) that informed consent in spaces of incarceration is extremely difficult to achieve, and that to have a clear option of 'no' (and for engagement that is 'non-research') is vital to consent more generally. Therefore, as I explain in Chapter 1, I only mention one key episode from inside Dungavel visiting room through this thesis, after talking it through extensively with the people involved following their release. I also conducted a number of phone interviews with people inside whilst they were detained, again after extensive discussion about this with them, as this was a form of communication in which they could more clearly 'hang up', withdraw consent and hopefully not feel as monitored as when we sat together, surrounded by other visitors, detainees and guards, in the visiting room.

The first 'phase' of my fieldwork involved establishing consent and introducing, or often reintroducing, myself to a wide range of organisations and individuals I had identified as possible participants in the research. Prior to fieldwork, I conducted eight unstructured interviews with friends involved in campaigns around immigration detention, four of whom had been detained themselves, to get feedback on my topics and questions. I adapted some of my focuses and questions in relation to their feedback, and began my full fieldwork in September 2018. In the first three months I established a small, informal 'film club' to watch and discuss films related to detention, which met five times at various people's houses. I contacted a large number of individual people, initially through networks of mutual friends,

and gave out a short printed summary of my research to those interested so that they could read through and consider their involvement in their own time. I did not use any signed consent forms, but instead checked in about this regularly as we went along. I realised quickly that many people had real 'research fatigue' from being contacted and interviewed by academics, especially if they were linked to publically available groups. I therefore tried to make sure that I only persisted in contacting those who expressed particular interest in taking part, rather than those who had been through similar processes already. Of the several people I met with regularly over the year after these requests, Adam – who I had met through Unity Centre, but also had other mutual friends with - was particularly excited to get involved, and we also gelled quickly as friends. He became an integral part of my fieldwork, and we usually spent an afternoon or morning each week at various cafes, parks and social spaces throughout the time, dependent on his work and college schedules. Similarly, Amina, Natalie, Mariam, Shaun, Mohsin, Priya and Alyssa, who we meet through the thesis, were all people I'd had initial contact with through existing groups, but then carefully negotiated a new 'research consent' with in the first few months. Such levels of consent, along with the variety of different experiences and backgrounds of these key participants, influenced my decision to prioritise their inclusion in the final thesis. I use pseudonyms throughout, either chosen by people themselves, or picked at random by me.

Throughout the fieldwork I attended and wrote about over 100 public events, meetings and protests – and often used these spaces as a way to introduce my research, often to people with whom I had existing friendships with but wanted to establish boundaries with. Here are a few of the organisations whose events I attended, to give a sense of the breadth of activity going on in the city: The 1 Big Family Foundation, Ubuntu Women Shelter, the Racial Justice Network, Unity Centre, Africa Future, Govan Community Project, Living Rent, Glasgow University / Gramnet, MORE, Docs Not Cops, Govan Law Centre, Women's Asylum Seeker Housing Project, Lift the Ban Coalition, Stop Lock Change Evictions, No Evictions Network, Maryhill Integration Network, and Positive Action in Housing. In the first three months of fieldwork I also attended weekly meetings with a Participant Action Research (PAR) group linked to a local NGO, after introducing myself at a meeting and then giving everyone time to consider my involvement. We met weekly in group sizes ranging from 6-15 from October till December 2018, when the group's funding ended. My involvement with key people

linked to that group: Ginika, Marcel, Sophia, Amber, Iris, Selma, and Jane in particular, continued after the group's end, and the discussions we'd had together helped frame my fieldwork in a more general sense. While many of the 'snowball' participants mentioned in the previous paragraph were from Sudanese, Eritrean, Pakistani, India and Jamaican backgrounds, the PAR group were predominately from Nigeria, Cameroon and Namibia. I tended to see certain replications within groups as I got to know people: most of those I met from North Africa tended to be single, mainly men but some women, in their 20s, whereas the PAR group and South Asian people I met were slightly older, often with young children.

People came from a wide range of backgrounds and complex class compositions, with many speaking of rural, impoverished and working class communities back home and in refugee camps en route, whilst others would speak to histories of professional work and relative wealth prior to them leaving their countries of origin. I did not attempt to guide my research in any particular direction in terms of nationality and demographic, but feel it is worth mentioning here as this resulted in my immersion in certain diasporic communities over others (I ended up spending little time with people from Iran, Albania, Vietnam or China for instance, despite the high percentage of people seeking asylum from these countries). This was also guided by a critique of 'methodological nationalism', which Anderson describes as "a model that naturalises the nation state as a container of social processes and thereby pre-determines and defines certain objects of sociological enquiry" (2019: 3, see also Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002). In attempting not to reify particular nations, or their conceptions of 'migration', I focused instead on Glasgow and Dungavel as a key local sites, shaped by mobility, immobility and transnationality.

At the start of my fieldwork, I also contacted Scottish Detainee Visitors about doing ethnographic research with the group, before participating in 'visitor training' in October and doing my first visit in November, though it wasn't until April 2019 that I was given full approval by the SDV staff for the research. I contacted visitors individually before each visit from this point on in order to check about consent, and wrote about the drives to and from Dungavel, but not about the 'inside' of the visiting room for reasons outlined above. Over this fieldwork, I conducted 19 official visits to Dungavel with 23 different people, along with several non-SDV visits, one of which I later wrote up, which is discussed in Chapter 1. I shared considerable amounts of time with many of these people over the year – particularly

Annie, Elena, Elsa, Winnie, Layla, Amy, Yasin, Gladys – and they guided and informed my thinking along with participating in the general ethnographic 'hanging out' and more formalised unstructured interviews towards the end.

Throughout this time, I became enmeshed in wider a digital ethnographic world of Twitter accounts, email lists, Facebook pages, 'slack' (an online organising platform) channels, text messages, signal groups (a 'secure' WhatsApp alternative) and multiple WhatsApp groups. These accompanied and facilitated more traditional 'hanging out' and participant observation with a growing set of participants across key spaces such as the African Arts Centre, Glasgow Autonomous Space (a self-run community centre, library and gig venue), multiple city libraries, a range of coffee shops and parks, Tramway gallery, local community centres, and often simply in the usefully anonymous booths of various McDonald's, Morrison's and Tesco cafés. As my fieldwork rolled on, I started being invited into certain people's private homes (Specifically: Priya & Mohsin, Mariam, Adam, Amina) and inviting people for meals or coffees at my house, but the vast majority of my ethnographic work happened in these more public spaces, mainly because of the lack of privacy and security people felt in asylum accommodation, and questions over having guests (see Chapter 2). Throughout the year, I kept notes in my phone, a paper diary, extended laptop notes and both a digital and physical folder of images, flyers and other non-text ethnographic data.

The second 'phase' of my fieldwork, having established key contacts and consent, involved a range of unpredicted events, that forced me to re-establish key sites for the project. The first of these episodes was a series of meetings and protests in support of the Sudanese Revolution, which galvanised the Scottish Sudanese community in support of attempts to depose the dictatorship of Omar Al-Bashir. The new year of 2019 also saw an escalation of activity against evictions from asylum accommodation, and I was able to balance my role as campaigner with 'research' in this new group by carving out clear time with people to discuss and write up certain events, whilst 'getting on with the work' of support and organising at others. Amongst various meetings, street stalls, strategy sessions, protests and 'solidarity vigils' at sites of possible eviction, I wrote up a few key examples, whilst also helping organise the launch of the new No Evictions Network (NEN) in February. Later that month, I attended a full day of the court case against Serco, the asylum accommodation

provider, at the Court of Sessions in Edinburgh, with members of NEN, written up in Chapter 2. I also joined another new group at this time, Docs Not Cops Glasgow, attending 9 meetings and events as 'researcher' through the coming months. February was the month that Nasar Khan, who was being supported by the Docs Not Cops group in Birmingham, but linked to friends in Glasgow, tragically died in a hospice after being initially denied care on the grounds of his immigration status (discussed in Chapter 5). I decided to not use a pseudonym for Nasar due to the high profile nature and press coverage of his case, and how his family and friends stressed the need to 'raise awareness' of his death, which I hope I've done here and elsewhere in some way. I followed the case through the months, and ended up travelling to Birmingham to talk with those involved in March, as well as attending an event around the life and anti-deportation work of Muhammad Idrish (explored in Chapter 7, whose name has also not been changed following discussions with him).

From May 2019 onwards I continued meeting regularly with Adam and other key participants, as we formulated a project that would be linked to this research, planning a collective research-campaign called 'Beyond the Right to Work' that collected testimonies about working conditions amongst people who had recently been granted status to work. In the end we abandoned this project after Adam and his brother were badly injured in an horrific racist street attack in June (see Chapter 3). I conducted a number of long-form interviews over this time with mental health workers, city councillors, medical workers, NGO workers and campaigners, finding that many people (particularly 'professionals') would rather put aside a few hours for a discussion than the opaque offer of an 'ethnographic hangout'. After several months of visiting and making connections inside Dungavel, I also approached several people who were currently detained that I had become close with about doing phone interviews, and did these with six people inside in the end, along with two after release. In the end I chose to focus on Stanley, Noah, Andrey and Adele's testimonies, as these were the most developed relationships I established, and their words spoke to the range of experiences I encountered amongst people inside. Towards the end of the research I conducted thirty-seven long-form recorded interviews – two with couples, the rest all one-on-one: six with SDV volunteers, four with medical practitioners working with people affected by detention, two with local politicians, two with people historically involved in asylum service provision in the city, and fifteen with people from campaign or

community groups. Of these, only one person worked directly inside a detention centre, Doctor Dean from Chapter 5 – while twenty had direct experience of being detained. I found that an open, long interview at the end of the fieldwork was a useful way to frame an 'end' of the research with people. Even whilst 'interviewing', I tried to leave the space open to go in any direction, led by the interviewee, and avoiding intrusive questions from me, in large part because of the ways in which people in the asylum and immigration system are aggressively interviewed and scrutinised as part of their claims. Summer 2019 saw a flurry of action around evictions, including a number of high-profile protests and direct actions targeted at Serco, Mears (who took over the asylum accommodation contract) and the Glasgow City Council. I continued to participate in these as an ethnographer where appropriate, visit Dungavel, and do day-to-day participant observation, whilst slowly trying to extract myself as 'researcher' from a field I've still felt very much a part of as I have gathered, collected and written up my work.

Playlist

Listening, as well as participating and observing, was a key part of my fieldwork throughout, and whilst songs and sounds pepper the pages of the thesis that comes, I thought it could also be instructive to lay out a song-a-month 'soundtrack' of my time 'in the field', as a coda to this section:

- September 2018: Michael Jackson – They don't really care about us (Played as intro music at Glasgow Refugee and Asylum Seekers Solidarity event)
- October: Unidentified Sudanese Protest Song (sung by a man in the crowd during a Q&A after a film screening about detention)
- November: Ariana Grande - thank u, next (Multiple Café Radios)
- December: Crazy Frog – Jingle Bells (at PAR Christmas session)
- January 2019: Zoozita - Surrender البلد مفاتيح سلم - زوزيتا (Originally written by Muhammad Wardi – played at Sudanese Protest in Edinburgh)
- February: Trust Fund – Abundant (On train to Edinburgh for Serco Trial)
- March: Funnel Vision - Party in the Elevator (Repeated plays as part of musical statues during childcare at event)
- April: Killer Mike – Reagan (Blasted from hired car on drive back from SDV visit to Dungavel)

- May: Isle of Lewis Back Free Church Singers - Psalm 16 8-9 (From the album 'Salm: Gaelic Psalms from the Hebrides of Scotland', played on way to Dungavel in car after a discussion about Gaelic Psalm singing)
- June: Djembe Drumming at Forum Theatre event organised by MORE (Migrants Organising for Rights and Empowerment)
- July: Lal & Mike Waterson – Bright Pheobus (Played in car on visit to Dungavel, with friend on her last visit before leaving the country to move back to Sweden)
- August: Dave - Location (ft. Burna Boy) (On way to Living Rent action at Serco Caledonia Sleeper)
- September: Kansas City Express - This Is the Place (played in room whilst trying to collate notes towards 'the end' of fieldwork).

I have made a mix of some of these songs, along with audio from my fieldwork, that can be streamed or downloaded here: https://tinyurl.com/JWthesisplaylist

Structure of the Thesis

Detainability, deportability and 'deterrence' are not simply parts of life for people in the British asylum and immigration system, but a 'condition of life' (Han, 2017), threaded into their day-to-day routines and relationships. This was acutely evident across key sites such as Immigration Removal Centres and Home Office reporting buildings, but extended far beyond, through other spaces, memories, relationships and practices of care. The anthropological task is here not to try and 'pinpoint' the location of the carceral, but to be attentive to its wide and differentiated operation for different people in multiple forms. Delicate consideration of this through the twelve months of fieldwork led me to the sense that 'carcerality' could appear in unpredictable ways: the smell of overcooked broccoli, the glimpse of a police uniform, the sound of an airplane, a stranger's glance on the street. Guiding these experiences, however, was the existence of a material, tangible space of 'detention', even for those who hadn't actually been there. The conditions such spaces impose, even at a distance, have particular effects on how people build relationships, care for one another, and live, which in turn can help us expand our understandings of these very concepts.

Following this focus on detention as a range of material spaces, along with the relational forms that emerge within and inform such sites, I organise the main body of this thesis in two main parts. Firstly, I overview three spatial sites of 'detainability': the IRC itself, the

home, and the dispersal city. With these as a backdrop, the second half of the thesis overviews three key spheres of life and relationality for 'detainable' people: interactions and complicities with 'the state', constructions of vulnerability and risk within medical care, and forms of work. I then attempt to link some of these threads through a concluding discussion of solidarity, representation and political action. This structure starts 'inside' partly because of how central the idea or shadow of the IRC was to everyone I met, but takes us 'in' and 'out' of detention at various times, mirroring the ways people would often be detained multiple times, or feel in many cases to be simultaneously 'inside' and 'out' at once. I attempt to maintain a delicate balance then, between centring the material fact of sites of detention as integral to the 'conditioning' of life, alongside the diverse manifestations this could take outside the IRC walls. This structure also allows a gradual introduction of various important bits of policy and legislation. We learn through the chapters about visiting rules, the lack of a 'time limit' on immigration detention, Asylum Support legislation, the history of dispersal, Immigration Bail, the confusing logics of a 'good asylum claim', medical procedures within detention, and different limits on the right to work.

Visiting is the key way in which people like myself, along with existing friends and family, interact with people in detention. Chapter 1 thus begins with a detailed ethnographic overview of detention visiting, as a way in to understand the kinds of relationships and lives people build during incarceration inside an IRC. I argue that visiting exists at a threshold between the 'inside' and 'outside' of detention, producing forms of relationality that are marked by this. Key to these is NGO 'befriending' as a form of what I term 'humanitarian kinship', drawing on both ideas of the 'suffering subject' and a participation in a relational collective. Such practices exist 'within but outside' the IRC institution, linking to the different ways that visitors understand their own relationship to the 'insideness' and 'outsideness' of detention.

Following this, Chapter 2 moves outside of detention itself, to consider how people in asylum accommodation in Glasgow, Scotland's only asylum dispersal city, attempt to make their homes. It focuses on a protracted legal battle around what counts as a home, in the face of an attempt by the privatised asylum housing provider Serco to evict a large number of people from their accommodation. Housing is always linked here to people's material subsistence, through Asylum Support regulations, which grant a meagre amount of cash and

mandate inhabitancy of 'no choice' dispersal to cities like Glasgow, only if people can demonstrate a material and relational 'destitution'. Surveillance and house searches from para-State figures, such as Serco housing officers, espouse a rhetorical 'duty of care', but ensure that tenants must consistently live at the edges of this marginally withheld destitution, with a cumulative effect of making people's home feel, as one woman put it "like imaginary detention."

Chapter 3 widens the spatial lens from the previous Chapters' focuses on detention and the home to consider how Glasgow as a city is experienced by 'detainable' people. It argues that the city is something people feel in an affective sense, and that for detainable people the city often feels like detention, across the wider urban environment and in relation to distinct areas and buildings. While systems of bail, policing and surveillance structure this feeling of detainability, networks of friends, family and community strangers-as-kin also contribute to a feeling of being 'known' in urban space – with complex overlaps of intimacy and reassurance, alongside feelings of intimidation and dread. Sensory experiences such as sharing food can take on a particular role here, transporting people 'inside' and 'outside' detention, or allowing for conviviality and connection in ways that work to unravel such unpredictable proximities to the carceral. Racist violence confronts people at unpredictable times and places within this already ominous urban space, as the shared recognition of community 'knowing' is contorted into markers of difference by proximate 'strangers'.

Following these three chapters, which situate my ethnography spatially within key sites of detainability, I then move to consider three spheres of life as they emerge through such sites: the 'state', healthcare and work. Chapter 4 considers the ways in which people attempt to understand what the Home Office is and how it operates, along with the ways such processes involve navigating ideas of the 'state' and 'stateness'. NGO advisers may be told to 'think like the Home Office' to provide effective support, but also use metaphors of a 'game', 'lottery', 'monster' or pinball machine to describe the institution. How does one think like a pinball machine? What does it mean to act or feel like a 'state'? How might 'thinking like' blur into 'becoming' the Home Office? Does 'thinking like' imply a kind of complicity, and to be complicit, do we have to know what we're complicit 'with'? Looking at how people think, act and play with ideas of the Home Office, also involves considering what happens when state entities withdraw responsibility. This was especially acute inside

detention, where formal and legal state withdrawal is met with the material presence of walls, barbed-wire and force.

What happens when you try and assess harm in an environment many see as intrinsically harmful? Chapter 5 considers how ideas of 'vulnerability', 'risk' and 'harm' are produced and understood within IRC healthcare. It focuses on one medical professional from a UK IRC who told me how "It sometimes feels as if I hold the key," to getting people out. Release and liberty are here accessed through particular forms of medical expertise, itself only really understandable when put into the context of a collectively improvised institutional process that draws in a range of IRC staff, NGO advocates and others. Fitting into narrow categories of vulnerability often involves drawing on this wider set of actors, whilst finding ways to engage with medical 'care' that is deeply intertwined with a capacity to withhold and grant liberty. In ways that are very much analogous to the wider asylum system, proving or evidencing forms of harm or trauma is a difficult process, involving what one NGO worker called "a legal arms race, a clinical arms race," with differing ideas of what constitute harm and vulnerability becoming subsumed by who has the capacity to act on such definitions. Meanwhile, many 'detainable' people outside detention try and avoid medical and 'caring' scrutiny for fear of being sent 'inside', leading to acute experiences of ill-health and, in one tragic case discussed in this chapter, death. The racializing and violent logics of the hostile environment manifest in particularly brutal ways here: the system produces vulnerability as much as it claims to simply identify and sort different 'vulnerable groups'. Through this, the 'shared vulnerabilities' of friends, family and campaigning groups can still create moments of affirmation and support, a vulnerability *as* resistance that is always in process.

Chapter 6 then turns to question what it means for 'detainable' people' to be 'productive' in a system that withholds their right to work. Focusing first on people working inside detention, the only place that a large number of people in the UK asylum and immigration system can legally work, the chapter moves to consider forms of carcerality and relationality amongst those who do get the 'right to work'. Across these sites, people attempted to understand their position within spheres of 'production', 'reproduction' and 'non-production', pointing to spaces and forms of life 'outside' the limits of capital accumulation. Finding, doing, resisting, and refusing work are all deeply relational processes, creating colleagues, friends and sometimes comrades, with a material and experiential stake in a

shared task or workspace. For many of the men I met during my fieldwork, extensive and exploitative labouring involved pushing at the limits of their own 'reproduction' (through multiple, exhausting jobs), but was geared towards re-establishing gendered and familial roles through immigration status and family reunification. Life at the margins of 'productivity' involves shifting forms of exclusion and incorporation, with the promise of the 'right to work' often hiding the continued forms of racialized exploitation that await 'successful' refugees. Yet throughout such processes, people make connections and friends that are not reducible to purely economic terms, and what Emma Dowling calls "reproducing life itself" (2016: 454) is never fully contained within the reach of capital.

To conclude the thesis, I then turn, in Chapter 7, to two 'unexpected' events that became important parts of my fieldwork: the flurry of meetings, actions and demonstrations that Sudanese people in Glasgow organised in support of protests to overthrow the dictatorship of Omar al-Bashir in Sudan; and the communal sharing of an anti-deportation video archive linked to trade unionist and anti-racist campaigner Muhammad Idrish in Birmingham. I unpack how the affective power of words like 'friend', 'care' and 'solidarity' can become heightened in moments of collective protest and political struggle, with boundaries of time and space unsettled by the sharing of images, words and support. The everyday video sharing and live-streaming that people drew on throughout my fieldwork – and that was explicitly absent inside detention – is utilised to capture and heighten the experience of protest and political organising. Such images allow for a certain opacity in Glissandian (1997) terms, refusing to reduce people to the static transparency of categories like 'the asylum seeker' or the apolitical suffering 'migrant'. This opacity extends to the framing of the image itself, with the shaky temporariness and mutuality of camera-phone video streaming and DIY film-making always implying that which is 'out of shot': the crowd that would welcome the distant viewer, the multiple backgrounds behind those viewer's screens, the invitation to participate in the communal montage. 'Solidarity' itself involves a similar 'opacity of the frame' for many of those I met through the year, it is simultaneously about capturing something shared, and opening up that framing beyond a clear containment. In practical terms, this means allowing for the emergence of both 'friends' and 'strangers', and for seeing how shifting forms of collectivity can move or change our personal subjectivities.

I then conclude the thesis by focusing briefly on an episode than seemed to tie together many of the threads above, in a way that was filled with hope and potentiality. This was the successful blockade of an immigration removal van on Kenmure Street in Glasgow in May 2021, just around the corner from my flat, which resulted in the release of two men being taken to detention by the Home Office. Here, many of the people and ideas I write about within this thesis came together in a remarkable way, showing how care, friendship and even freedom can involve a communal 'holding' of space, against the crushing containments of the state.

Chapter 1: Friendship at the Threshold

Care & Custody

The routine feels familiar now. We meet at 6pm at the Bridge Street Subway Station, just on the edge of Glasgow city centre. It has been a winter of dark, wet drives to Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre (IRC). Some of my fellow visitors have never seen the IRC in the light. The clocks went forward last week though, and it's a clear evening as I park up the hire-car, registered with Scottish Detainee Visitors (SDV). Annie and Elana arrive together, they both know each other from University. We've all visited a few times together now, but this is the first visit since my research was officially approved by SDV's two paid staff and Board, after which I've been checking in individually with each visitor too.

We chat and catch up as I drive, snaking past the rush hour traffic onto the M74 motorway, sometimes having to shout to be heard over the noise of the road. Elena is sat in the back, and tells us about how she just got engaged, taking us through the night of her partner's proposal with excitement and deprecating humour, "he knew I would never have said yes if he'd done it somewhere public!" Annie then tells us about her sister's recent engagement too, and they both laugh about the stresses of wedding planning and family organising. At one point the conversation lulls, and Elena asks, "so, who are we seeing today then?" Annie reads from a notepad where she's jotted down names, CID (Casework Information Database) numbers, language requirements and phone numbers, talking us through which people had responded wanting a visit, or not. Elena hasn't been able to come for a few weeks, and asks about some people she'd seen previously. "Oh I think he was released … or removed. Released or removed, we're not sure. He's not on our list anymore anyway, maybe we can ask the officer," Annie responds, "it's so hard isn't it? People disappear all the time." We come off the motorway and follow a winding set of country roads, passing through small towns and farm land. Just as the Satnav starts to get confused, we turn at a small white road sign saying 'Dungavel House IRC', glimpsing barbed wire fencing and floodlights through the trees. "Oh, it's so gross," says Elena, as we drive slowly up towards the main gate. I park up and we all silently fiddle with pockets and coats: phones have to be left in the car, paperwork and leaflets prepped for a search, IDs readied, along with 20p coins for the visiting room vending machine.

The air outside feels colder and clearer. A thin wood circles the area, but the only birdsong comes from a group of sparrows, nesting around the roof. Above them, a conical tower, topped by a rusting weather vane. The building itself is old and grand, almost gothic looking, previously a hunting lodge and summer retreat for the Dukes

of Hamilton, before it was turned into a prison and then, in 2001, an IRC. It is circled by a huge metal fence, topped with razor wire, and an array of lights and cameras. The car park is quite full, one corner has a row of big white transportation vans and a portacabin, both run by the company 'MITIE' and adorned with their logo and motto: 'Care & Custody'. Annie buzzes in to a little camera and microphone at the entrance tunnel or 'holding pen', "Hello? Scottish Detainee Visitors. Three people. Yes, we have our IDs." A first hydraulic gate swings open and we walk inside the long cage of fencing, covered at one side by a tattered Perspex roof. A transport van is leaving through the adjacent vehicle exit, guards peer at its underside with a mirrored stick on wheels, before waving it on. "Maybe they just had some new arrivals," says Annie quietly, as we hear another guard behind the gate: trudging, scraping, the sound of a key in a lock.

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Figure 2: Dungavel House IRC, Main Gate

Visiting is an arrival that always implies a leaving, not quite inside and not quite out. In the extended academic 'visit' that made up my PhD fieldwork I made the journey above many times, every week or two for 12 months. Occasionally it would occur to me that some of the people I was going to visit had been inside Dungavel throughout this time, watching the seasons change through the window, or on walks through the IRC grounds. While they were in some important sense 'stuck' (Turnbull, 2015; Jefferson, Turner & Jensen, 2018; Russell & Rae, 2020), the 'visitors' I joined for these journeys moved through their lives at what sometimes seemed a rapid pace, navigating their way through engagements, marriages, graduations, births, and deaths. But life doesn't stop when you are detained, as much as detention seems to sever and limit the established relational worlds people inhabit. Those inside detention, and those who are broadly 'detainable' in a wider sense, find ways to form and sustain themselves and the relationships that matter to them throughout their detention. This process is deeply affected by the carceral logics and limitations of particular IRCs, but not reducible to these. While I go on in the next two chapters to consider the roles friendship and care play in asylum dispersal accommodation and the wider city of Glasgow, I begin here within the IRC because of the central structuring and affective role that detention plays for 'detainable' people. Visiting happens in the heart of this system, within the IRC walls, and thus allows us to consider the carcerality of the immigration system in its acute material form. Detention may be a 'logic' that structures immigration controls in Britain, but it is also a place, surrounded by fencing and razor wire, where people are forced to live. Not losing sight of this material and spatial form allows us to appreciate the wider reach of 'detainability' outside the IRC, and how ideas of 'inside' and 'outside' are drawn upon by those who have been through detention.

This chapter focuses on Scottish Detainee Visitor (SDV), the only official detention visiting group in Scotland. The majority of the chapter focuses on the codified 'befriending' practices utilised by groups such as SDV, which I posit as a form of 'humanitarian kinship', whereby the relational processes of 'befriending' create particular interpersonal subjects, along with narratives of suffering, charity and responsibility. These necessarily intersect with Home Office notions of 'care' and 'custody', or "custody [as] a form of care" (Sufrin, 2017: 186), producing relational forms marked by what Foucault calls "pastoral power", a religiously-inflected "salvation orientated" form of disciplinary care (1982: 213). It is through

SDV that people like Elena, Annie and myself would try and navigate the particular difficulty of 'befriending' someone who can disappear, or turning a scribbled CID number and 'full name' into a meaningful, if contextually bounded, relationship. For many visitors, detention was something they attempted to 'leave behind' at each visit as a kind of 'holding space' itself, as Elena put it to me in a subsequent chat, discussing a woman she'd got particularly close with:

> I love the time we had together …. and I don't want to sound cold and mean …. but that lives there. I don't think it would be healthy for me to turn all those relationships into friends in the outside world, because how we met and how we got to know each other was a really specific context, and I don't think that would ever really go away.

Relationships are marked by detention in this view, never really leaving the carceral space they emerged from – yet people like Elena were committed to the regular routine of 'befriending' people inside. Detention visiting thus raises a number of productive questions: what kinds of friends are possible in such circumstances? How do people going through the detention system engage in forms of relationality and care? How is the carceral felt 'inside' and carried 'outside'? Can it be left behind? How does a visit, which Elena went on to describe as intrinsically 'weird', a "chat with a stranger," become understood in terms of support, friendship and commitment?

Many of the visitors and people in detention that I got to know would try and work through such questions through ideas of 'inside' / 'outside', or, as we'll see, differently emphasised *friends* and friends. Friendship and care in detention must reckon with the enforced liminality of the border regime, which I argue throughout this thesis is not an accidental effect of a system that 'sorts' categories of people, but a key component of how borders produce, differentiate and enforce precarious immigration status, creating forms of life "on the threshold of in and out" (Khosravi, 2008: 332). Detention is this threshold writ in bricks, mortar and barbed wire, a 'holding space' that acts a particular, often painful terrain for friendship, at the same time as it blocks and interrupt people's relational worlds. Dungavel's remote outside-ness, far from the city and people's established lives, can compound a sense of isolation or being 'disappeared', and is framed by periods of transit to the IRC (often after dark) that condition experiences of the space. Visiting crosses these spatial and material divides, and it was in the hour long drive to and from Dungavel that SDV visitors would

unpack the conversations had and relationships made. Such relationships, and the boundaries that inform them, unfold temporally, marked by the immigration detention's 'indefinite' temporality, along with the unpredictable timings of removal and release: often experienced as 'disappearance.'

I begin the chapter through outlining the ways in which NGO visiting practices and the Dungavel 'visits room' express forms of what I call 'humanitarian kinship', before seeing how these are utilised in divergent ways by visitors, often involving narratives of 'inside' and 'outside'. I then relay an episode of 'informal' visiting that drew on 'friendship' and notions of an 'inside' in slightly different ways, pointing to how what Veena Das calls 'critical events' (1996) are often experienced in interpersonal or 'vicarious' ways. However, I will first briefly discuss how this chapter intersects with literature on humanitarianism, arguing that 'befriending' should be viewed as a form of 'humanitarian kinship', but that this takes shifting and contested forms day-to-day.

Humanitarian Kinship

Anthropology has had a long if sometimes tricky relationship with humanitarianism, which Miriam Tickin glosses as shifting from an "embrace of the morality underlying humanitarianism to critiques and denunciation of humanitarianism," before moving in recent years "to more cautious, ethnographic examinations and descriptions of its complexities, limits, and boundaries" (2014: 283). Anthropology of humanitarianism tends to ethnographically explore the ways in which 'humanitarian reason' (Fassin 2011) has involved a shift in focus: away from structural inequality, political violence and notions of 'justice'; and towards notions of individualised 'suffering', medicalised trauma and empathetic connection with 'victims'. As outlined in the Introduction, Ticktin's work has been important for my own thinking through this thesis, linking to a wider body of literature on the 'suffering' body (Allen, 2009; Fassin, 2011; Fassin & D'Halluin, 2005; Kelly, 2011; Ticktin 2006, 2011) and "social suffering" as common human experience (Das et al. 1997, 2001; Kleinman et al. 1997). Joel Robbins argues that this literature has been part of a wider anthropological move away from the 'savage' Other and towards the 'suffering slot', with "the figure of humanity united in its shared vulnerability to suffering" (2013: 450). I critically

unpack such ideas of 'vulnerability' in more detail in Chapter 5, on detainable people's experiences of medical care, but introduce the topic here because of the key role ideas of 'suffering' and 'vulnerability' played in the forms of relatedness I go on to examine. Here we see not only a historical "kinship between the role of anthropologist and humanitarian" (Ticktin, 2014: 277), but kinship *as* a form of humanitarianism, centred on a generalised 'suffering' Other that is at once a personal 'friend'.

Following my Introduction - which posited immigration detention as a legal, social and material 'holding space' forged in the afterlife of Empire – I argue here that detention visiting is a form of what I call 'humanitarian kinship', linked to that history. Narratives of 'befriending' aim to transform the moral subjectivities of both visitor and 'detainee', with the latter clearly positioned as suffering 'victim' in certain ways, but also as an active participant in a community of relatedness. Ideas of 'befriending', 'welcome' and 'sanctuary' (see Darling, 2010) have often drawn on a "mythology of British hospitality" (Kemp, 2019: 2), whilst visiting also connects to a history of often Quaker-led prison visiting and reform initiatives that centred friendship as doing 'God's will', a moral and religious duty for disciplined subject formation (Foucault, 1977; Duwe and Clark, 2013, see also Feldman, 2007). Such discourses and practices emerged alongside international projects such as the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) scheme, which as Jordanna Bailkin's outlines, sent young people from the British elite out to parts of the decolonizing Empire throughout the 1950s and 1960s: "to preserve the spirit of imperial adventure, while also forging new types of postimperial relationships" (2012: 57). In contrast to classic histories of humanitarianism, Bailkin goes on to posit that "the crux of the VSO idea was not technical aid but international friendship" (2012: 74), linking to other work that has analysed the role of friendship in colonial and 'post'-colonial settings (see Ghandi, 2006). This focus on friendship was shaped by the shifting of global power balances in the wake of the second world war and decolonization:

> If the Peace Corps sought to reassure critics that America's power could be matched by its humanitarianism, then VSO championed a very different impulse: one that was shaped by the loss of global supremacy rather than its acquisition (Bailkin 2012: 58)

This is a subtly different story to that told by Ticktin, who argues that 'colonial aphasia' (Stoler, 2001) was integral to how organisations like Médecins Sans Frontières arose from the collapse of a European Left 'third-worldist' solidarity movements, moving towards a

humanitarian "antipolitical moralism" (Ticktin, 2011: 64). This potentially draws too hard a line between the 'political' pre-1968 movements, and their 'humanitarian' descendants, whilst missing how the interplay between ideas of 'friendship' and 'solidarity' structured both (see also Chapter 7). Furthermore, against the medicalised notion of traumatic 'aphasia' as an inability to remember and comprehend, Bailkin points to an experience of colonial 'loss' as structuring humanitarian logic, with 'befriending' as a key expression of this. 'Befriending', an important but easy slip from the 'friend', has a particular unilateral edge then: implying a 'them' in need of support, along with such histories of colonial loss and humanitarian salvation.

Awareness of these histories was apparent throughout my visits, particularly amongst people who had spent most of their lives in Britain but were being threatened with deportation to formerly colonised countries such as Jamaica or India, as we will see. Complex questions were raised by interactions with visitors who were often 'international' (particularly from the USA) or 'well-travelled' within these countries: what were their personal and familial stories of connection to such histories? What kinds of relationships emerge from a sense 'loss' rather than 'forgetting'? What is a 'good' friend within such a context? Detention visiting prompts such questions, pointing to a history of humanitarian projects centred around relationality and 'welcome' and linking to anthropological work on ethics and morality, as "intrinsically interpersonal" (Lambek, 2015: 10), involving "the becoming and maintenance" of ethical subjects (Faubian, 2011: 20). Visiting draws on tropes of both humanitarian 'saviour' ('re-integrating' and offering emotional support to the 'suffering' detainee) and relational 'friend', often in overlapping ways, situated within broader narratives of charity and 'doing good'. It thus involves particular responses to Ticktin's powerful question around humanitarian morality: "What is the effect of doing good?" and "What does doing good end up actually doing?" (2011: 163). I consider such questions through this chapter, whilst being open to how forms of interconnection within detention visiting went beyond the normative codified forms of 'humanitarian kinship' established through NGO procedure. As Cheryl Mattingly argues, ethical considerations of 'the good' involve constant experimentation and are "marked with a radical uncertainty", a communal experiment in fashioning the subjective 'I' and collective 'We', always entangled (2014: 16, 22). Visiting, as we will see, involves such collective experiments, navigating the

shared 'we' of SDV visitors and 'people on the SDV list', along with ethical questions about responsibility, commitment and altruism, often expressed through notions of 'inside' and 'out'.

Within but Outside: 'A relaxed regime'

We're taken up in a lift to the top floor of Scottish Refugee Council. The office is open plan - long, neat and clean – with rows of young staff at desks, all wearing smart clothes and lanyards. The walls are adorned with framed magazine covers and artwork, one large picture catches my eye: it's a kind of surrealist photo collage of a family in a folded paper boat - the women in headscarves, grasping onto small children - being welcomed to an island by a muscular white man in a kilt.

Our group is guided into a glass meeting room overlooking the city, people chat and get hot drinks and nibbles (M&S flapjack bites, fresh fruit) from a side table. We sit at small tables, about 25 people now, facing the front of the room. Anne from SDV welcomes us all, standing in front of a projected presentation she's put together, a picture of some barbed wire fence overlaid with words in bold font: 'An Introduction to Immigration Detention and the Detention Estate'. I scribble down bits of information as she starts to speak:

- Dungavel has 249 bed spaces – 14 for women.[2]
- "It is hard to access without a car, staff can send a pickup to the nearest train station in Hamilton, 15 miles away […] It is in the middle of nowhere basically."
- SDV saw 238 people in 2017, from 49 countries.
- The top 10 were Romania (11%), China (10%), India (8%), Vietnam (7%), Iran (5%), Iraq (5%), Poland (5%), Sudan (5%), Afghanistan.
- "We see 7 people per visit average, between 2 and 14: you need to be prepared for anything."'
- "We mostly see men - 19% of the people we saw last year were women."
- "Nearly half we see only once, 9% seen over 10 times" – "this roughly fits with the breakdown of how long people stay there."
- "I think the ultimate purpose of what we do is … to provide friendship."

The day of training then proceeds with role-plays, writing exercises, and discussion: tailored to forming us all into effective volunteer visitors.

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[2] This reduced to an overall capacity of 125 towards the end of my fieldwork – see Introduction.

At one point we're invited to have a Q & A with existing SDV volunteers in small groups. An older woman who tells us she has a background in 'justice reform', and has visited a number of prisons in the past, is asked about her impression of the guards:

"Well, you only really see them to sign in, and they can be quite different in their approaches. Some are really helpful and calm, some can be difficult. Any problems, we always just say to feedback to Anne and the SDV staff, not to get in arguments. Anne meets regularly with the management at Dungavel, they appreciate what we do. GEO [the company that run Dungavel] are not a big player in the UK, it's their only centre. It's a bit of a hand to mouth situation to be honest – the place looks fairly run down. But it's a really different environment to down south, people generally prefer it. Overall, I would say it is quite a relaxed regime."

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The SDV visitor training situated the organisation within key humanitarian narratives of 'witnessing' and documenting suffering, espousing 'universal' humanity, and generally 'doing good', epitomised by a drawing Anne showed during one exercise, of a heart behind a row of bars, which she felt exemplified detention: "I think it's really important to show that there are humans and love behind those bars." This linked with her expression of SDV's "ultimate purpose" as being "to provide friendship," but implied different relational practices to humanitarian procedures centred on helping 'clients' or responding to a 'crisis'. Alongside this, through the info packs and overlap of key personnel, the training situated SDV within the large network of NGOs and organisations that made up the 'refugee sector' in Scotland. SDV was set up in 2002, to 'befriend and support people being held at Dungavel detention centre near Strathaven, South Lanarkshire,' emerging from a small group of people linked to the Scottish Refugee Council. The majority of detention visiting groups across Britain emerged around this time, with the massive expansion of the detention estate following New Labour's 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act (analysed in detail in Chapter 2). Like SDV however, most have roots in organisations like the Refugee Council, which in turn emerged from a history of humanitarian NGO formation in the aftermath of the 1951 Refugee Convention. Though the various organised groups that visit in Britain "differ greatly in terms of political ethos and motivation," including, "rights focused, religious and anti-border groups" (Kemp, 2019: 7), many espouse an ethos of humanitarian befriending linking

to these longer histories of post-imperial 'integration' or 'welcome' at home, and 'development' and 'crisis' abroad (For an overview of visiting groups see AVID, 2020).

'Befriending' with SDV was conditioned by a number of important contexts: the organisational and political position of SDV, the codified procedures of befriending, and the physical space of the 'visiting room' itself. The SDV training situated the organisation as 'within but outside' the formal structures of Dungavel IRC, with a number of people referring to Dungavel as "a relaxed regime" throughout my training and first visits. I found myself bristling slightly at the framing: Why were they keen to emphasise the 'relaxedness' of this regime? How can a regime be relaxed? As the vignette demonstrates, the phrase was often used to juxtapose Dungavel with detention centres 'down south' in England, which were consistently depicted as more dangerous and brutally disciplined. This drew on wider ideas of Scottish (and Glaswegian) hospitality and welcome, as evoked by the framed picture in the SRC office. The 'relaxed regime' position also functioned as response to a wider grassroots campaign to 'Shut Down Dungavel', which many at SDV supported in principle, but felt could lead to people being sent to worse detention facilities 'down south', along with a separate, underfunded legal system. A 'relaxed regime' here gestured to the complexity of the issue and SDV's position in spending time with those 'inside', many of whom also expressed similar worries about a unilateral closing of Dungavel. Demonstrating 'inside' knowledge was folded into the idea of visiting itself, with Jerome Phelps of Detention Forum (a sister organisation to SDV) arguing that "coordinated evidence-gathering over a sustained period among small visitors groups working on the ground in detention centres around the country" has helped to "move the debate" (Phelps, 2020: 20) around detention in recent years. Anne's facts and figures, though seemingly distinct from the task of 'befriending', were actually an expression of this intrinsic link: visiting was always a knowledge gathering and data collection exercise, as well as a relational event.

'Humanitarian kinship', both in organisational and practical terms then, involved a deliberate overlap with the detention system, and a model of change that foregrounded a role 'within' rather than outside this system. SDV had long-term connections and regular meetings with Dungavel staff, and were regularly praised in external inspection reports of the IRC, becoming a part of the institution's weekly routines for almost 20 years. Day-to-day, certain (particularly older, more established) officers would ask SDV visitors to 'check

in' on someone visitors had previously not met, or discuss situations and thank visitors in ways that positioned them as doing a 'similar job' of pastoral and welfare support. This often involved an implicit, though occasionally overt, criticism of 'Immigration' – the small Home Office team stationed within Dungavel, separate to the GEO IRC staff – a distinction that was also shared by some visitors and people inside detention too. Such overlapping IRC 'insides' are outwith the remit of this thesis, but worth noting as context to the wider positioning of those pulled into this system, who would often be strategically 'friendly' (or not) to those they felt fitted these groups within the IRC. These overlaps also took physical forms, as SDV were allowed to take printed leaflets, guides and business cards inside Dungavel. Materially as well as organisationally then, the organisation was an 'inside' part of the IRC, papered around its walls and halls.

As the vignette above attests, a lot of the SDV training and preparation was about maintaining these relationships and access, along with navigating personal boundaries, doing correct data collection, and 'raising awareness' of the issue of detention. On paper (literally, packs and booklets of it), SDV's codified 'befriending' included: stipulated roles and responsibilities of a 'good visitor', advice about listening skills, a 'confidentiality policy', descriptions of how to use the SDV rotas and visitor record logs, self-harm and 'suicide guidelines' and a focus on never giving legal advice. The SDV mission statement focused on providing "practical social and emotional support" to people in Dungavel, as a way of "alleviating feelings of isolation and stress," through the act of befriending: combining humanitarian focuses on suffering with practices of kin-making. However, I would argue that, in practical terms, these structures allowed for a looseness and flexibility that seemed to let different SDV volunteers approach the idea of visiting in their own ways, as we shall see in the following section. SDV kept its own online database of people 'to visit' and volunteer 'visitor organisers' would choose who to see from this list before each of the twice weekly trips, texting around in advance. Apart from stipulating that new referrals should be prioritised, SDV's visit organising process were up to the discretion of the rotating volunteer 'visit organiser', and usually ended up being about shared languages spoken and any previous experiences when visiting. Strictly, each visitor was supposed to sit with only three allotted 'detainees' at separate tables in the visiting room, but most of the time guards would allow visits to function as a big group chat, where everyone sat together,

moving furniture around the visiting room to form a large and sometimes chaotic circle. This was very different to visiting groups in England, which usually function by pairing individual visitors with people inside for one-on-one visits, in spaces segregated by walls, glass and different coloured seats, bolted to the floor.

Despite not seeming to be less spatially rigid, visits at Dungavel are still deeply informed by the space of the visiting room. Here, after being led by guards through the outdoor 'holding pen' and searched and processed in 'reception', visitors would sit and wait for people to be 'called down', arranging printed materials in the meantime. The room itself was quite big, filled with low tables surrounded by worn, armless waiting-room chairs, vending machines, a water cooler and set of toilets. At the far end was a 'kids' area, with a couple of colourful posters, games (some bought by SDV), and a TV, sometimes silently playing a film. Next to this was a set of private interview rooms for lawyers, a desk for the guard and 'detainee' entrance, through which people being visited must come, knock, be let in, leave phones and CID cards at the desk, and then sit down. Posters about 'voluntary return', 'duties of care' and mental health were dotted around the walls, mixed with framed 'detainee art', some in glass plinths: a painted scorpion, a paper crane sculpture, a sketch of a reclining woman, often credited but not named: 'an Eritrean detainee'. Spatially then, the visiting room, as the only space accessible to the public apart from the dining room for meals, was set up to create a sense of 'outside' and 'comfort' for those within, whilst still clearly threaded with the carceral force of the 'inside'. It is in such a space, and through the collective and written SDV guidelines given at training, that the work of 'befriending' happened. This was focused into the hours of 7.15pm - if visitors have made the drive in decent time, and got through reception quickly - and 8.30pm, when visiting time ends. But who are these people that visit? And how do these spaces and procedures of 'humanitarian kinship' work in practice, often linking to ideas of 'inside' and 'outside'?

Who Visits?

SDV visitors, like those being visited, were a multifarious and wide-ranging group, who approached the codified forms of 'humanitarian kinship' found in SDV's procedures and the physical space of the visiting room in differing ways. Like me, most people had heard about

SDV through friends who had visited or been involved in other ways. Though at least 3 of us were doing PhDs, along with 4 or 5 people on Master's or Undergrad programs at any one time, this was certainly not the only feature of the 50+ people on the SDV visitor list (about 20 of whom were active at any one time). Quite a few came through the NGO sector, volunteering at linked organisations like the SRC or British Red Cross, and a couple from other visiting groups in England after moving up. However, for a significant number of SDV visitors, the experience of visiting linked to personal histories of 'detainability', and a certain proximity to those being visited.

Super volunteers

A number of SDV visitors had connections to people inside, with some having been previously detained themselves, or as one visitor told me: "I had a family member who was detained there. She got out, she has a baby now. But still she's not sure exactly what will happen." SDV's forms of 'humanitarian kinship' offered a way to reclaim some control over being 'inside' this system, as well as to foreground 'integration' and voluntary commitment. Gladys, who I had met at numerous groups and events outside SDV, was going through the asylum system for the duration of my fieldwork. Often referred to as a 'super volunteer', with what was essentially a full-time work schedule of unpaid voluntary labour at different NGOs, Gladys started visiting in 2014, just after arriving in Glasgow, after initially volunteering at the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC) reception. She told me one day over lunch at a café in town how she had seen the SDV office inside the SRC and wanted to find out more:

> I didn't know there was a detention centre here [in Scotland], but my son was detained down south and was removed to Zimbabwe. I'd visited him in England and realised how long people were there. [...]
>
> Seeing him closed away from the world, it really hurt me, I don't like to talk about it actually – ["of course, we don't have to," I say] - I've seen what my son went through and I'd like to give as much support as I can to people who are in detention. And it's my passion to help people who are in need.
>
> So I decided it was good to do that here, I felt like I needed to visit people in detention because I know what they go through.

Gladys' sense of connection to those inside was compounded by the ongoing difficulties she faced 'outside', and the way the 'carcerality' of detention extended beyond the IRC walls:

> I went through so many problems and stresses with Serco [the asylum housing provider, see Chapter 2] when they wanted to evict me. This actually affected my memory, so sometimes I forget names and things.
>
> [But I remember the people]
>
> I met a guy who had been there for quite some time, he was like a pillar for other people inside detention - he was a jovial guy, I kept in touch with him, he's in London now, and I still meet him and his family if I visit London.
>
> There was a woman from Zimbabwe who I met quite a few times inside but then she was eventually removed - and I tried to communicate with her still, but it was really heartbreaking to know she had been returned, and that the situation was that bad.

Such commonality could of course enhance Gladys' sense of precarity, as when she first started visiting:

> [Some] people told me that I couldn't go because I was an asylum seeker. I had to use my ARC [Application Registration Card] card as ID. People told me it's not safe. But I just went ahead, I took the risk.

The same factors that made Gladys at 'risk' informed her being an 'expert' and 'super' volunteer visitor, structuring the friendships she made with people inside. Many of these lasted beyond a person's period of detention, partly because Gladys seemed to embody a certain transgression of the assumed boundary between 'inside' 'detainee' and 'outside' visitor. Personal, familial loss for Gladys was evoked but also worked through via the routines of detention visiting. This happened against a backdrop where Gladys was still waiting for her own legal case to be decided by the British state, a process deeply informed by the historic 'loss' of colonies such as Gladys' so-called 'country of origin', Zimbabwe, which had gained independence within her lifetime.

Such complex threads of transnational history and personal loss or trauma were present for other volunteers too. Yasin, another prolific volunteer around the city, told me over cups of tea one day about how he had first encountered SDV after volunteering at the SRC, something recommended by his solicitor: "[You know] I don't have the right to work, and I learnt a lot about the legal system here through SRC. I am a lawyer in my country [but I

wanted to learn about here]." 'Befriending' held legal and practical possibilities for Yasin then, and allowed him to connect with a personal history of humanitarian legal work in Iraq. As he recounted to me:

> The first time I saw the building it reminded me of the Abu Ghraib prison [where he had visited as a lawyer a number of times]. It really looks like a prison from the outside. The sharp wire, these huge metal gates, I thought 'all these things are for asylum seekers?'

I read the evocation of Abu Ghraib here as a subtle critique of the British State, within a context where Yasin had to appeal to its legal processes, but be very aware of Britain's legacy across Iraq and Afghanistan. Since his first visit, Yasin had been doing a regular two or three visits a month, for almost four years, taking "two buses and walk" from his asylum accommodation, which was far from the SDV drop off point. Softly-spoken and gentle, with his legal background and a fluency in Arabic, Yasin was, like Gladys, a very in-demand visitor. People inside would regularly ask after him on visits where he wasn't present, especially when there were no visiting Arabic speakers. Language was a key factor in Yasin's own understanding of his useful 'insideness', in terms of rapport, trust and connection:

> I think because I'm not Scottish or European they see me and think, 'are you from the same background? Are you one of us?' And they think 'we can trust him'. And because my English isn't perfect, they trust me more too.

But this was not simply about language:

> I was talking recently with two men from China and they ask me 'are you British?', I said 'no'. They said 'Do you have status?' 'No. I am asylum seeker!' And they say Ok, haha! Same as us! So you are not better than us!?' 'No I'm the same as you!' I said, and we all laughed loudly at this, we were sat separately and everyone else turned to look at us like, 'why are they laughing? We should be sad'.

Yasin's dedication to visiting allowed him to utilise his position as 'one of us' in ways that seemed to demonstrate to both himself and others that the 'outside' of leaving detention was still possible. In another sense, Yasin could mitigate the limitations and stuckness he felt 'outside' in terms of being unable to do official humanitarian or legal work, through an expertise in 'visiting' that he shared in a kind, unshowy way with the less long-term waves of SDV visitors who came and went.

Some visitors balanced overlapping humanitarian and charitable roles alongside SDV, often linking to their religious faith. One woman, Winnie, was a Pastor at a Church on the outskirts of Glasgow and was also doing a PhD, in counselling, through her church. She visited Dungavel in her capacity as Pastor quite regularly, as her church included a number of people who, like her, were going through the asylum and immigration system. She explained to me on one visit, against the quiet backdrop of some Christian rock on her car stereo, that she had to be careful to distinguish her roles: "It's tricky, because today I am SDV, but people will say, 'Will you pray for me?' - they know me as a Pastor, and I have to say, 'as SDV I can't.' If people are religious, and they ask it as a direct question, I can do it [but I have to keep it separate]." Religion was important to many of the visitors I met, with Elena describing how a catholic school upbringing where "you had to do something for someone else, literally to graduate!" had instilled a sense in her that "one of the most important acts of charity or works of mercy that we can do in this world, is visiting someone who cannot leave where they are." Similarly, Gladys was clear that "of the main reasons [to visit] was because of my faith - there is a verse which says 'I was in prison and they did not visit me.' But it is difficult to visit in prisons [because of my status]". This fits with a broader history of Quaker and Christian friendship and visiting practices, speaking to particular overlaps between religious and 'secular' humanitarianisms.

Though Winnie, Elena and Gladys interpreted SDV's procedures as requiring a secular 'distance' from their religiosity, this still came through in their personal reflections after visits, and the ways they framed 'befriending' as a responsibility. Winnie approached our visits with a dutiful, cheery and somewhat maternal ethos, regularly speaking about her techniques as a mother on the way to visits. This retained a religiosity in form if not direct content, and evoked the 'pastoral' in Foucault's sense (1982), but involved tending to a flock which she saw herself as part of. "I'm still stuck after three years," she told us on one drive back, worrying about the impact this was having on her children, but finding clear resolve through the routines of her church, her faith, and the importance of 'charitable' and humanitarian action, even when facing one's own tribulations. Friendship, as a process of engagement with a 'universal' humanity, takes on a particular form in such accounts,

mediated through connecting with God and a religious, charitable responsibility. 'Befriending' creates distinct, if unpredictable, forms of moral subjectivity and interconnection, that draw on personal faith but necessarily reach outwards to the 'other'.

Feeling Outside

A felt proximity to those inside, whether familial, religious, linguistic or based on shared legal precarity, often involved simultaneously articulating an 'outside' then: in terms of knowledge and charitable zeal, or volunteer work ethic. Linking to this, some SDV visitors felt exposed through the practice of visiting to feelings of 'outsiderness', even if they were white, or had less precarious legal statuses. This takes on particular importance when we consider the ways in which a large number of people in detention are racialized as 'white' but 'foreign', in shifting 'xenoracist' (Fekete, 2001) forms centred on the figure of the 'Eastern European' and 'criminal.' One visitor, Elsa, an EU citizen, told me on a walk one day how "becoming a visitor made me realise that I needed to leave the country, I learnt that you really couldn't trust this government, I didn't feel I could stay anymore after seeing how they treated people." Elsa's shifting relationship with the British state and her own status linked in complex ways to her idea of 'connection' through visiting. As she warned me, "New visitors, they always want to make strong connections, but you see people and then they disappear. You need to learn to disconnect. You need to learn to not care too much." Learning to 'befriend' was here learning to maintain distance, an adaptation of SDV procedures that simultaneously pushed against narratives of 'Scottish' welcome, a catalyst for a subjective shift that prompted her to leave the country after almost a decade. In contrast to Elsa, Elena – who was from the USA but had an Eastern European family background and surname – was motivated to get involved with SDV *because* of a feeling of outsiderness:

> I can't vote here; I can't get a job with my current visa. And when you feel really powerless, sometimes taking back a little bit of power, and advocating [is good]. And I think as an outsider I was not keen to immediately jump into politics here. [but] I can go and listen to someone there, and sometimes the people listen to me, which is great, because I've been going through my own immigration nightmare. To a very different degree, but it's my own.

Ultimately though, Elena felt that visiting was always about a certain kind of self-work:

> [But ultimately] we all volunteer to feel better, let's be honest. No matter how much you tell yourself that you don't, we all volunteer to feel better […] you have to acknowledge it and then be able to work beyond it too.

Elena's argument points to how "humanitarians often choose their careers to help themselves (as forms of self-care or as fulfilling their own needs) as much as for those whom they purport to help" (Feldman 2007, Malkki 2015). This linked to a wider ethics that Elena espoused about being 'up front' and honest about her positionality and motivations, and a focus on boundaries and self-care that was regularly discussed by a number of other volunteers. This linked to her earlier comments about 'unhealthy' friendships and a love that 'lives there' (inside detention), with her vision of humanitarian befriending working as a particularly contained form of ethical self-work, in contrast to someone like Gladys' longer-term relations.

"Not *Friends,* Friends"

Such distinctions and forms of relational containment linked with people I got to know inside Dungavel. Alek, who we will also meet more in the following chapters, and had been detained for several months, distinguished different kinds of friends through emphasis of the same word, as when I asked him after release about whether he'd stayed in touch with anyone from inside:

> I am in touch with a couple of people, yes, I'm phoning them. But then, over a period of time … ['things drop off?'] Yes … It's not like we are *friends*, friends, you know? Because when you are detained it's one thing, but when you are released it's not easy either.

Friendships made inside were charged for Alek by the memory of that time, and complicated by the struggles he faced after release. This was compounded by the fact that many of the most 'regular' and lasting connections made by SDV visitors were with people like Alek, who had been detained for a longer time. This created a tricky temporal friction, where familiarity and rapport also annexed a sense of stuckness, each visit we 'got to know someone better' was another week inside. Many of these visit 'regulars' came through

prison, or were from countries that it was hard to remove people to. Jackson, who we will meet more thoroughly in Chapter 5, had already been detained for months when I started visiting, following a prison sentence, and felt that the visits offered some much-needed stability. I mentioned one time in a phone call during his detention how he was a popular guy inside, helping people out and offering frank assessments of the immigration regime: "you've made a lot of a friends right?":

> Yes, I met a lot of detainees, and I made some new friends, but now they are all gone – which is even more frustrating. All the people I met when I first came, they are all out – so all the people now are fresh people, they are just coming. Everyone, after one or two months, they are gone. I used to sit down every day, make jokes, make friends – now all of them, they are out. Now I'm scared because I could sit down with someone, make friends, and the next thing you know they are out.

In contrast, visiting was "alright, like when the others [SDV] came [to visit] last week":

> It's good to see people from outside because you see that hope, that there are people out there who are trying to help. [Otherwise] You see the same people – officers – they are not trying to help you.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, when speaking to an SDV visitor and academic researcher, most people in detention that I asked about visits shared this sentiment, with common refrains being: "it's good to talk," "it takes your mind off things," and "I like meeting new people."

It's important to note, however, that a lot of people never requested or received visits during their detention, with people like Jackson somewhat of a minority, in that he had been detained for some time after prison, and had lived in Britain for most of his life prior to this. As one of his friends in a similar situation, Noah, told me, this contrasted with many of the others inside: "Yeah you meet people, but there is a language barrier. People tend to stick with people with a common language. It's quite segregated. But people tend to try and get along with each other, they are cordial. You learn about people – Chinese, Vietnamese, everywhere." This fitted with Noah's wider critique of the detention system, as he explained how:

> For me, personally. It felt like walking into one of those concentration camps – [I was asking myself] why are we all here? It's because we're all foreigners, because we weren't born here. That's the reality. They paint a portrait, they say 'it's comfortable, they have phones'. But it's 2019, my daughter is asking – why can't you FaceTime?

As Noah attests, generally people inside's most reliable and important connections were with existing relations from outside, and visits often ended up becoming a space where people would share stories and memories of family and friends, highlighting both their importance and the ephemerality of the visit itself. These familial and 'outside' connections were followed in importance by those who shared a language and experiences – for instance, if they had been caught together in workplace immigration raids, or having come through prison. Such groupings were replicated in subtle ways by the patterns of SDV visits, whereby seeing 'Vietnamese' people often involved preparing for a whole group of people to come together, usually with one or two of the most confident English speakers translating things (see Chapter 6 on interpreting). Not always, but often, SDV volunteers chatting about such people relegated them to a generic group rather than individual people – 'the Vietnamese guys' - as I'm doing here, a fact compounded by my struggle to form lasting relationships with many of the people inside who were not 'confident' and chatty regulars like Jackson and Noah. 'Befriending' in its way thus reproduces the differentiations between 'national' and 'ethnic' communities of value that detention enforces, with visits becoming a space where key figures, though marked as 'criminal' and 'foreign', can push back against such labels (and their place within the wider detention population) through relational proximity with visitors.

Adjacent to Noah and Jackson were a few people who had also been detained for some time, but who held contrastingly complementary views of Dungavel. Adele, who marked a year of detention during my fieldwork, told me after her release that she had made some of her most lasting connections with staff: "The officers worked for GEO, so they've got nothing to do with immigration you know, so to be honest they are on the detainee's side – and with the female officers, I made a few friends – now that I'm out, I'm hoping I can meet some of them outside." She had to square this with painful experiences of friends inside being removed or deported, as with one man – Demetrios, a wonderfully chatty travelling musician in his 60s – who was eventually removed during the night without warning. Not being able to say goodbye, or know when a friend might be taken, was a key source of anguish. Visits were a chance to hang out with other detained friends, alongside SDV volunteers, and also get bits of information and news that could help predict changes, or

anticipate things. Adele would come down to the visiting room multiple times a week, often with some knitting, as part of a routine she had built herself where 'staying busy' and 'helping others' were a priority. "You know once I got back home I really, truly missed the place and the people," she told me after her release (though she was later re-detained):

> You get used to the voices and the faces, and your daily tasks.
>
> Even now I will watch the telly, but I'm still thinking about the association room, the girls – that was my daily life – I miss it.
>
> And every day someone would be released, someone would be transferred to another centre. You see the ups and downs of people's lives.
>
> I was lucky, I was strong enough to make it – at the same time there was a lot of people around me that were destroyed. I was trying to do my best to hold their hand, to be there for them.
>
> I still think about those people, I still care. But you are not there.
>
> It's been such a big part of your life.

With an echo of Gladys and the 'super volunteers' discussed earlier, Adele became a key part of SDV's work for the duration of her stay there, introducing people inside to SDV, submitting things for the SDV blog, checking in regularly with visitors and performing a pastoral role for others inside (particularly women) that precipitated a certain closeness with the GEO officers. While the length of Adele's stay was unusual, it helps frame the importance of 'inside' relationships for many of those who are released, along with how a certain idea of 'humanitarian kinship' and 'care' can be drawn upon by people during their detention.

"Broke me down inside"

> Iris has been inside Dungavel for 10 days by the time we manage to visit her. I drive up with my partner Sarah and two of Iris' friends from the LGBTQ+ group she's a part of, Selma and Maria, stopping on route for crisps and juice. Iris tells me later, laughing, that everyone agreed I was a "very bad driver," but that Sarah was "very good."
>
> The guards seem gruffer than on an average SDV visit, almost denying Maria entry because of a lack of ID (the Home Office has her passport, but she had brought official documents with her photo on), and getting irate with Selma when she

doesn't immediately hear their requests to take off her scarf before the pat-down search. We get through it all wordlessly though, and find ourselves sitting in the visiting room, clutching paper cones of water from the machine, silent. I buy a pack of Maltesers from the vending machine and open them up on the table to share.

As soon as she arrives and see us, Iris breaks down in tears, sitting down and shuddering quietly as Maria and Selma gather around her in a series of gentle embraces. I go to try and find some tissues for her to dry her eyes with, but the toilet only has coarse loo roll and those thick green hand towels, so I bring a small pile of the latter and she lightly pats her nose and cheeks.

After a while, Iris quietly explains to us that today she got issued with a ticket, a removal flight in just over a week. I go round and kneel next to her, ask a bit clumsily if she wants a hug - no - we talk about the case, work through what she knows. It's all very confusing, lots of conflicting information, but the lawyer seems active at least. There's something calming about this retreat into legal chat, plodding through questions we are both familiar with together, considering the details in ways that make the whole picture somehow slightly more bearable for a moment.

The three friends drift into speaking Otjiherero now and then, Maria keeps making Iris laugh. We talk about films for a while. Iris found *Sleepless* starring Jamie Foxx in the IRC library, one of her favourite actors. The flitting moments of fun and lightness steadily become overshadowed by the sense that we need to leave; in the end I'm the one who says, "maybe we need to get on the road", wanting to avoid being told to go by the guards. Iris asks when we will come again, we talk about another visit the coming week, but it feels like a long way off – she doesn't look back after saying her goodbyes.

Once we're out in the car park, I feel the anger and sadness tensing through my body in a heavy shudder: "those fuckers", I say, "what a horrible thing to go through."

"That's life", replies Maria, shaking her head. It doesn't feel trite or dismissive, the way she says it, just true. We put on some music on the way back, Cardi B, before dropping people off.

Three days later, after some coverage in the press and a legal petition lodged at the Court of Session, Iris is released. She comes to say hi to me in town after getting the keys to her flat back, having stayed with Selma for a few nights. Iris still has all her things in a small wheelie trolly, and perches her cup of tea on it as we sit with the weight of everything that has happened, not really saying much out loud.

***

This was one of the only times through my fieldwork in which I wrote about the 'inside' of Dungavel's visiting room with the people included. As discussed in the introduction, it never felt ethical or consensual to write up the populated 'inside' of the SDV visits I took part in, and I remain unconvinced of the possibility for ethnographic 'consent' within a space of incarceration. Here, I wrote the account later, from scattered notes, feeling heavy and knotted, only after longer discussions with those involved. Iris recounted to me over coffee how she was detained whilst signing at the Home Office as part of her 'immigration bail' conditions (see chapter 3):

> There was a man with papers, he said 'we need to interview you again' and when I went back into the interview room he said 'we are going to detain you, you can call your lawyer and inform anyone.'

Iris called her lawyer, and Selma, along with her partner Amber, before being moved to Dungavel and processed. She met a number of people there, some of whom I knew through SDV visits:

> I met Adele, Demetrios, they'd been there a long time, he was very friendly. And Ariene, she came to visit her husband for Christmas, but she had the wrong travel documents, and ended up leaving [voluntary return]. I felt so down when she left. There was one guy from Ghana but he left too, then I was the only black person.

> The day you visited was the day I got the ticket. They give you an appointment with the nurse straight after, they ask 'will you hurt yourself'? I was sleepless, no appetite. You feel alone, but you look out for each other. I helped an older guy use the fax machine, we were fond of each other. On Saturday we'd have church, in the chapel, it was … very emotional. I spoke to my lawyer a lot, they managed to cancel my removal flight.

> Then, after two weeks, on the Monday, I was having dinner and while I was eating, an officer came and said – 'you should go to your room' I was terrified. What is happening? But only when I got to my room he said: 'good news, you are going home.' 'Really?! 'Yes.' Really, really?! 'Yes.' I packed my stuff – I was really happy. They drove me to Hamilton and I got the train on my own to Glasgow. I was very quiet; I couldn't believe it. I came to Selma's; I didn't want to sleep alone. Amber's phone was off; she was very scared. I was back home by Tuesday, it was nice.

> I'm relieved to be out but it's a long way to go.

> I had a friend who was detained before me. I visited her twice, cared for her. Before I was detained, I had fear. And then I was living that fear.

> What I feared most really happened to me.

> We were very close, seeing her in that situation really broke me down inside, if I had the power to take her out I would have done it. Then, when she was deported, I was

her first call, we were crying on phone. I couldn't believe it. I was trying to be strong [but I was crying too] – deep down, I was broken.

Iris experienced her detention through the intimate experience of visiting her friend, haunted by the way that had ended. It was during these moments of our conversations that she became most animated, angry, in contrast to the quiet, stoic sadness of her tone when discussing her own situation. Threaded throughout was a resolve to 'let people know what happens', and a deep concern with the shared impacts of detention. Iris spoke about how horrendous the impact of her incarceration had been on her partner, Amber, who she had met through the local LGBTQ+ asylum group. Amber withdrew into a shocked kind of hiding for a number of days after Iris' initial detention, telling me at a separate coffee chat how she had been:

> A wreck.
>
> I was heartbroken, stressed.
>
> During the night I started having panic attacks. The doctor put me on some medication, I was losing my mind, I couldn't sleep.
>
> You think about detention every day. When you go to sign [report at the Home Office]. You keep thinking of detention. One day they might take you, or someone close to you. My best friend was deported [Belinda, the same person Iris mentions (see also Chapter 4)].
>
> Sometimes I just break. Everything just stays the same – the stress, the struggle.

Amber, Selma and other friends from the LGBTQ+ group played a key role in contacting lawyers, media and politicians throughout this time, along with visiting Iris inside at multiple points. For some, a visit felt impossible, especially if they had been detained themselves in the past. As we see in the visit I took part in, the presence of friends and space for shared (often silent) relationality was marked in visits by its temporariness, as Iris told me afterwards: "[The visit] was very sad – especially when you were leaving." Such moments were infused the fear of this being a final goodbye against a backdrop of uncertainty, but felt important to people as a shared time for 'breaking down inside', an interpersonal experience of fractured subjectivity that evokes Judith Butler's writing on grief:

> What grief displays […] is the thrall in which our relations with others hold us, in ways that we cannot always recount or explain, in ways that often interrupt the self-conscious account of ourselves we might try to provide, in ways that challenge the very notion of ourselves as autonomous and in control. […] Let's face it. We're undone by each other. (2006: 23)

Iris experienced the particular personal horror of her own detention through the prism of her friend's similar experience, and eventual removal. Though SDV visitors like Elena would tell me that "you should be vulnerable if you are expecting other people to be vulnerable with you," there was a degree of vulnerability and shared experience at work here that seems to speak more to Alyssa's notion of 'vicariousness', which opened this thesis. The routines and spatial arrangements of 'humanitarian kinship' broke down here too, as the group of us 'held space' in a different way: for shared grief, uncertainty, anger and silence.

Conclusion: 'revisiting'

The silence was the most striking difference between visiting Iris and an SDV visit. Of course, my role in this was very different from Iris' other long term friends, something reflected in my inability to hold the silence, filling the gaps with chatter about laws and support that was in its own way a kind of background noise, joining in with the loud whirr of the vending machines. This wasn't complete though, and we did hold the silence as a group together in that room at many points, watched awkwardly by the large, old IRC guard who would eventually have to separate us. For all of us, in different ways, the experience of visiting at that point and our sense of interpersonal connection became fused in ways that were difficult to untangle. For Iris in particular, detention and that visit would be something she would 'revisit' for an unknown length of time: whenever she was due to sign at the Home Office, saw a police car, or in the sometimes stilted conversations we would have afterwards.

The ways that this 'inside' lingers and manifests itself on the 'outside' will form much of the focus for the coming chapters. I end with that episode not to draw too hard a line between the discussion of 'humanitarian kinship' that opens the chapter and these more informal, vicarious kinds of visit; but because I think Iris' experience tells us a lot about how what Veena Das calls 'critical events' (1996) are often experienced through relationality, the experience of the friend. While the codes and procedures of 'humanitarian kinship' aim to create a contained and potentially unilateral form of 'befriending' that demarcates 'befriender' and 'befriended', people like Iris also draw on experiences of previous care and friendship to interpret their own situations. Despite the clear differences between them, the

idea of the 'friend' seems to allow for such shifts in perspective, involving a mutuality whereby the collective is made personal and the personal made collective. As Iris' experience shows, such intimate interpersonal exchanges – "This person has become part of you," as Alyssa put it in the Introduction - are often experienced as a breaking down of the self.

This chapter has shown how such relationships and processes are conditioned by the 'holding space' of detention, "on the threshold of in and out" (Khosravi, 2008: 332). Here, codified NGO 'befriending' groups such as Scottish Detainee Visitors (SDV) position themselves in material, political and relational terms as 'within but outside' the detention system, but allow for improvised and divergent approaches to visiting. These often draw on ideas of 'inside' and 'outside' spanning nationality, legal situation, religion, language and voluntary commitment, striving towards shifting interpersonal and ethical subjects. People inside, often attempting to sustain and manage a range of familial and other relational forms far wider than these new 'visitors', engage with such people and others as a range of differently emphasised *friends* and friends. Finally, in visiting outside such organised formats, we see how detention can 'break people down inside' in ways that draw in both the past experiences of friends and current networks of support. However, leaving a visit, or being released from detention, is rarely the end of most people's experience with this system, and though the razor wire may recede in the rear-view window after a visit, for many it is the 'home' itself that can end up working as a form of detention.

Chapter 2: 'Is it a home?'

The Flats

The protest has been going on for about two hours when the food arrives. Big plastic bowls filled with lentils, pasta and flat-breads. A couple of people carry it all down in the lift, from a flat up on the 19th floor of the block. Mariam had cooked through the night; she couldn't sleep anyway. Letters from Serco, her MP, her lawyer and two or three charities sit on the kitchen counter. Outside, people pass around flimsy white paper plates, a steaming thermos, plastic cutlery. The plates get soft as you eat, bits of paper mushing into the salty, still-warm food. Someone writes a message of thanks on the back of one plate and we all sign it, to send back up to the chef. The crowd has reduced slightly, maybe 20 people now, some small groups have gone to leaflet inside the blocks, keeping an eye out for locksmith vans and police. A trickle of mostly supportive local residents stop to chat with us as they come and go between the three tall tower blocks, each with 21 stories, 120 homes. A couple of kids play on the swings nearby, people come and go from the small corner-shop, buses lurch in and out of the nearby stop, passengers peering from the top deck. One woman comes towards us angrily as we eat, clutching a balled-up piece of paper. Earlier a man driving past had stopped to beep and swear at us, and another woman had calmly walked by, repeatedly muttering, "send them back, send them back."

I prepare for a similar exchange, but it turns out this woman is angry with the Housing Association that runs the flats, not us. They have hastily sent a letter round all the residents in the blocks, warning people about the protests and expressing that they are 'of course sympathetic to the plight of those who will now have to leave their accommodation', but can't do anything about it. She's angry with this lack of action. "They're useless," she says, raising her voice so we can all hear:

"If the polis come I'll be straight down to block the door; no way they are getting away with this! It's disgusting, these are women, children, families."

Earlier some representatives from the housing association had come to speak with us too. They'd expressed sympathy, asked us not to block doorways for other residents, told us how these flats had been part of the asylum seeker accommodation contract in Glasgow for 10 years now, that there is a community here, that this isn't the first time they have faced these problems. The letter Mariam had received was titled 'discontinuation of Home Office support', instructing her that her 'entitlement to accommodation' would cease today. This is why she'd asked for support from us, a loose group of tenants and migrants rights groups, some of whom had known her for years, and why we'd quickly organised what we called a 'solidarity vigil'. About an hour into the protest the Housing Association had come back to tell

us that the contractors in charge of the accommodation, Serco, have just rung to say that they are not going to evict our friend today, that there are other residents in the flats they have marked for eviction first. The process they are using is a so-called 'lock change' eviction, where the locks are changed on a person's flat while they are out so that they cannot get back into the property, and their belongings are gathered for them to collect later.

As the likelihood of this happening today seems to decrease, some of us go to join our friend in the flat above, taking in the panorama of the city bellow, playing cards, drinking strong coffee. She writes a statement with me on my laptop, to be used in a press release:

> Where are women's rights? I don't hear any women's rights from Serco. They are denying me my rights. The letter [from Serco] made me unwell, any sounds would wake me up, I don't have sleep. I'm scared people are going to come and look at me, take me. I am afraid. I was scared to go to the shops. I run to the bus, I am afraid.

> Today was nice, with people here. I was in George Square for the protests, I met lots of people. I've protested at Dungavel, against detention, for human rights, I went to Unity Centre. I don't have money, but I have friends, more people, and I thank God. I love people. There are good people in Glasgow.

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The Offices

Just under a year earlier, in August 2018, when Serco first announced its plans to evict 300 people from the asylum accommodation it ran across Glasgow, various groups involved in housing and migrant rights in the city joined up to call a protest outside the Serco offices themselves: a dull new-build sandstone office block just down the road from the Home Office's reporting centre, not far from the south banks of the river Clyde. Some of us went ahead early, sneaking through the electronically locked entrance door to present the management inside with a 'Notice for Serco to Quit Glasgow'; re-tooling the language of the letters they were in the process of issuing.

The office has what will become a familiar atmosphere: scrubbed clean and bare, bright white lights, with a polystyrene panelled ceiling, stuffy air, and the constant hum of a vending machine or old computer. There are clear spatial demarcations for the 'service users' marked by hard smooth surfaces, wide desks, thick windows, intercom systems, electronic locking doors, laminated poster warnings about 'conduct', and a large waiting area off to the side. The staff behind the welcome desk, smart in lanyards and pinstriped suits, remonstrate with us as we film them on

an iPhone, refusing to take our letter. We read it aloud as the main manager gets more irate, shouting:

"There are vulnerable services users using this facility, don't you care about upsetting them?"

Shaun, stood next to me, who had been telling me as we walked over about his years living in Serco accommodation – the mould, the house searches, the broken furniture - raises pitch in response, almost laughing in his frustration,

"Vulnerable people! How can you talk about vulnerable people?! You are the ones forcing vulnerable people onto the streets!"

Eventually, a couple of bored looking police officers arrive, and we leave with minimal bustle. Outside the protest has gathered and my friend reads through our 'Notice to Quit' to the crowd, over a portable PA. A woman takes the mic, decrying Serco and the Home Office for their actions. Another friend whispers to me that this is one of the 'Glasgow Girls', whose campaign against similar evictions in 2005 got turned into a hit theatre production. Another woman, visible shaken, follows her, slowly telling the crowd how she had been so scared and upended by the threat of eviction that she'd had a miscarriage, "I lost my baby."

There's a hard silence as she speaks, people crying. A strident, suited man from Govan Law Centre then goes on the mic to announce his intentions to take Serco to court, to halt these evictions.

We march round afterwards to the Home Office reporting centre, 200 metres down the road, where people must 'sign' at regular intervals whilst claiming asylum in Glasgow, outside which two young Afghan men have started a public hunger strike, also in response to the evictions announcement. They sit quietly at the side of the road, with a pop-up tent and some blankets. I think about other times I've seen this bland, grey building protested, blocked, picketed; about friends who have gone in there and not come back.

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Figure 3: No Evictions 'Solidarity Vigil'

Figure 4: Protest outside Serco offices

This chapter is about how 'home' and 'detention' can overlap for people in the asylum and immigration system. While in the next chapter I will look at how the spatial and material constrictions of immigration detention are threaded into the wider urban infrastructure of Glasgow, this chapter situates the analysis in the specific site of the home, asking: how does the 'holding space' of detention and logic of 'detainablity' bleed into people's homes? What does it mean to make a home, in a situation of temporal precarity and enforced material limitation? How can we study or write about 'homes' in such instances of surveillance and control?

While I found much insight in anthropological literature on homes and home-making (see Bourdieu, 1997; Brun & Fabos, 2015; Sandoval-Cervantes, 2017; Douglas, 1991; Jackson, 1995; Carsten, 1997; Carsten & Hugh-Jones, 1995), this chapter is largely ethnographic, allowing the legal and everyday contestations around the 'home' and 'carcerality' that I became part of to unfold. In this way, I try to make space for the multiple ways in which the 'thresholds' and forms of kinship analysed in the last chapter extended beyond the walls of any one detention centre.

As described in the Introduction, asylum accommodation in Britain is provided on a 'no choice' basis through a nationwide dispersal program, making it the primary reason most people I worked with ended up in Scotland. Dispersal accommodation in Glasgow was managed during my fieldwork by the private outsourcing firm, Serco. Here, people found themselves trying to build homes and lives within a system of provision designed to be 'temporary', tied to their ongoing asylum claim, but that could often stretch into months and years, with the threat of detention looming throughout. The quality and experience of such housing was a source of constant conversation in groups, meetings and day-to-day chats, with topics including: mould, damp, pests, racist neighbours, lack of travel infrastructure, and the omnipresence of Serco housing officers (sometimes nice, other times bullies and nuisances), along with tips for dealing with new flatmates, cleaning rotas, decoration, cooking and having guests. Such discussions overlapped with key issues featured in this chapter including the legality of 'lock-change' evictions, Serco housing inspections, and the broader system of 'asylum support' payments and accommodation. Here, the 'carcerality' of material and spatial limitation, control and surveillance, is delivered

by state and private contractors in a language of 'duty of care' that draws on narratives of vulnerability, marginality and victimhood, at the same time as it creates the conditions for such narratives. And yet, people find meaning in their own versions of care, home and neighbourhood in ways that are never fully defined by the wider structures they move through, 'holding space' and making homes in multiple ways.

The physical boundaries of a house may become imbued with the 'carcerality' of changed locks, house searches, and moved belongings - but 'staying put' can be a strategy to regain some control. 'Detainability' could just as much mean being locked out as locked in. To contain, even confine, oneself, can become a strategy against 'moving-on'. It is in this context that a person can host a group of mostly strangers, 19 floors down from their home, without leaving the flat, for fear of not being able to get back in. Or, as the vignette from the Serco offices shows, how narratives of vulnerability and 'care' can be argued about across a smoothly controlled vestibule, surrounded by reinforced glass, while waiting for the police. Through tracing the history of these systems in Glasgow we can begin to see how dull office blocks become sites of major contestation and anguish; how leaving your home for a doctor's appointment, coffee with friends, or even (in one case) to give birth, can mean you don't have a home to come back to, and what impact this has on your experiences of that home itself. These examples encourage us to consider how multiple ideas of 'care' can be deployed on all sides, how the question of what constitutes 'coercion', a 'tenant' and a 'home' itself can be debated in the highest court in Scotland, but lived-through in kitchens and front rooms around Glasgow.

The Court

> Up the Royal Mile, dodging the colourful umbrellas of tour guides and shoppers, I come to the back of Edinburgh Cathedral. Here, hidden in the folds of the wet, old stone sits the Court of Session, 'Scotland's supreme civil court'. The path is smooth and slippery underfoot, CCTV cameras protrude awkwardly from the walls. My friends from the 'No Evictions' campaign are waiting in the lobby – unpacking little piles of keys, lighters and wallets into plastic trays, shaking off the rain as they step through the humming threshold of a body scanner, behind which a gruff, suited man runs them up and down with a beeping security 'wand'.

Shaun greets me from across the divide, smiling, in a pinstriped shirt and jeans: "Easy big man! You all right? You all right?"

We make our way down the huge marbled corridors, the walls lined with endless photorealist paintings of judges in wigs and gowns. I don't see a black or brown face amongst them, or, for that matter, outside of our group, for the duration of the visit – and I'm conscious of this in a way that re-exposes me to the often less overtly conscious fact of my own whiteness. Alyssa jokes about this as we walk, gesturing at a marble statue: "I thought I'd want to get a photo later, but I don't want to do it front of a statue or photo of some big white man!"

We're reminded later by a security guard that photos are strictly off limits of course - this is a court of law.

The court itself is a mass of shiny wood, with the judge's raised seat facing the room from the front, under a colourful coat of arms. Rows of benches line up towards him from that point, tiered by rank: clerks and assistants at the front, then QCs and lawyers for the defenders and pursuers, followed by younger teams of solicitors from each legal firm, journalists, and then us, the general public. It's busy as we enter, with a gentle hum of tense chat. An usher scowls and frets as we try to squeeze into the remaining space, telling Alyssa to take off her hat.

The court eventually begins its session in a flurry of bowing and 'M'lords,' with the entrance of the Honorable Lord Tyre, who starts by hearing continued evidence from the 'defenders' - Serco and the Secretary of State for the Home Office - carrying on proceedings the previous day. We switch halfway through the session to representations from Govan Law Centre (GLC), who have put together the legal challenge, fronted by Mike Dailly, the strident Glaswegian solicitor from the first demonstration we did outside Serco's offices, six months previously, now enrobed in black. I struggle to keep up with the legal jargon, scribbling notes in my diary as we go, struck by how much the judge stalls and intervenes in proceedings. At one point he asks for clarification on the difference between a 'refused' asylum seeker and someone that is 'appeal rights exhausted' – *'they don't understand asylum law!'* I write in my diary, double underlined.

Mr Dailly regular finds himself cut off mid-sentence, as in one key moment of discussion:

> [my clients] don't have a choice when it comes to the accommodation, they have to accept the accommodation offered by Serco – you could say there is an element of coercion in this….

The judge stops him, red faced, with a whip of the hand: "wait, wait. They don't have a choice of provider – this is not the same as being handcuffed in a van."

They are discussing an example from case law, 'Campbell v Scottish Ministers', in which an incarcerated man contested the use of handcuffs by private companies and the Scottish prison services during his trips to the hospital. Can an analogy be drawn?

Dailly, looking for the first time slightly rattled, comes back: "I don't use the phrase to imply violence M'Lord, maybe compulsory is better."

Lord Tyre waves him on, nodding: "Yes, 'compulsory'. A 'compulsory' system – perhaps that's a better term to use."

The judge stops Dailly again later as he discusses the impact the threat of eviction had on his client, not present today, who I realise with sadness must be the woman I had also first seen at the protest in August 2018, who had brought the crowd to tears:

Judge: "You've used this phrase – constant threat of eviction – but with what evidence? – the client just had one notice of eviction, at time when her partner was Appeal Rights Exhausted. What is this threat?"

Dailly: "M'lord, members of staff will attend the property, they will put pressure on them to leave – there are lots of personal interactions and exchanges."

The judge doesn't look too convinced, peering down as Dailly continues:

> We have a medical report from a clinical psychologist – it sets out how the threat of eviction resulted in stress and anxiety. She feels frightened all the time due to the ongoing threat of eviction. When she received notice of removal, this caused her mental anguish, and she believes this resulted in her losing her baby.

The Judge, adopting the tone of a disappointed teacher, retorts: "I think we have crossed again into the territory of things going wrong Mr Dailly, rather than assessing the system as it should work."

I feel a hot, tight kind of rage, thinking about the dismissiveness of the comment, the strange affect of a stale courtroom discussing this with such detachment. Dailly, with only the faintest hint of frustration, responds directly to the point: "But M'lord, things will always go wrong. The system is designed in such a way – it relies on human behaviour, the system itself will always go wrong."

He sighs a little, looking down at his notes: "Ultimately we are coming back to an important question, namely, what kind of accommodation is this, is it a home? "

'Is it a home?'

Sitting in that court - so ordered, surveyed and policed, echoing with legal jargon, Latin and hard, unwelcome stares - the question feels somehow out of place, a slippery philosophical anomaly: improper, no matter how important. What legal judgments are required to assess the meaning of coercion, threat, 'mental anguish', and of home itself? Is 'the law' up to that task? Through the case and its subsequent judgment and appeal, key binaries were debated and defended that circled on these questions of home, but barely came back to the word itself, other than to speak of the 'Home Office', 'Home Secretary', a particular 'Care Home' from case law, or, in a sad kind of irony, 'homelessness'.

Instead, the lawyers and judge would debate:

- Were people in Asylum Accommodation living in what was essentially a tenancy with protection under relevant housing legislation and Scottish common law, or were these arrangements just a form of 'Temporary Accommodation' paid 'per person per night' by the Home Office, with nothing that could be described as 'rent'?
- Should the 'Occupancy Agreements' people received from Serco just be called what they seemed to be, a lease?
- Is Serco carrying out 'functions of a public nature' in operating this accommodation, with attendant responsibilities under articles 3 and 8 of the Human Rights Act? Or is it simply a private company carrying out a 'commercial activity', with the Home Office bearing responsibility for the people being housed?
- Should Serco be able to terminate an occupancy agreement unilaterally, without a court order, through a 'lock change'?
- Is this accommodation provided with coercion, or compulsion?

Distilled down, these question became about distinct, linked binary arguments about the nature of the kinds of housing being provided to people in asylum accommodation, and the status of Serco's provision of this housing:

Govan Law Centre – The Pursuers:	Serco & The Home Officer – The Defenders:
Tenant / 'Residential Occupier'	Occupant
Lease	Occupancy Agreement

Public	Private
Coercion	Compulsion

A tricky and strange kind of friction throughout the trial was centred on the latter pair of terms – Govan Law Centre tried to argue that their clients were some form of tenant, with what was effectively a lease, under provision from a company acting out 'functions of a public nature'. But, they also made the argument that this housing was being operated without choice, *with* coercion. 'These are homes', they argued, but homes people experienced in ways that were more analogous to prison, or detention. As 'defenders' Serco and the Home Office both maintained that the housing was temporary, without a lease or rent in legal terms, and 'commercial' as far as Serco's responsibilities fell, and that therefore a lock-change eviction was perfectly fine. But they argued that this was done *without* coercion, indeed pronouncements around the Trial from Serco spoke instead of 'care'.[3] The internal tension in both these positions - that these were homes *but* coercive, or that they were somehow *not* homes and *not* coercive - was threaded through the trial and subsequent judgments. Essentially, this was a debate about the carcerality of the housing provided, the power to lock-out an occupant, and repossess a property that all parties admitted was legally opaque. Yet it became complicated by questions of control, choice and privacy. Can a home be coercive? And if it is neither, what actually is it? *Is it a home?*

Answering such question in any depth requires leaving the rarefied atmosphere of the courtroom, and, whilst holding on to the power its judgements could have, entering into the granular everyday experiences of home-making for people living in this accommodation. Here we find that 'homes' are never simple or static, that they may be monitored and intruded upon in ways that are difficult to predict or defend against, that they may become sources of anguish or anxiety, a space that is required to reflect a temporal and material scarcity mandated by its very terms of delivery. And yet, these are spaces of love, relatedness, food and conviviality – never fully reducible to 'carcerality' or 'care'. The legal

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[3] Serco CEO Rupert Soames, stated in a statement from August 14th 2018 that: "Serco cares for around 17,000 asylum seekers in the UK providing accommodation and welfare under contract to the Home Office. 5,000 of these people are in Scotland, and almost all of them are in Glasgow, which is the only area within Scotland that has been willing to extend help on any material scale to asylum seekers […] nobody understands better than us just how much trauma many of those who seek asylum and protection in our country have suffered. Our Housing Officers see it in their eyes every day." (Soames, 2018)

impossibility of 'is it a home?' gets answered every day, in multiple and contested ways – and is often more complicated than 'staying put', or 'moving on'.

"Where do you stay?"

"BOO!!"

Mohsin and Priya's son jumps out from behind a door as I ascend the stairs to their new flat. We laugh as he runs away into a back room, his dad smiling, mock-apologising, as we shake hands and embrace. Priya welcomes us into the front room where they have laid out a lunchtime feast of biryani, saag, fresh breads, salad and juice. The two kids intermittently pop in to show us artwork from school, new games and dance moves. We eat and chat: work, school, politics, mutual friends. The family have moved recently, the new area is much better, the neighbours friendly, the housing officer much nicer, but it took a while to sort out. We flick through Netflix on a TV, the couple showing me their favourite Indian true crime and drama. Mohsin gets me to write down one key recommendation: *Leila*, a dystopian Hindu-Muslim love story that he says will tell me a lot about modern India and Pakistan, about the struggle he and Priya have gone through themselves. After dinner we walk with his son to a little park round the corner. We play football, various other local kids coming to join in, losing track of the teams and goals.

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Staying and moving were charged domains for people I worked with through my fieldwork, and ideas of 'home' drew on notions of movement, arrival, stillness and rootedness in complicated ways. People would put time, care and limited resources towards being able to be in charge of where they stayed, and when they moved, in ways that show the complexity and local manifestation of a global system of racialized "differential (im)mobility" (De Noronha, 225). 'Home' could just as much mean a desire to move, a dream or vision of a new flat in a new part of town, as it might mean a capacity to put down roots, through staying put in a particular space, or resisting what Serco called its 'Move On Protocol' of eviction notices and lock changes. Here, the complexity of being 'detainable' in Glasgow - having the threat of detention percolate through your daily life and surroundings, often in unpredictable ways - meant navigating spaces of containment and movement, often in ways

that centred on ideas of 'home', and made its possibility both fraught and even more at stake. This then also raised complications for the practice of doing anthropology 'at home' for me, living for the duration of the fieldwork in the flat I'd shared for the preceding 3 years in the Southside of Glasgow – a flat I opened up to friends and people involved in my research at various times, but also kept distinctly 'outside' my anthropological practice in certain ways too.

In moments like the vignette above - of house-moving and home-making and sharing of space - the difficulty of being able to be 'at home' raised methodological as well as practical questions. What role does an anthropologist play in such 'home-making' in a context where people are surveyed and monitored, and usually not allowed guests at certain hours? What does it mean to give or withhold support towards such projects of home-making, whether donating a child's bed, or helping fill out an application to move accommodation? How does the knowledge of the possibility of these practical and material forms of support impact on an ethnographic project? Such questions have a grim salience in terms of 'signs of wealth' inspections that people in asylum accommodation are subject to and in the knowledge that a successful asylum claim would mean the end of a particular house or home, as we shall see in the subsequent section. As with detention, questions of surveillance, privacy and control in asylum housing become paramount, and people are wary to have their homes opened up to extra forms of observation, but are also keen to share and draw on limited resources: time, food, things for the house. This required an awareness of how such support takes place in a complicated network of housing managers, council workers, NGOs and Home Office funded companies, all with their own ideas and narratives of 'care' and conflicting notions of what kinds of 'homes' should be available to whom. I had to understand that in such a context my presence, physically and in terms of letters of support, and practical assistance, was productive in certain ways, but also transgressive or difficult, blurring the boundaries of 'instrumentality' and 'emotional commitment' associated with 'friendship'.

As such, many of my experiences in people's homes through the year of fieldwork I conducted were at moments of emergencies, house-moving, or as in the example above, shortly after a securing a new home. The Glasgwegian questions of 'where do you stay' (i.e. live), was never uncomplicatedly a thing of 'staying' rather than 'movement'; it could mean

family and childhood, 'countries of origin', possible future plans for moving or making a new home. But it could also mean Govan, Glasgow, or Scotland - a spectrum of spaces and the people that made them up, which were themselves always in motion. An invitation into a home in this context was also an invitation into these contested and difficult struggles over 'home' itself, and with the Office that bears its name.

Invitations

For Mohsin and Priya, an invitation to their home was also an invitation to join more deeply in the family's life, as the relational and material threads of home-making become entwined in food, company and shared stories. I had known the couple for about four years at the time I went to their house, by which point we'd become friends and co-organisers in various campaign groups about issues affecting people seeking asylum. Priya had been a regular attendee at meetings of a campaign we'd run together against Dungavel detention centre - we often reminisced about the first demonstration we'd done out at Dungavel itself, where a few of us had taken turns rocking her then new-born daughter to sleep at the edge of the detention centre walls, the loud chanting and drumming behind us seemingly not bothering the tiny baby at all. Mohsin had got involved after a while too, often doing mass catering for the events and meetings, cultivating a reputation as a legendarily good cook. I would often end up helping in the kitchen too, or doing bits of childcare, getting to know their young son through constant games and craft activities, covering various community halls across Glasgow in poster paint, crepe paper, glitter and biscuit crumbs. People's asylum 'cases' at such events were deliberately yet subtly off-limits – with a general awareness that the constant expectation to recount narratives of persecution, loss and forced migration people experienced through the asylum process should be avoided. Consequently, we had only spoken a few times about their struggles as an inter-faith couple in India, and their (ongoing) asylum claim linked to this, before the meal at their house, but had shared food together countless times at 'socials' and 'community meals.' 'Home' in these times could be food and company shared publically, anchoring each other in a city and 'activist' community that rarely went into people's private spaces.

The invitation to their new home consequently felt like some kind of shift, after months of wrangling with the Home Office over a previously unsuitable place. They told me explicitly that they now felt settled and happy enough to invite friends over, not embarrassed or worried about intrusions from their previous housing manager: "he was very nosy." The house itself is a tall, pebble-dashed semi-detached unit, built in the post-tenement-clearance building spree that swept Glasgow through the 1960s, as part of a large estate in the north west periphery of the city. The family of four have an upstairs flat, the entrance door taking you straight onto a carpeted set of stairs, with variously sized anoraks, coats and shoes at the bottom, and a white child's safety-gate at the top. The hall leads off to their son's bedroom, walls bright with paintings, awards from school and old birthday cards – toys piled into small shelves and buckets. The kitchen, busy with pans and tubawares (I went home with several, plus two plastic bags of sweet rice), faces a bedroom, with cot, that the children are told to go play in while we spoke. This was a rule nobody expected them to uphold: the whole house is imbued with the warm conviviality of a shared space, children included. In the main room where is made up of four white walls, a TV hung at one end, and a small table with four black faux-leather chairs and small mattress on the floor that the kids love to bounce on. The family had invited me a month before for an Eid party, and I apologise for not having managed to come. Priya talks about how they'd struggled to fit everyone in that night, "it was a big success," and tells me about how much better this new place is; warm (double glazed), easy to get the bus, good schools, the housing manager much friendlier, nice neighbours. We meet a few of these neighbours later, playing out in the street and gardens. An older woman with a huge slobbering dog comes over to greet Mohsin and ruffle his son's hair, asking: "are you going to beat these two old lads at football then sunshine?" Another family wave from a small bouncy castle they've put up in the summer heat.

Mohsin and Priya's home, and the relations they'd built around it – whether with anthropologist or neighbour – couldn't be easily separated from their asylum case. Indeed, it was a space where discussion of this was made possible and somehow controllable, non-intrusive, introduced through food, Netflix and other domestic markers. The couple were very aware that demonstrating some level of rootedness and 'integration' in the area was important to future steps in their asylum claim, something we made sure was highlighted in

support letters they gathered from me and others. As such, control over the terms of this home was even more important, worth fighting to change, in a task that had involved enlisting support from various organisations. They were also acutely aware that friends had told them 'not to raise problems' with accommodation allocation as this 'could affect your case'. The threat of this, the opaque balancing act of cultivating a home and 'strong' case, was constantly shadowed that year by news updates about the Serco evictions. We talked at length that day about it all, well aware that the company had promised it would 'not be targeting families', but having learnt over time to never completely trust such assurances. There was a sense of concern around the fragile comfort the family had cultivated – any change in asylum status could mean the end of their accommodation and support, including a 'positive decision' granting leave to remain. But alongside this, threaded into the conversations about the Eid Party, the Netflix TV, the children's toys – and in my attempt to write about them now - was a concern around the rules of asylum accommodation, the sense that to be too comfortable was to go against the terms under which the accommodation was provided. Here we need to move our analysis to a very material component of 'carceral care' under asylum support rules; the heavily scrutinised limits on people's finances, movement and possessions, whether they were at immediate risk from eviction or not. Looking into how this 'asylum support' is structured and policed reveals not just the threat of a changed lock, or questions of 'moving' and 'staying', but the question of whether a 'home' in this context is ever really off limits to the state.

"As I'm here now they might just be in my house"

> "What's it been like? Just like first off let's not talk about the standards, the standard is rubbish. Any time there is a repair they go for the cheapest. Your privacy is invaded.
>
> As I'm here now they might just be in my house."

Jane's fingers prod the air and table as she speaks, forceful and clear, with intermittent tuts, sharp kisses of the teeth. Morrison's supermarket radio plays in the background: Bowie, Radiohead, Steve Harley, the latest in-store deals, tills beep and shuffle nearby. The café is bustling, mostly white pensioners, their trolleys locked to one side, waitresses bringing fish suppers, all day breakfasts, jacket potatoes. It's warm and chatty, jokes and waves flitting across the seating booths.

Jane has a lemon tea, she's coming down with something, I've gone for a refillable latte. We've known each other for a couple of years, but for a few months I've been seeing her much more regularly, at a local community group, analysed in detail in Chapter 4. Issues to do with housing, Serco and the ongoing threat of evictions are always a major topic, and Jane commands a maternal kind of respect in the group – slightly older, two of her children going to University, unapologetic in her criticism of the system. This is the first time we've sat down one-to-one. She continues talking, looking me direct in the eye:

> You know my house, maybe they would have come in, looked around, assessed - forgetting that I have been here for 5 years now. My son came to meet me yesterday; he says 'Mum I need a new bed. Any time I wake up my body is in pain.' I said, I'm not going to ask Serco for a bed. Because they're going to bring that same, those same bad ones. So I said I'm going to speak to you today Joel, if you know anybody who can get me a good bed and a solid mattress?

I nod, make a note to look into whether anyone could help donate a spare mattress, while Jane moves on to describe the issues she's also been having feeding a family of five from a "tiny fridge":

> I can't be going every day to buy food, it's not cheap. So why do they think 'oh you can go shopping every day' - and I've also heard them say the money given to us is just for bread and soup!

I make a shocked noise, inhaling – "who said that?"

> Yes somebody said it, I saw on Channel 4 news. They say we are not allowed to eat meat. We should eat only bread and soup. Have you heard them say that sanitaries should be only £1?

I nod.

> Ok, you know the breakdown! The Pampers my daughter, my little girl wears, are about £4.50 for only 5, the only five she's going to have. Since I moved into that house in 2014 Serco gave me one set of bedspread. Very low quality. This is the 5th year, do they expect I will still be using the same bed sheets?

<p align="center">***</p>

Asylum Support

Understanding how homes become spaces of detainability for people in the asylum system

means unpacking the material and spatial limits built into British 'asylum support', the key

backdrop to the Serco evictions. People seeking asylum in the UK are barred from accessing welfare benefits, and, with a very small set of exceptions, from working. Once they have initiated an asylum claim (or a claim under Article 3 or 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights) they can access support in the form of accommodation and/or basic living expenses through a system of monetary and accommodation provision administered by the Home Office (see ASAP, 2018). This scheme is usually referred to as 'asylum support' and was initiated through New Labour's 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, which as I outline in the Introduction, "built on the worst elements of UK immigration policy, introducing a voucher system in place of cash benefits, a national system of forced dispersal and was accompanied by an increased use of detention centres" (Mynott, 2002: 1). While cash support was reinstated in 2002 after protests against the 'voucher system', before being turned into a chip-and-pin 'Aspen Card' system in 2017, asylum support levels have remained low since that time: £37.75 per person per week at the time of my fieldwork. This was initially set in 1999 at 70% of the equivalent adult Jobseeker's Allowance payment, but asylum support has not risen over time to reflect this - if it had asylum payments would sit at around £51.17 a week. The £37.75 is instead calculated by the Home Office by analysing "primary source data collected by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) about expenditure by the lowest 10% income group among the UK population" on various 'essential items' (Home Office, 2018a: 4), which make up what Jane calls the expected weekly 'breakdown', including:

- Clothing: £2.80
- Food and non-alcoholic drinks: £22.62
- Toiletries: £1.00
- Healthcare: £0.92
- Household cleaning items: £0.92

There are some extra payments for babies and young children, but as Jane explains, these are very difficult to budget with: nappies are calculated at £4.20 per week, for 0-6 months, going down to £3.08 as the child gets up to 18-24 months (All figures: Home Office, 2018a). Similarly, £4.30 is allocated for weekly travel, with the Home Office explaining that, "we do not consider travel and communication are essential needs in themselves, but accept that they may be necessary in limited circumstances to enable other needs to be met," before going on to argue that "asylum seekers are invariably accommodated in urban centres

where churches, mosques and other religious establishments are within walking distance" (Home Office, 2018a: 9-10). A current First Day bus pass costs £4.60 for an adult in Glasgow, and while legal appointments and visits to the reporting centre from over 3km away are reimbursed separately, this limit on travel was a major issue for many people I worked with, who, like Jane, articulated a sense of being materially and spatially 'stuck' and surveilled through a system they had got to know intimately, and in painstaking detail.

Such 'Section 95' support, named after the requisite part of the 1999 act, was often adopted as a short-hand marker of asylum status by many people going through the system, who would often say "I'm on Section 95" or "I'm Section 95". Alongside this was 'Section 4', which is set up to provide support for people who have been refused asylum. Alongside a refusal, to qualify for this people must meet several specific criteria, including: being unable to travel for medical or physical reasons, taking 'reasonable steps to leave' (for instance trying to access travel papers), having no viable route of return, undertaking a judicial review of a decision, or where there may be a human rights breach if support is stopped. This latter clause, which commonly draws on the argument that homelessness and inability to work constitute 'inhuman and degrading treatment' under the ECHR, is the part of Section 4 most regularly used by caseworkers. Most often, this is done through demonstrating that people have applied to make a 'fresh claim' or 'fresh submissions' for asylum, and have been given a date to present and begin processing this claim, but will be without support until that time. The system to submit these 'fresh claims' involves people having to travel to Liverpool to physically submit them, without travel compensation (though some charities may help cover this), and people can be waiting around 6-10 weeks for an appointment, sometimes longer (see ASAP, 2021). People who have been granted Section 4 get slightly less than those on Section 95 every week, £35.39, and are unable to withdraw this as cash from an ATM, instead having to use their Aspen Cards directly in shops, creating further problems for bus travel. Many people affected by the Serco court case had found themselves caught in the gaps between Section 95 and Section 4, having their support stopped either through delays, mistakes, legal issues, or because their 'ongoing claim' had been refused. Some were also people who had been granted refugee status or leave to remain, but were waiting to access mainstream housing support (most would have to declare as homeless at the point of getting status in order to do so, see

Chapter 3). Serco's argument throughout was that, in all cases, the Home Office had stopped paying them as housing provider for these people to stay, and that they therefore should no longer have an obligation to house them, no matter where they may end up.

The systems of asylum support and an asylum claim operate in a parallel, but deeply entangled, way – with people often finding out about changes in their claim through problems with support or housing, and the threat of 'breaches' of support conditions damaging a main asylum claim looming heavy in people's minds. The complications, bureaucracy and gaps involved in both these support systems, and people being moved from one to another, or having support stopped entirely, became a major point of contention at a political, legal and campaign level through my fieldwork, along with everyday implications for how people felt 'at home'.

Signs of Wealth

To access any kind of asylum support people must pass what is called the 'destitution test', as outlined in Section 95(3) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, which identifies a person as destitute if: "he does not have adequate accommodation or any means of obtaining it (whether or not his other essential living needs are met); or, he has adequate accommodation or the means of obtaining it, but cannot meet his other essential living needs", with those needs being roughly equivalent to the itemised 'breakdown' of essential goods detailed above (UK Public General Acts, 1999). Proving 'destitution' generally can mean providing details of bank accounts, previous addresses, accounts of charitable support received, child maintenance arrangements, previous employment situations, past rental agreements, and other 'evidence' to show that a person will be unable to support themselves. People must in effect deploy evidence of relationality and support-networks in negation, with a coherent timeline, to evidence that any support they have had is unsustainable and that the state is their only option. Most people who do this successfully are moved from initial 'Section 98' emergency accommodation onto 'Section 95' accommodation and financial support, and are moved to dispersal accommodation administered by a private 'housing provider' (Serco) for the Home Office.

People on asylum support are required to notify the Home Office of any 'changes in circumstance' that may affect their support, and support can be withdrawn for 'breaches of conditions'; if accommodation is abandoned without permission, if accommodation provider 'house rules' are broken, or if it 'evidence' of non-compliance with the terms of support is found. Practically, this is mostly policed through regular 'property inspections', when 'visible signs of wealth' are recorded and fed back to the Home Office, who can then reduce or stop support payments. This monitoring also happens through questioning about belongings at signing appointments, and electronic monitoring of Aspen Cards, particularly if people have used the cards on trips outside of their "authorised city", or bought 'luxury' goods (Horne, 2019). People are expected to declare, with evidence, any gifts, emergency grants or other things that may contravene the rules of support, and may have this support reduced to 'pay back' the cash value of items found. As such, the Home Office asylum support system mandates a constant bind of destitution/support, whereby support is only available through near-destitution, with limits and monitoring of people's accommodation, consumption and movement, whilst located in a 'no choice' dispersal house.

Jane had herself had been caught out by the 'signs of wealth' searches, as she explained:

> Some people, the Home Office, came in the disguise. They said that they were coming to check the quality of the house. Not knowing they were actually spies, when they came I left my broadband out - they didn't ask any questions they just noted it down, then after some weeks I received a letter - 'do you have this in your house, do you have this, do you have this?' they asked so many questions - 'do you have a tablet?' - so I answered the questions correctly, and like two weeks later they brought a letter that I should come and explain to them how I fund my broadband, where I got a laptop from [her son had received it on loan from his University], they said they saw a tablet - which was a lie - they had to go get my son's bank statement without his consent, luckily for me it was just like £20, £50 - and the Home Office told me I should explain why I put £20, £50 in my son's account. And I said yeah I put it because sometimes we save towards things, like 'mum my shoes are bad', so every week I will keep £20 - he needs to change his boxers, they need to cut their hair, so how's this £20, £50 leave me living? They say they saw, the word they use was 'signs of wealth', Joel, 'signs of wealth!' - you know I wept when I got that letter.

She stops, gathering herself, sighing with her whole body, her shoulders slumped. Looking down and then up again, she fixes me again in her line of sight:

I shed tears, I said OK. I told God, because I believe in God, because if this is a sign of wealth to whoever is writing this correspondence back to me, May It Be So for him and his family all the days of their life, may they not earn more than £20 in their life!

Jane focuses back in on whoever is making such calls, the civil servants, the MPs, the distant 'decision maker', who denies her this capacity to save, to feel like her intimate belongings and home are never off limits. I ask, "what did the representatives of the Home Office do?"

Yeah, they started deducting money from my money, 80 something pounds every month. I had to go cry to the MP, cry to Scottish Refugee Council, cry to ASH (Asylum Seeker Housing Project). After the MP wrote to them, they said it would stop, but they never gave that money back to me.

Jane had her support payments cut for 6 months, none of which was reimbursed when they overturned the decision. She articulates this process of having to 'go cry' about the situation as one of frustration and bureaucracy, but not of confusion. These are organisations Jane knows well, with relationships she can hopefully count on. Indeed, around the time that Jane was having her monthly support payments reduced due to her WiFi router, the ASH project were conducting their own study into what they term 'Wrongful Entry' searches, compiling stories similar to Jane's.

Wrongful Entry

At an event at the Women & Asylum Seeker Housing (W-ASH) Project offices - soft office chairs lined up for a presentation, people mingling at the tea urn - I listened as several 'research volunteers' read from the organisation's new 'Wrongful Entry Report' (W-ASH, 2019):

A Serco housing office entered the bedroom without giving me time to dress.

They came in while I was in the shower.

A housing officer phoned to say 'I'm inside', while I was at the shops. They were carrying out inspections that were scheduled for 2 weeks earlier.

They came into my house when I was sleeping. I woke up and they were in bedroom. 'I'm here from the new company – wake up, we need to take pictures of the home'. Only the man from Serco showed an ID card.

I came home to see that my stuff has been moved. Lights were turned on that I always turn off.

It's like I am nothing.

The small crowd, a mixture of NGO workers and people in the system themselves, with a few politicians and journalists, listen in a mood of attentive frustration. Heads shake, some notes are scribbled on small paper pads.

After some more questions we hear from an SNP MP, promising to keep trying to raise the issue with the new Immigration Minister in Westminster, thanking ASH and the research volunteers for their work on the report. He finishes with a note about Glasgow, Scotland, the importance of welcome:

I just want to make it very clear to everyone here today: If you want to stay here, then you are part of us.

The audience claps, people nod enthusiastically, a few kids start to run in from the crèche next door, someone takes a photo for the website.

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Complex forms of 'home' are, in such moments, collectively imagined and contested, as people are welcomed into an ongoing project of nation building in which 'welcoming' itself is foregrounded, linking to ideas of 'humanitarian kinship' outlined in the last chapter. Such statements – "you are part of us" - would be regularly accompanied by reminders that 'immigration and asylum are devolved matters', that invitations to state and nation were still somehow off-limits. In contrast, the walls and doors of people's houses themselves seem far more porous, available to state and private agents who function with a spectral omnipresence, moving belongings, turning off lights, calling, with an almost horror-film theatricality, to say: "I'm inside." Such dissonant imaginaries can create a peculiar sense of the everyday, of the presence of diffuse forms of detention. As Jane so succinctly put it: "As I'm here now, they might just be in my house." And as she later framed it: "Even though I am not in the four walls of a detention centre, Joel, we live in like an imaginary detention, put on us by the Home Office."

Evidence that these 'theys' may not carry ID cards, not knock, or fail to give proper notice of a visit, is written off by private contractors as an individual failing to follow procedure, or a case of someone just making lots of complaints, threatening staff.

But for Jane, this was a kind of 'imaginary detention' – a sense that she could be detained, but also that the systems imposed on her home, consumption routine and movement mean

that she in some ways already is detained – is informed by the widespread normalisation of such apparently occasional 'failures'. As one caseworker at the ASH event explained during the event: "We have to keep explaining to people that here it is not usual to go into a person's home with keys. Service users end up thinking that this is a normal practice here."

The 'inside' of detention as a key 'holding space' is found in both material and affective forms on the 'outside', through homes, and as we'll see in the following chapter, key spaces around the wider city. It is in the context of surveillance and material limitation, with houses never reliably open or closed, that people must build their homes. As we saw with Priya and Mohsin, but also with Jane, whose protestations very much drew on narratives of 'home' and hopes for the future, this is an important project, with 'home' often a moment or set of experiences, put in opposition to the impositions of the Home Office, whilst built within walls provided by it.

So, to return to Mike Dailly's question: 'Is it a home?'

The answer from residents, NGOs, activists and the GLC legal case seemed to be: 'it should be' – an ethical proposition made real in multiple everyday strategies of home-making by people living in this housing across the city, and in their collective attempts to push back against forces that supressed or denied the possibility of making their homes here. Yet as a backdrop to these ethical, domestic projects throughout the year sat the Serco Court case, which though it ostensibly targeted people who had somehow been 'refused', was understood by everyone as having significant implications for their own, local projects of home-making, and the legal foundations of 'home' for people in the asylum system more generally.

Decisions

The Honourable Lord Tyre made his decision on the court case in April 2019 - but we didn't get a 'final' judgement until November 2019, after appeal. In the initial decision, Tyre found the use of lock-change evictions to be lawful, dismissing the Govan Law Centre and their clients – this was temporary housing not covered by mainstream housing law. But

interestingly, Tyre sided with the pursuers on two key arguments from our original chart of pairs.

Govan Law Centre – The Pursuers:	Serco & The Home Officer – The Defenders:
Tenant / 'Residential Occupier'	Occupant
Lease	Occupancy Agreement
Public	Private
Coercion	Compulsion

Firstly, that, in his words:

> Serco is exercising a function of a public nature. The implementation by the UK of its international obligations to receive and provide essential services to destitute people seeking asylum is clearly, in my view, a function which is governmental in nature. (CSOH 34, 2019: 19)

And also that:

> Provision of accommodation to destitute asylum seekers or former asylum seekers […] has more in common with the exercise of coercive functions, as in Campbell v Scottish Ministers [the prison transportation example] than with the mere contracting out of a service by a public authority. (CSOH 34, 2019: 20)

He was otherwise convinced by Serco and the Home Office that the asylum housing they were providing was not comparable to a residential lease, that these were temporary kinds of 'occupancy' and thus not protected by mainstream housing law around evictions. Yet, in a judgment that in some way 'solves' the 'problem' of what I previously identified as an internal friction between the two positions put forward at the trial (homes *but* coercive vs *not* homes & *not* coercive), he asserts that these houses must then be delivered in a way that is 'governmental in nature' and in some sense 'coercive', despite his protestations on the day of the court. These were not 'homes' or 'dwellings' in Lord Tyre's interpretation of Scottish Housing Law, but the lack of choice and control built into their provision meant that the accommodation should be thought of as 'coercive', carceral. Ultimately though, Tyre found that the onus should be on the individual asylum seeker to advance their claim, make sure their support doesn't stop, and that there were enough existing legal avenues to do

this, Serco shouldn't have to take each individual lock-change to court, as GLC had hoped: lock changes were lawful.

The minor panic that spread across Glasgow after this announcement, as residents, NGOs and activists attempted to interpret pages of difficult legal jargon, subsided when Govan Law Centre announced that they would lodge an appeal, with fresh legal arguments apparently prepped. People under threat of eviction were encouraged to get housing lawyers, take out 'interim interdicts' to halt any evictions until the law was further clarified. Serco, having lost the asylum housing contract in Scotland over the summer, continued in their attempts at 'repossessing' properties, but packed up their offices in the city, where we'd previously issued them with our satirical 'Notice to Quit'. My friend Mariam, the chef from the flats, managed to get an interdict in place, but the terror of possible detention and uncertainty about her home persisted, causing intense stress and various medical problems. A few people I knew decided to simply leave houses that Serco were trying to repossess, some disappeared, some got claims re-started. A few came back from trips to the shops, hospital, or a coffee with friends, to find themselves locked out from their houses. One man told me how he came back from a doctor's appointment to find his key didn't work in the door, and that Serco wouldn't let him retrieve his medicine and belongings from inside until the next day – he could see the old lock through the letter box, sitting in a pile of sawdust. But, in most of the initial 140 cases that the company had tried to advance, Serco was unable to change locks or repossess the properties. This stalemate persisted until November 2019, as I began writing the first draft of this chapter.

We'd hoped the appeal might reverse Lord Tyre's decision about the legality of lock changes, instead, it firmly upheld it[4] and with a 'cross appeal' from Serco and the Home Office, the new judgement went back on the two parts of Tyre's judgement that had given the campaign against the evictions some hope. He'd been 'unsound' in stating that coercion was in place:

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[4] From the judgement: "Thus occupancy was precarious, in the absence of any obligation to pay rent, and [Serco] were entitled to proceed to summary ejection from the property. That does not require court procedure" (CSIH 54, 2019: 19)

> No coercion applies to someone in the position of the appellant […] It remained open to her to refuse the accommodation offered. That may involve a stark choice between the accommodation offered and homelessness but it did not follow that the Secretary of State was exercising a coercive power in providing the accommodation. (CSIH 54, 2019: 12)

There was choice, the choice of having no home at all, and thus, no 'coercion'. Tyre was also 'unsound' according to this new judgment, in finding Serco to a be functioning in ways that were 'governmental', like a 'public body':

> Under section 95 of the 1999 Act the obligation is to provide support for asylum seekers, and that obligation remains incumbent on the Home Secretary and does not pass to parties such as Serco who contract with the Home Secretary to provide services for asylum seekers. (CSIH 54, 2019: 24).

Not 'homes' in any legal sense then, and the ultimate responsibilities for provision lay with the Home Office, rather than accommodation providers themselves, leaving them considerable discretion in excising their right to evict. The 'friction' of Serco's and the Home Office's position – 'these are not homes but also not coercive' – was solved with a brutal simplicity: it can't be 'coercion' if there is some kind of choice over accessing it (the 'stark' choice of becoming homeless), and this housing was purely a 'commercial activity' for the provider. At meetings and in conversations about the ruling, the shadow that had hung over the year, the 'detainability' of being locked-out as well as locked in, felt more proximate. The fragile status of letters of support and interdicts felt that bit more precarious. People would continue to find ways to try have some control over when they could move or stay, to build liveable 'homes' that don't somehow contravene the material conditions of asylum support, to push back and organize against intrusions of 'Private' contractors into un-private homes. Yet the terms of debate had been set and shifted by legal battles that persisted through the year, concluded, for now, in the decision that the housing people lived in was different to many of their neighbours in important, difficult ways.

On the day of the ruling, flanked by various NGO and legal figures from campaigns against the evictions, Mike Dailly, from Govan Law Centre, read a statement:

> I think this is a truly sad day for human rights law in Scotland. In allowing the Home Office's cross appeal the effect of today's ruling is that the UK government can

outsource its statutory and international legal obligations to a private company. In effect that means you can contract out of the Human Rights act.

He finished by announcing that Govan Law Centre will be seeking their clients' permission to appeal the ruling at the UK Supreme Court; conclusions, and possibly evictions, held off again.

Over in the Scottish Parliament, the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon joined in with condemning the decision:

If lock-change evictions are legal, they certainly are not moral.

And though there is a determination to not let any conclusive answers about this housing take root, it struck me that fewer people were asking, at these loftier legal and political levels: 'is it a home?'

Conclusion

Such grand contestations over law, morality, nation and human rights may feel far away from the question of 'home'. One point I've been trying to make in both formal and substantive ways through this chapter is that this is not the case, that 'detainable' people in Britain find themselves having to work through the knotty procedures and figures of asylum support, questions of housing or human rights law and narratives of national morality through the space of the home. This is clearly a gendered and racialized thing, with particular experiences and narratives of 'vulnerability' impacting people like Jane, Mariam and the woman who became the key figure in the Govan Law Centre case. While the previous chapter involved a group of volunteer 'befrienders' who were mainly women visiting people in Dungavel who were predominately men, this one has involved particular key male authority figures drawing on figures of the 'vulnerable female asylum seeker' that will be explored in more depth in Chapter 5. This was despite the fact that, as Serco were keen to remind everyone in their press releases, the majority of people targeted for lock-change eviction were 'single men'. As De Noronha argues, "norms surrounding 'the family' are produced and enforced at the border" (2020: 140), linking to narratives about who 'deserves' a safe, comfortable home, against a long backdrop of racist agitation around

asylum seekers 'stealing' homes (see Philo, Briant & Donald 2013). As Mohsin and Priya attest, this is something that people inside the system are very aware of, often seeking to draw on ideas of family and counter narratives of 'homemaking' in their attempts at securing status. I think it would be a mistake to see these as any less infused with possibilities for responsibility, commitment, love and friendship because of this fact, and instead found that attending to such relationships allows us to see how relatedness is often contingent on shared needs, desires and experiences of vulnerability.

Instead of 'instrumental' relations here, I situate the homes of Mohsin and Priya, or Mariam, as sites of resistance, as well as threat. This evokes bell hooks' writing on the importance of 'homeplace' to black women's struggles, as she argues: "Black women [have] resisted by making homes where all black people could strive to be subjects, not objects, where we could be affirmed in our minds and hearts despite poverty, hardship and deprivation, where we could restore to ourselves the dignity denied us on the outside in the public world" (1990: 384). Such work allows us to see domesticity and the home as a site of "a site for subversion and resistance" (hooks, 1990: 389), despite the limits and restrictions of systems of racial oppression. Whilst acknowledging the specific black feminist locus of hooks' 'homeplace', I think it's possible to see how throughout the legal and political battles sketched through this chapter people maintained expansive forms of "being at home in the world" (Jackson, 1995: 123) that speak to her notion of 'homeplace', as never fully contained by laws or locks.

This chapter has discussed how legal and everyday contestations around the 'home' and 'carcerality' created particular material and affective experiences of 'detainability' for people I did fieldwork with. Feeling 'stuck' within legal procedures of asylum support, or fixed and surveilled by house inspections, was compounded by the threat of being 'locked out' of a home or 'locked in' to an ever-present space of detention. However, what Jane calls 'imaginary detention' has a deeper historical trajectory and wider geography than individual homes, taking in courts, signing centres, libraries, foodbanks, hospitals and public spaces across the city. It is to this wider urban 'carceral' infrastructure that the next chapter will turn.

Chapter 3 - "Inside me, everywhere": 'Detainability' and The City

Four scenes from a city

The City Centre

The big Costa in town, near Primark. It's busy, people typing on laptops, chatting over bags of shopping. "I hate these chairs," says Adam, as we sit down, wiggling into the seat, with its admittedly weird, hard angles. He meticulously tears through a mound of sugar sachets, pouring them into his empty cup, before pouring the cup into a small pot of brewing green tea. I ask him about the process and he laughs, shrugging: "I don't know why I do it like that, at home we would have the pot on a fire, maybe that's why." Adam uses the space around us to demonstrate things throughout our chat: he gestures to the proximity of our two chairs to recount a story about how he had to ask for permission to go between rooms at the homelessness hostel he'd lived in recently, "you are there, I am here, in our rooms. And the receptionist at this hostel when I'm seeing a visitor, she is sitting right here, hearing everything." He taps his ears, shaking his head.

When we discuss both having recently started driving lessons, he uses the empty sugar packets to simulate a piece of parallel parking, both of us laughing. And at one point, he balances an old Nokia phone on the side of a table, perilously*:* "I think it is very difficult for asylum seekers in this country, it is like this" – he wobbles the phone dramatically - "you cannot plan, you don't know where things will go."

I point to his other phone, a smart android one with a pink case sitting on the table. "What about that one?" He smiles, "that's my main phone," picking up the Nokia again, "but this one is to ring my mum. It is better than EE or whatever, it has Lyca to ring my mum on, cheaply. What are you on?"

*"*EE!" I say, and we both laugh.

"I think I might change to GiffGaff, but I will keep this one for my mum."

The Home Office

Outside the Home Office reporting centre again, the small crowd tie banners to the metal railings, the largest – 'No Evictions Network' circled by a mass of multicoloured hand prints – flapping unhelpfully in the wind. A few workers in the office above peer out from the second floor, two security guards pace around near the locked car park gate, nobody seems to be going into 'report' today. Years before I'd seen a group of protestors stop a friend's detention by sitting on the road here, blocking the

immigration vans inside. I've also seen people collapse and faint on this same patch of roadside, overwhelmed by the stress of having to report.

A news crew from BBC Newsnight have come to film the protest for a special report they are doing on the evictions. They had already filmed a group of us a couple of days ago, outside the Glasgow Museum of Modern Art (GOMA) in the city centre, at an event organised by the Living Rent tenants union, where we had delivered letters to all the Housing Associations in Glasgow, asking them to publically refuse to take part in the Serco evictions.

As they try to gather people on the narrow pavement into a group shot, everyone continues to help themselves to juice and cakes from a flimsy trestle table we'd set up, not quite congregating. I pass around some melting ice lollies and cups to various children, trying to ask their parents for permission first.

"It's always Irn Bru and cheap biscuits at these protests!" Someone jokes. "And the meetings! I've eaten so many now. We really should try and get some fruit juice or something."

The Eagle Building

I try not to spill the three takeaway coffees as I hurry past shining glass tower blocks, late out of Central Station and into what a small sign tells me is Glasgow's 'International Financial Services District'. The steep hill which rises up through the city centre sits to my right, rows of sky scrapers punctuated by older buildings carved in deep, sooty stone. Hidden in the midst of this, just before you hit the M8 motorway that rips through the city, is the 'Eagle Building', a grey mass of glass and shining marble. Imposing in its own terms, the tower blurs into its surroundings here, reflecting the structures around it on its vista in a strange mirror of refractions.

I pass the drinks to my friends as I arrive, breathless, apologising. "You look like a supermarket manager," laughs one of them, my bleached white shirt tucked into my trousers. The court begins at 10am, our friend is already inside with his lawyer. I've done 'court support' like this a few times now. It mainly entails sitting quietly in the back of the court room, a grand name for what are here simply bare, worn-out office spaces fitted with the requisite wood partitions and legal insignia. Often there's a loose wire dangling from somewhere, and a missing ceiling panel – very little else apart from plastic chairs and small white heaters. Such spaces provoke a strange aching anger and melancholy in my body, similar to other spaces of bureaucracy and quiet violence that I've encountered at other times in my life.

We swig the lukewarm lattes as we ride up the glass elevator to the floor that houses 'Glasgow Employment and Immigration Tribunals'. The G4S guard at the entrance

won't let us bring in the drinks, and searches us briskly. Past the scanners, a waiting area holds small huddles of people and lawyers. Some are alone, sitting anxiously, waiting for their court to open.

The Library

Sat at my usual seat at the local library, I'd found it hard to work this morning, typing up field notes: one desk is being used as a makeshift Universal Credit advice area by the council, earlier a woman had left her meeting with them in tears. At other times the Library is noisy with 'sing along with baby' sessions and writing groups, or giggling teens watching videos after school, but these are a welcome ambience compared to the strained and patronising tones that fill the space today. I try and distract myself by watching a film from earlier this year, made by the Scottish Detainee Visitors 'Life After Detention' group, in which members of the project had filmed their everyday lives in Glasgow, recounting their experiences after release from detention.

A series of speakers talk over grainy mobile phone footage: the city from a bus; men swimming in a loch; feet walking on concrete; and, towards the middle of the film, the inside of a sitting room, a framed pastoral painting, the dull black shine of a TV monitor, a wet looking residential street and cars through the window. I realise I recognise the voice that is speaking. It's a woman I've known for some time through various campaigning groups, though we've never discussed her personal circumstances. Hearing her familiar voice over my headphones sends a shiver of emotion through my body, already heightened, and I struggle to stay composed, staring at my screen as she speaks:

> I'm not what I was. Sometimes I think there is a banner on my face, everyone knows that I have been in detention. It has just changed my whole personality; I was a very confident girl.
>
> It's always with me, all the time. Whenever I see something, it recalls me to detention.
>
> When I was in detention, I was pregnant, and I used to go to the dining room for eating. Every day they boiled the broccoli. I had a very bad pregnancy: nausea, morning sickness. I felt the smell of broccoli inside me, everywhere. And I just hate it. And whenever I see the broccoli it just reminds me of detention.

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This chapter is about the urban environment of Glasgow, Scotland's only asylum 'dispersal city': how forms and experiences of detention are threaded into the city in multiple ways. I analyse how spaces charged with the kind of relationality, resistance, bureaucracy and affect sketched in the vignettes above are produced and experienced by detainable people, often as somehow reflecting their 'detainability'. Food and drinks can have powerful effects here, transporting people through the 'inside' and 'out' of detainability in unpredictable ways. Overcooked broccoli, cheap lattes, flat Irn Bru, biscuits, green tea, sugar – all become located and therefore implicated in personal and collective experiences of the city, along with the places that came before it. Alongside the clear 'carcerality' of Immigration appeals courts or Home Office reporting centres are subtler but no less pervasive forms of surveillance and control, operating through public space and across key sites such as food banks, advice and healthcare centres, NGO offices, libraries, hostels, cafes, shops, churches, mosques, streets and neighbourhoods. But this chapter is less about formal modes of 'everyday bordering' (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss & Cassidy, 2017) and surveillance associated with the hostile environment, and more about how the city can feel charged with forms of 'knowing' and relatedness: hopes for interconnection, or building a 'new life', along with threats of violence, racism and exclusion.

These feelings link to 'detainability' in complex ways, and, as Adam's wobbly phone highlights, are precarious and shifting. Such props become a way of producing and understanding the space around us; the same phone becomes a way of narrativising connections to friends and family, packs of Costa Coffee sugar offer a small routine of relatedness. My own associations - between soggy custard crèmes and long meetings, or cheap lattes and the Dungavel Visiting room - were affirmed and expanded through the year, and the tastes are still with me. Of course, this takes on a more traumatic form for the woman I recognised from the SDV film, for whom detention was "always with me", a deeply sensory, experience of smells, tastes and feelings. Such experiences are embodied or present 'inside' a person, even after they get 'out' of a specific IRC, speaking to anthropological work on the wider ways in which violence, loss and trauma are "absorbed into everyday life" (Segal, 2018: 12; see also Segal 2020; Kelly, 2008).

This chapter builds on the arguments made in my introduction to consider how racialization, bordering and carcerality emerge in the space of the city, through ethnographic attention to those who live in such spaces. While in the last chapters I considered the roles played by friendship, care and 'detainability' in the IRC and asylum accommodation, this one expands the spatial scale to the city in order to consider what it feels like to be 'held' in a wider sense, and how people hold this feeling with them. I first outline experiences of dispersal, bail and post-status housing as key sites of prolonged 'detainability'; then consider how such sites exist alongside spaces of 'community' and relationality, sometimes with complex overlap; before concluding through working through a gut-wrenching episode of racist urban violence. I ask: what are the spatial, affective forms of 'detainability'? How are 'dispersal' and 'bail' felt, and implicated in their environments? What does it mean to get to 'know' the city, be 'known' by it, or remain anonymous? How does the 'inside' of detention, stay inside you? What does it mean to share space with different kinds of strangers? How do people 'hold space' in different ways?

This chapter attempts to trace this, along with the sensuousness and threat of a 'detainability' that is "inside me, everywhere". Firstly, however, it is useful to briefly outline how theories of affect, the stranger and urban civility have influenced what will thereafter be a largely ethnographically focused chapter.

Strange Feelings and New Urban Frontiers

In this chapter, I draw on Clara Han's work to argue that both borders *and* "relations are lived in degrees of intensity; they are not an all or nothing presence or absence" (2012: 232), with forms of bordering and relatedness taking interconnected forms. 'Intensity', like the idea of detention being 'inside me, everywhere', points to ideas of affect, that most slippery but popular of theoretical terms. Affect is often written about through synonymic iteration and metaphor: "the felt, visceral, immediate, sensed, embodied, excessive" (Brinkema, 2014: xiii); a 'mood' that "makes the atmosphere thick, sticky, muggy" (Cooper, 2018: 98; see Mariana Valverde, 2015); "that outward unconscious which hovers between people, rather than swimming upward from the privacy of each heart" (Riley, 2000: 4). I have found much insight in theories of affect that emphasise the "affective regularities"

(Riley, 2000: 7) of words rather than positing it as outside or prior to language, a position that points to Jon Bialecki's question of whether there is a "representational problem in using language to narrate a pre-linguistic, pre-subjective phenomenon"? (2018: 13). Such readings specify 'affect' in the Spinozan and Deleuzian sense as "a *force* that either dilates or contracts human capacities at any single moment" (Bialecki, 2018: 13). Such 'dilations' as a form of joyous affect, are present here but more explicitly inform my discussion of solidarity in Chapter 7 (see Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Massumi, 2002; Montgomery & bergman, 2017). In this chapter, I found that writing about 'affect' theory seemed to ironically reduce the 'affective' quality of my ethnography, so focus more on trying to convey some of the atmospheres and feelings I found moving through the city, with the acknowledgement that such ideas were still guiding my thinking. Through ethnographic attention, we find that spaces of 'detainability' can have a force or mood that people express as fear or dread, along with a kind of claustrophobic or centrifugal 'pull'. But such spaces can also offer feelings of commonality, maybe joy: the possibility of finding others who share an experience of detention, who may even offer support, mutual recognition and friendship. Linking to arguments I made in the introduction, these are also spaces of shared racialization and 'migrantization', which people experience in differentiated ways.

Considering detainability's affectivity, associated with certain urban spaces and experiences of 'outsiderness', though never quite contained by them, also links to classic theory about the 'stranger', collectivity and social cohesion. Sharika Thiranagama argues in an edited volume on 'civility' that "this literature has frequently framed the complexity of life that emerges within the city's increasing density and the advent of cultural and economic forms of modernity through the problem of how to live with strangers" (2018: 359; see Simmel, 1971). Ideas of the 'stranger' and 'civility' underlie this chapter, with certain spaces and relationships becoming attached to the terms, linking to questions of anonymised or opaque 'solidarity' that I outline in Chapter 6 and my conclusion. Richard Sennet distinguishes between the 'known' and 'unknown' stranger, with the former "synonymous with the outsider," fitting into existing representational ways of framing "who belongs and who does not" such as 'linguistic' or 'cultural' difference (1976: 48). The 'unknown stranger' however cannot be 'placed' and, for Sennet, also reflects a perceived breakdown amongst groups lacking clarity "about their own identities" (1976: 48). This is a useful if somewhat binary

formulation, that will be expanded on through the chapter via everyday notions of the 'stranger' and 'outsider'.

In the contemporary context of immigration controls, ideas of the 'strange' and 'foreign' have been clearly shaped by "the idea that too much immigration undermines social solidarity," which Keenan Malik argues, "has over the past decade become almost common sense" (2013: 42). Such sentiments are informed by historical moments where migrants have been understood in contradictory and overlapping ways: celebrated as "representatives of [postcolonial] rising nations, whose friendships must be regained" (Bailkin, 2012: 50); blamed for inciting white rioting and violence through their presence alone (Bailkin, 2012: 205); and viewed through shifting tropes of 'ethnic absolutism' (Gilroy 1987) and 'cultural essentialism' (Hall 1992). Throughout this chapter I try to be cognisant to the historic and contemporary weight of words like 'stranger' and 'alien', whilst also being attentive to ethnographic ideas of "co-existence and co-presence" (Thiranagama, 2018: 367), which often draw on categorical distinction and emic notions of difference. Civility, which for Sennet, is "treating others as though they were strangers and forging a social bond upon that social distance" (1976: 264), can instead be understood as ethically unfixed and contested day-to-day: "an *incomplete horizon* in which forms of relating to each other in shared publics persist, even as those publics are built on such deeply unequal forms" (Thiranagama, Kelly & Forment, 2018: 171).

Of course, notions of 'civility' and 'civilising' also bring up questions of colonialism (Thiranagama, Kelly & Forment, 2018: 164), and the city was for many a 'holding space' for particular, often personally felt, colonial pasts. One man told me, about his time as an asylum seeker: "Mitchell Library was my home for so long," his tone a mix of bitterness, humour and reverence for that great architectural symbol of 19th Century Glasgow. Like GOMA, the library was built with plantation tobacco wealth steeped in the slave trade (see Devine, 2015; Glasgow Museums and Collections, 2018; Price, 1956), a fact the man was keenly aware of, having travelled himself from a former British colony. Day-to-day, for people I got to know, the city was a place where they would be racialized as 'strange' within an urban environment marked by colonial extraction (from Jamaica Street, Tobago Street and Virginia Street, to the Kingston Bridge and Merchant City), while simultaneously being denied the urban anonymity of the 'known' stranger. Here, great architectural markers of

colonial 'civility' and wealth express how *"rather than a category transplanted onto the colonial relations, the actual cultivation of European civility was a project that unfolded itself through colonial expansion"* (Thiranagama, Kelly & Forment, 2018: 164) in material terms. People within the asylum system navigate a racialized urban environment forged in the heat of colonial extraction – in this man's case through making a 'home' in one of the few public spaces available - at the same time as working through legal structures that deny them access to these spaces and resources (El-Enany, 13: 2020).

In concrete ways, through dispersal to structurally under-resourced parts of the city, people encounter narratives of "a 'decivilised' landscape, a marginalised space where 'incivility' and 'disorder' (often couched under the umbrella label 'anti-social behaviour') are prevalent" (Gray & Mooney, 2011: 7; see Haylett, 2003; Fyfe, Bannister & Kearns, 2006). Glasgow's colonial built environment has been augmented through what Neil Gray outlines as cycles of disinvestment, territorial stigmatisation, and privatisation in the city, often couched in terms of 'urban planning' and 'regeneration' (2008, 2015). As Neil Smith argues, regeneration is often presented as 'civilising' a 'new urban frontier' (Smith, 1996), and in Glasgow this has been particularly focused on parts of the east end and north east of the city depicted as "welfare ghettos", "Glasgow's Guantanamo" or 'no-go zones' in media attacks (Gray & Mooney, 2011: 14, 12). Such areas, along with the south-side district of Govan, which has experienced its own cycles of stigmatisation and post-industrial 'regeneration', have consistently been the main parts of the city used for asylum dispersal. This problematizes Sennet's notion of the city as "civility institutionalised" (1976: 264), pointing to overlapping discourses of 'incivility' and how notions of the 'undeserving' / 'bad' non-citizen or citizen overlap (Anderson, 2013), and take spatial forms. While histories of asylum dispersal and Glasgow's formation as "*the* prototypical city of neoliberal revanchism" (Gray, 2015: 139) are rarely put in dialogue, they form an important backdrop to the experiences of those who navigate asylum accommodation and its aftermath.

Immigration Bail: *The Reporting Centre & The Neighbourhood*

Central to dispersal and detainability in Glasgow is The Home Office reporting centre, on the south banks of the river between the areas of Ibrox and Cessnock, near to the famous

Govan shipyards. This was often a site of site of protest, as sketched in the opening vignettes to this chapter, but more routinely a space that the people I worked with experienced as charged with frustration, anxiety and dread. A non-descript grey office block overlooked by rows of classic red-brick Glasgow tenements, the building is only really distinguishable through its neutral 'UK Visa and Immigration' signage, and the lurking presence of security staff in hi-vis jackets. Yet, since the inauguration of 'no choice' dispersal through the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (see Introduction and Chapter 2), this is where anyone seeking asylum in Glasgow has had to come and regularly 'report' or 'sign' with the Home Office. It is also where the vast majority of detentions have happened since 2005 onwards, whilst people 'sign', following successful campaigns against the use of 'dawn raids' on people's accommodation (see Khan, 2006). During my fieldwork, the 'reporting' conditions attached to claiming asylum were reframed as 'Immigration Bail' through Theresa May's 2016 and 2018 'hostile environment' legislation (which took some time to come into force). This explicitly restricted work and educational entitlements as part of a move towards narratives of 'illegality', itself a category used to evoke certain racist archetypes (Wang, 2018: 14-15), alongside rhetoric targeting 'illegal immigrants'. As a legal account from 2018 on the Free Movement website explains:

> "Immigration bail" as a formal legal status is relatively new. Prior to 15 January 2018 people sometimes had conditions placed on them as part of the process of being given 'temporary admission' in the United Kingdom. This was usually where the immigration authorities encountered someone without leave to remain, when people claimed asylum or where an immigration officer had concerns about a person's immigration status on arrival into the United Kingdom. From 15 January 2018, with the coming into force of section 61 and schedule 10 to the Immigration Act 2016, temporary admission and bail were merged into a new single status simply called "immigration bail" (Yeo, 2018).

Here we see how the deployment of Home Office vans emblazoned with the phrase "In the UK illegally? Go home or face arrest" and a Home Office twitter campaign around '#immigrationoffenders' (Back & Sinha, 2018: 29) overlaps with the use of increasingly 'illegalising' (De Noronha, 2020: 6) language and legal terminology for all people seeking asylum. Bail, drawing on racialized narratives of criminality and prison, was "now the word for the raft of community-based control measures now going to be imposed on all people without status" (SOAS Detainee Support, 2018). Everyone I knew in the system was

presented with new 'Bail 201' forms at signing appointments, causing considerable panic and confusion at the time, particularly due to the fact that many had ambiguous 'no study' conditions seemingly imposed out of the blue, and because the wording was clear that recipients were 'liable to be detained'. This new form of 'bail' also overlapped, confusingly, with the parallel system of detention bail available to people in Immigration Removal Centres, which require financial surety, bail addresses, and the judgement of a bail tribunal, to facilitate a release. The constant changing of law and procedure becomes an 'illegalising' and carceral force in itself.

Jane - whom we met in the last chapter and was a key part of the NGO Participant Action Research (PAR) group featured in the next chapter - had 'signed' at the Home Office for a number of years by the time of my research. She explained an average 'reporting' session to me:

> You go there, you have been searched like a prisoner, from the door. You are not allowed to use your phone. And you go there and you'll meet someone who if they want can say '[you have to] come 7 times a week'. They keep asking you for your address, and I'm like 'my address should be on the system'.

> If you are unlucky that is where you get the detained. Whenever I go there I'm like kind of a potential detainee, you know?

> When I have leave to remain I'll go somewhere far from the Home Office. I do not want to live near here.

Immigration Bail compounded existing associations for Jane, focused on anger at being "searched like a prisoner" or forced to recount an address that was being provided by that same bureaucratic institution. Crucially, Jane combined narratives of this process with ones about dreaming of escape from a locale that was tarnished by its association with being a "potential detainee." The Home Office reporting centre is here a clear zone of detainability, but not predictably so, and the streets around it (along with the days leading up to an appointment) become imbued with this unknown possibility. It is partly for this reason that the Unity Centre, initially an informal 'signing support' stall set up outside the Home Office, opened a permanent shopfront in 2006 just around the corner, in an attempt to provide space for people to check in and get support before and after a reporting appointment. Fifteen years later, both offices remain as affectively resonant, material markers of contestation over the urban space of the area.

Jane's friend from the PAR group, Marcel, linked his experiences of reporting with living in nearby Govan, an area he was very fond of, but felt was neglected by the council: "Govan is a poor area, Serco chose Govan because it is poor and housing is cheap. It's a business choice." Ginika, also part of the group, would join in: "Yes! And where are the Christmas lights? They should be between the buildings. Govan is poor, the council doesn't care. I bet the posh areas in Glasgow have all kinds of lights and trees."

Marcel and Ginika would regularly talk about the sense of community they had in the area, but felt Govan was marked by dispersal and proximity to the Home Office, along with a certain 'territorial stigmatisation' or 'taint' (Wacquant, 2008) as 'poor' and forgotten by the council, a 'new urban frontier' (Smith, 1996). The neighbourhood, like the home, becomes imbued with material and affective links to the 'carcerality' of detention, centred on details like the absence of Christmas lights. This was complicatedly tangled with an affective sense of community, support and mutual understanding focused on the NGO offices and 'Community Hub' where this conversation took place (see next chapter), and spaces like Unity Centre, which they both frequented. This evocation of the 'the council' also harked back to the days when Glasgow City Council had initially run the dispersal and housing of asylum seekers directly, until it was privatised in 2010. In line with Marcel's point, a Refugee Council report from 2000 states: "It's clear that the Home Office wants to direct asylum seekers to the cheapest accommodation" and consequent private contractors such as Serco have had to demonstrate an ability to deliver the contracts even more cheaply.

Initial dispersals to Glasgow in 1999 were focused on the Red Road and Sighthill flats in the North East of the city, utilising council units that had been classed as 'void' or 'hard to let' (see White, 2020a; Hill, Meer & Peace, 2021). But subsequent outsourcing firms have attempted to cut costs by procuring properties that are scattered around the edges of the city, cut off from existing communities. Thus, while some people in areas like Govan were housed in ex-council flats leased by housing associations to Serco, many were in the private rental sector. In the aftermath of the 'stock transfer' of Glasgow council housing, and Thatcher's right-to-buy program, the majority (Glasgow's Asylum Seeker Housing Project told me they estimated 70-80%) of asylum accommodation is rented by private landlords to a private company (Serco), who are in turn funded by the Home Office. Such processes have resulted in a chronic lack of housing infrastructure in Glasgow, which also effects

people who manage to get leave to remain. The affective forms of urban life are conditioned by such histories of privatisation and a chronic lack of community investment.

"I never want to set foot in their again!": *The Hostel & Post-Status Housing*

> I meet Adam at what has become our usual café, fifteen minutes' walk from my house in the Southside of Glasgow. It's a joyfully noisy spot full of worn leather settees, TVs on mute showing old sitcoms and talk shows, and a busy variety of customers: pensioners eating all day breakfasts, groups of young men chatting in Arabic over espressos, families sharing brightly coloured cakes and hot chocolates. Adam is already there when I arrive, relaxed and smiling in a smart shirt and jeans, black jacket, a woollen hat, his beard trimmed short. Here, we usually share tea and cake, taking in turns to pay, sliding from chats about my research to browsing flats on gumtree together, looking at housing association websites, polishing job applications, talking through college assignments, gossiping about mutual friends, and discussing politics, books, and life.
>
> Since our initial meetups, at the Costa Coffee in town, Adam has been granted leave to remain by the Home Office, spending some time after becoming an official 'refugee' living in a hostel nearby, classified as homeless as he waited on various housing association lists, until he eventually went to stay with his brother, who had also made it to Glasgow to seek asylum.
>
> After we finish in the café, Adam decides he's keen to show me his old hostel building, which I didn't realise is just around the corner.
>
> He walks at a brisk pace, giving me an impromptu tour as we go: the best charity shop for smart clothes, the Subway and supermarket where he gets his pre-work sandwiches (depending on time), a sign for a construction company he used to work for. Not far past the shops we come to a grand complex of old red-brick buildings, 'Glasgow Samaritan Hospital for Women' is carved into the wall facing the street in a formidable, archaic font. He laughs, pointing up as he walks towards the entrance:
>
> "This place is hell!"
>
> "Hell?" I repeat back to him.
>
> "Yes! Hell!"
>
> We turn into the close and come to a large glass door, through which a TV flashes in a bare, low-lit reception.
>
> I peer through and ask*:* "is this where you were telling me about, where you'd have to meet friends?"

Adam nods: "yes, no visitors in the rooms. And with the curfew you were not allowed to leave before 8am! Then they would search your room when you left it, look through things. One time I left for a short time and came back and they were in my room with all my clothes. 'What are you doing?!' I'd say. But they'd say it was to keep us safe."

He scoffs, shakes his head, and presses his finger onto the intercom bell, glancing up at the camera above us both. A woman comes out to greet us, holding the door slightly ajar, smiling but clearly a bit bemused as Adam asks after the two old managers.

"Are they around today?"

"I'm afraid not," she replies. "But you know they will actually be in on Saturday if you wanted to pop by then?"

She smiles again, warily, and closes the door as we head back out on the street. Adam adjusts his woolly hat and turns to me:

"I never want to step inside there again."

***

This building, strangely invisible to me until that point, despite being two minutes from my local supermarket, was one of many around the city that I learnt held complicated affective associations for people in the asylum and immigration system. Like the Home Office reporting centre, people would describe in various ways how these spaces felt charged with a particular affective sense: wanting to get out, being pulled back in. What we might call a 'centrifugal' force could also, as in Adam's 'tour' above, be potentially reclaimed after some time, my sense was he wanted to stare into 'hell' one last time, with me as a witness. For some, the city itself took on a quality of centrifugal 'stuckness', in Adam's case (in the occasional moments he spoke about maybe leaving Glasgow), he was pulled back by established networks of friendship, support and kin, housing waiting lists, work and job centre requirements, and limited resources. Everyday markers also pulled Adam back to his time seeking asylum too, the Subway sandwich shop he mentions above (always filling the street with smells of bread and cookies) was what seemed to propel him into these memories, and the impromptu tour. For the vast majority of people not yet in his position, the things holding them in Glasgow often felt firmer: 'no choice' dispersal put specific limits

on leaving the city for any length of time, whilst Asylum Support 'Aspen Cards' were monitored and flagged if used outside the city. Serco housing managers would ring and often report people if they seemed to not be at home for any length of time, and missing reporting appointments could have serious effects on people asylum's claims.

Once people had managed to successfully claim asylum, as in Adam's case, they found themselves exposed to news forms of conditionality and stigma across welfare, housing and work (Anderson, 2015; Tyler, 2013). As a friend, Caroline, who worked for a major NGO in the city told me:

> There's always an apprehension for us when people get their status.
>
> The transition is supposed to be managed by Scottish Refugee Council, and they have funding to do that, but the problem at the moment is that they've got a massive backlog, it's really hard to get an appointment, so that can set people off a bit on the back foot.
>
> The Hostel accommodation is often not suitable for people, the food is not appropriate, you are forced to share with people who may scare you, the noise, the curfews - and you're not allowed to be away for a certain period of time.
>
> Then there is bidding on houses [with housing associations], how complicated that is, what area you want to be in, how much you know about the area, knowing your rights in terms of refusing offers, and how you can be penalised for that.
>
> A lot of people will move away from Glasgow too and go to England, without knowing about whether you can then come back and still access things.
>
> The day you present at Hamish Allen [homelessness service] and you are meant to leave the Serco [asylum] accommodation - sometimes it's unclear whether you will get accommodation, and that's just really scary. Whether you'll be picked up at the end of the day and how long you'll be waiting.
>
> And then there's things at the Job Centre. Learning about housing benefit, managing your own tenancy and tax, learning about Council Tax.

Many of these processes loudly echoed the forms of conditionality that mark the asylum system, but also manifested in the spaces people now had to frequent. In my experience, there is a particular 'genre' of bureaucratic space that mirrors the 'Eagle Building' appeals court in the opening vignettes: across Job Centres, Disability Assessment Centres and Housing Offices you'll find similar drab and airless corridors, sagging waiting room chairs, moods of anxiety and petty authoritarianism, G4S security guards on entry. As Caroline argues though, despite any spatial similarities, these systems required new kinds of knowledge and support, and were also constantly shifting. Concurrent to the establishment

of the hostile environment were a series of brutal cuts to disability benefits and working tax credits, the phasing out of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), and the introduction of Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and Employment Support Allowance (ESA), which came with their own regime of private assessments, sanctions and newly empowered welfare officers, culminating in the highly controversial Universal Credit (UC) system.

The day of being granted Refugee Status, the prized object of the "British state's piecemeal accommodation of the claims of racialized people seeking access to resources in Britain through legal status determination processes" (El-Enany, 2020: 30), was the day one had to contend with these new systems. On being no longer eligible for asylum support, it was also the day many had to prepare to present as homeless. Another man I got to know well through the year - a key figure in the Namibian community in Glasgow, a father and taxi driver – found himself stuck at length with his daughter in homelessness B&Bs after getting caught up in the council housing association waiting list. This was similar to the 60 or so people who had Leave to Remain but were still living in Serco accommodation during the eviction struggles in Chapter 2, and were threatened with homelessness because the 'mainstream' housing system had so far failed to accommodate them. In such situations, the experience of 'dispersal', 'bail' and post-status housing can lead to a desire for escape: "I never want to step inside there again," "I do not want to live near here."

The city becomes dominated by an association with key sites – the hostel, the signing centre, the court, the IRC itself – but also by experiences of poverty, welfare conditionality and 'illegality' in communities that have been subject to under-investment and stigmatization for decades. Bail, dispersal, and forms of post-status welfare conditionality all involved attempts to monitor and render particular 'strangers' as knowable and contained, often using forms of biometric technology focused on determining that "you are who you say you are" (Muller 2013: 136). Dreams of escape were often about getting outside such routines and spaces of surveillance, which John Fiske reminds us are "differential" and "racialized" (1998: 85, see Browne, 2015). But people were also 'held' in the city in different ways: by forms of shared community and 'knowing' that sometimes drew on similarly racialized categories and spaces.

Me and Adam are back in our usual café, chatting about an event we'd both been to recently, organising against the Serco evictions, and he is asking me about one of the groups involved. "They are called Living Rent," I explain, "they are like a union, a union for people who rent. So anyone who rents can join. And they can do things like …. all not pay rent if a landlord is not fixing stuff or doing their job."

He smiles to himself, and in a subtly teasing tone explains: "This is good! This is good. But it's not for people like me. For people like you maybe, you can do it. But if people like me do it then they take the house away and take us straight to court!"

We both laugh, bleak as it is, as I try to argue that wouldn't necessarily be the case.

We move on afterwards to talking about a project we've been discussing, around documenting the 'grey economy' in Glasgow, and the difficulty of asking people about insecure and potentially 'illegal' work. This is an issue of consent, Adam argues, "If you force it, then it's not research, you have to be very confidential," he says, emphatically.

"Do you know many people working like this?" I ask.

"Yes, many."

"How do you know them?"

He thinks again for a second, pushing his tea aside to look me in the eye across the table: "Let me go back a bit, to talk about my tribe, the people in Sudan. No matter where I am if I see someone on the street from Sudan I will know they are from Sudan. Like, if you see someone outside, from…. Poland, you know they are from Poland?"

I hesitate, "maybe, sometimes."

He smiles at my slight discomfort: "Yes, you do! Without hearing them talk, you'd say they look Polish. Even though everyone in Europe is white, you can still tell. How?"

"I wouldn't be certain, but maybe sometimes their clothes, their build and bodies, the mannerisms."

"No, no! if everyone was wearing… suits, the same clothes, you'd still know."

"I'm not sure I would!"

"You would!" He laughs. "And this is the same in Sudan, I recognise my tribe."

"How?"

"Well there is the colour, we are not so dark, but not light either. You can always tell. We are from Darfur. We are the Fur. It's like Scot, Land. Land of the Fur. There was war here for many years."

I nod as he carries on speaking, it's the first time we've ever really discussed anything prior to his life in Scotland.

"And if I went today to London and walked around, not knowing anybody, if I see someone from Sudan or my group they will talk with me and that day they would take me to their house, offer me somewhere to stay, I wouldn't need to find a hostel. In Glasgow, I'm very talkative, some people they are quiet – in a meeting they sit in the corner like this" – he crosses arms and sits silently, mimicking a solemn face – "but not me, I like to talk to people. So my people they hear me talk and then many of them, they know me more than I know."

***

Adam's clear-eyed sense of his own racialized vulnerability - the differential threat of union campaigning and protest for "people like me" - was met with how firmly he categorized the differences of others. This took clear spatial forms across the city, as Adam would point out key community spaces that he associated with different groups. This wasn't emphasized as a hard barrier for Adam, who would regularly extol the 'good people' and friendships he had found in places he marked through different nationalities: Somalian, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Kurdish, Iranian, Scottish. One 'African'-branded café that we frequented (which Adam told me was "Somalian guys, mainly"), was "always so good with credit, they understand how people suffer and they always help you if you are hungry, and you always pay it back". There is an element of Sennet's 'known' stranger here, but complicated by a shared scale of 'migrantness' that Adam clearly felt undergirded such acts of mutual aid. Such spaces were marked by complex temporalities too, as a 'regular customer' could become valued in different ways to someone marked as of the 'same' nationality. This linked to Adam's celebration of what he called 'respect': "It is the word, it is respect. Respect is taking the time. In this country it's good to take time." He contrasted this with the immediate 'knowledge' he and other Sudanese people had of each other, an ability to read a person's 'tribe', locality, even family, that itself (through the act of successful reading) constituted an 'insider' status. This was a flexible distinction though, as Adam felt that the space of the city, and Britain, required a 'respectful' unfolding of relationality even where things seemed

more immediately connected, along with leaving some things (such as 'illegal working') as a 'known unknown'.

I think this is partly what Adam meant by that wonderful, enigmatic phrase: "they know me more than I know": that it was important to acknowledge that one is already known in the city in ways that cannot be controlled. Adam spoke here about the established Sudanese community in Britain – but also about his interactions with people on route to the UK, and generally in the activist and social worlds we both moved in. To be 'known' was rooted in being seen and heard in key places around Glasgow, which would themselves then inform how you were 'known' too: whether you attended a particular protest; which NGO office you frequented; where you drank coffee; all were sites where interpersonal 'knowledge' was created but also where it became mutually implicated. Within this was a sense for Adam that everyone – even if in a kind of politically correct denial, like me – was coming to such interactions with a bundle of pre-existing assumptions, anchored on difference and similarity. There is a 'me' here – white, university educated, northern English, a man, politically affiliated in various ways, specifically to Unity – that was already somehow 'known' and located in both particular spaces and the way I move within those spaces.

Sometimes, as with the solidarity practices and protest of the Sudanese diasporic community (explored in detail in Chapter 7) this was a source of hope and reciprocal connection. Adam experienced the city in these moments as a space of potential, where anyone could venture, find mutual recognition through clear bodily, visual forms and subsequently access support, housing, reintegration into the diasporic network. I got the sense of something joyous when he would speak about this, but also mundane – it's just what is done. Yet such interactions were never totally predictable, and could also involve judgment, risk, and political difference. The intimate immediacy of the 'known' stranger-but-kin, however risky, was contrasted with the slow unfolding of the 'respectful' friendship, both located in key spaces. The former was predominately found in certain cafes, barbers, community centres and shops, at taxi ranks, specific parts of town, in the home, and through a huge WhatsApp and Facebook network. These were 'obvious' to any Sudanese person in the city, and presumed to be uninteresting to me – they remained largely off limits until my involvement in a series of large-scale protests about the Sudanese regime. 'Respectful' friendships also took place in specific locations, as Adam explained:

You meet at different places. Red Cross maybe, sometimes at the Library ESOL class, at City Mission, College. I used to just give my number out and then people can contact, if you meet this person three or four times, talk to them, get some trust, listen and grow, he feels like you.

When I came to the UK the first time, I met a Nigerian guy, just on the street. At that time, I didn't understand any English, and his was perfect. But we understand, and we talk. We still keep in touch, but he has gone to London since 3-4 years. It was important that we were having the same experiences. If we'd been looking for work, [at that time, it would have been] hard to connect.

Spaces where one is 'known' and surveilled as an 'asylum seeker', can, through the very shared experiences condensed within that term, offer possibilities for friendship and commonality. This extended in complex ways to more overtly carceral spaces such as the reporting centre, which many people told me had been a place they had initially made contact with others. The city streets themselves can also offer the possibility of mutual 'understanding', a recognition of a certain 'migrant sameness' that Adam was always clear could be just as important to him as those relationships he found through the Sudanese community. He would sometimes switch in such moments to talking about his journey to the UK, and the way his experiences in places like Calais, trying to cross the border between the UK and France, were informed by similar spatialized forms of relatedness:

In Calais, we found this short boy – he's in New Zealand now, I think he was Libyan.

I found him fighting two boys – they beat him. He was very short, small. I said to these two boys: 'why are you doing this?' I fought them away, and this short boy, he comes to our group. He had a phone, a bit of money – I didn't have one, he lent me it so I could ring my mum, and my wife. In Calais, you need a big group – if you walk on your own, people may beat you. That's just the way, people are fearful and they fight over things. Me and this short boy, we made a very strong relationship – he is married now. We stay in touch on Facebook.

We all slept near the train station, under the big tunnel. We were from everywhere – other groups were for Sudanese, Pakistanis or whatever, but we were for anyone. We were all the same: we wanted to get to the UK. That was all that mattered.

I ask him, "do you think about it a lot?"

"Yes, sometimes."

"Is it weird to talk about it?"

He nods, laughing: "a little."

"We don't have to."

"No, it's good."

"What reminds you of it?"

Adam thinks for a moment:

"Food, I think about the food – potatoes – French people they are very friendly, you knock on their door, ask for water, they would give you some. We boil potatoes in that water. But those other boys, [the ones who were fighting the short boy] I know them, and we are friends too now! *He laughs*. One of them is in Sheffield, another in London I think. We are all friends now."

"When we meet we talk about it a lot. We have to laugh about it, we went through a lot together there. Sometimes we would be 7 people with one blanket – it's raining you know - you'd have a head here, a head here. *He reaches out and touches my leg softly at my knee and then thigh.* You are close!"

A series of heads, lying in rows on legs, in a tunnel, sleeping out of the rain – Adam's sense of being 'known' was also one of shared intimacy, the knowledge of going 'through a lot' to get here. He carried this 'knowledge' with him, only really discernible to others who had done the same, in spaces that suggested this, and with it a certain affective capacity - a person comes to 'feel like you' – which vibrated through me in some reduced way as he touched my own body to demonstrate these previous intimacies. While elements of this involved markers of ethnicity, 'race' and nationality (as in his descriptions of the 'Fur' and Polish people), Adam returned constantly to how he 'just knew' when someone had been on similar journeys to him, foregrounding the messy intimacies, solidarities and violence of his own struggle to get to Britain. This hints at the complex forms of relatedness informed by a sense that detention, or migration more broadly, may be 'inside me, everywhere' - where possibilities for mutual connection, even healing, are contained within this fact. Food, again, can transport us to such moments, as the city becomes threaded with people and things that speak to the here and 'elsewhere' all at once. Tragically, one key episode in my fieldwork underlined how such categories of 'sameness', 'difference' and the 'stranger' can also have horrifically racist and violent consequences.

"Why did those boys want to kill us?"

We sit on the soft, carpeted floor, cross legged, backs against a sofa.

Hot tea and wrapped chocolates, hushed chat. Adam paces in and out of the room on his phone, organising. We are given a nod and everyone stands up: the quiet methodical bustle of ten men putting their shoes on in a hall.

We pile in two cars and a van, putting the address into Google maps, only a couple of miles away. Adam joins me and a friend in the van, sat in between us. "Are you OK?" I ask as we get near. "Yes."

Two days earlier I'd got a WhatsApp message to say Adam and his brother had been attacked. His brother, Abdul, had got the keys for his new flat the night before, and Adam had been helping move the first belongings into the space. 'Him and his brother got stabbed! I thought you knew,' the text had said, 'sorry you had to hear like this.' I struggled for 48 hours to get hold of Adam, sleeplessly anxious, until I managed to hear from a mutual friend that though he was safe with friends, and his brother was in an Intensive Care Unit, stable but seriously hurt. Eventually, on the evening after that initial WhatsApp, I managed to get through to Adam on a friend's number, sat in a McDonalds Café in town, his voice over my headphones. Shakily, I told him it was good to hear his voice. Adam was stoical, but angry - he described the attack a bit: two men and jumped on them in the car park of the flats, the police had said they'd been drinking, trying to rob the brothers, but to Adam they seemed smartly dressed, not drunk or high, and didn't take anything. "It is racism," he said, with clarity. "I think it is racism. People need to know what happened because they should be careful."

The next day became a whir of action, as a few of us formed a little support group for Adam and Abdul: trying, with shocking difficulty, to get some emergency accommodation sorted for them both. We also focused on supporting Abdul's wife, who was pregnant, five days from her due date, and scared of going back to their current home, near to where the attack happened. I'd visited them all that morning, in the hospital, before we met with the vans. Abdul's wife would eventually give birth there, a few wards away from Abdul, who was recovering from surgery but able to hobble through the corridors to spend time with his wife and new baby.

This drive is the first time Adam has returned to the scene of the attack, now two days prior, to help move Abdul's things out of the flat. We pull up outside, several tall blocks of flats towering above us, a small fenced playground nearby. My heart thumps as we walk round to the main lobby entrance. Adam points to where the attack had happened, right here, how the two guys had blocked their car's exit and then jumped on them. I can't get my head around it. The attackers hadn't run away

after, apparently they'd been caught and charged with attempted murder that night. Adam points down to the concrete path:

"My brother's blood. And that is my T-shirt."

A small purple scrap of fabric sits on the ground, next to a large dark red stain. We have to walk round it with each set of furniture, carried from the flat above. Adam tells me two young women had come to help them from inside the flats, and he'd defended himself with a piece of curtain rail. He has a big stitch on the side of his head.

Hundreds of windows look down on the spot. It's hard not to feel watched, and worse – a tall, gaunt man we pass in the carpark mutters something ugly but difficult to catch as he walks past, smirking. It seems that the sight of eight black guys and two white friends is unusual – every other face we see is white.

The move out doesn't take too long, there's lots of us and just a bit of furniture, not much else. When we make it back to the first flat, the move completed and the relief palpable, Adam offers us some food and juice: "We have done a lot today." He spoons several heaps out into a glass from a massive tub of pineapple juice powder. We gulp it down, full of smiles and thanks.

As I leave, I can't shake a question Adam had put to me earlier, his tone filled with wonder as much as anger:

"What I want to know is, what I want the police to find out is: Why did those boys want to kill us?"

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Making Adam and Abdul's experience here intelligible, or tracing the limits of intelligibility in his question about the motives of his attackers, is a fraught and perhaps impossible task. The question implies its own inscrutability, an answer may border on justification, and will always be insufficient. Yet Adam asked the question in earnest, finding his sense of self and ethical worldview deeply shaken by the seemingly random attack. Clearly such attacks come about in a context of ingrained racism, nationalism and media hostility, as Sara Ahmed argues, this is also gendered:

> The risk of being a 'soft touch' for the nation, and for the national subject, is not only the risk of becoming feminine, but also of becoming 'less white', by allowing those who are recognised as racially other to penetrate the surface of the body. (2004: 3)

She goes further however, in attempting to understand the affective politics of 'hate':

The very distinction between inside and outside might be affected by hate. Rather than assuming that hate involves pushing what is undesirable within the self onto others, we could ask: Why is it that hate feels like it comes from inside and is directed towards others who have an independent existence? To consider hatred as a form of intimacy is to show how hatred is ambivalent; it is an investment in an object (of hate) whereby the object becomes part of the life of the subject even though (or perhaps because) its threat is perceived as coming from outside. (2004: 50)

The urban street, particularly in communities that have suffered decades of under-investment and negative media around 'incivility' and 'anti-social behaviour', involves forms of co-presence, intimacy and violence. Imogen Tyler's work points to how processes of social abjection and stigmatisation can overlap and conflict here, as the repeated "constitution of the figure of the asylum-seeker as a threat" (Tyler 2006: 191) is acted upon in violent, racist ways by groups (according to the police, 'known offenders' and violent 'drug addicts') also constituted as an established, but unpredictable threat. Adam's delicately worked through boundaries of being 'inside' certain communities but able to move 'outside' this at times, were shattered by being rendered as 'outsider' by an 'outside' force he couldn't predict. The complex closeness Adam found in a Sudanese community that "know me more than I know" takes a horrific form when his own existence becomes reduced to being a proxy for a wider, shifting group: foreigners, black people, asylum seekers – linking to overlapping tropes around 'criminals' and 'terrorists'.

As Ahmed notes, "hate crime works as a form of violence against groups through violence against the bodies of individuals" (2004: 53) and the fact that the attack was initially not treated as such by detectives was most galling to Adam, who could still hear the racist words his assailants had said, still feel the hate in their eyes with an intimacy that was difficult to convey, to prove. The challenge here is not to individualise 'hate', a word I'm wary about for that very reason, or to use structural analysis as way of obscuring responsibility for those who caused so much harm to Adam and Abdul. To consider the specificity of racist violence in its context, without describing it in gratuitous ways, or failing to question how other, less immediately physical forms of racist violence we encounter through this thesis are treated differently. I see in Adam's question - "why did those boys

want to kill us?" – an attempt to balance this, to point to that interplay between wider forces and individual actions. Answering this question could pull us in a number of directions: a rabidly hostile British media, under-resourcing of areas used for dispersal and social housing, police forces which fail to class such as attacks as 'racist', colonial histories of white entitlement, wider structures of poverty and marginalisation. An account of racist violence needs to attend to such multiplicities, whilst considering how racism itself seems to come from 'inside' distinct others, yet lurks 'everywhere'.

Conclusion

This chapter has widened the spatial lens from a focus on detention and the home to consider how Glasgow as a city is experienced by 'detainable' people. It argues that the city itself can feel like detention, or involve related affective moods of control and threat, often in relation to distinct areas and buildings. While systems of bail, policing and surveillance structure this feeling of detainability, networks of friends, family and community strangers-as-kin also contribute to a feeling of being 'known' in urban space – with complex overlaps of intimacy and reassurance, alongside feelings of intimidation and dread. Sensory experiences such as sharing food can take on a particular role here, transporting people 'inside' and 'outside' detention, or allowing for conviviality and connection in ways that work to unravel such unpredictable proximities to the carceral. Appeals courts, homeless hostels, libraries, public space, cafes and the Home Office signing centre become important markers of 'detainability' and shared 'knowledge', against the backdrop of Glasgow as a 'no choice' dispersal city. The 'intensity' of relations and borders can be interwoven within such key spaces, that are often difficult to 'escape'. Racist violence confronts people at unpredictable times and places within this already ominous urban space, as the shared recognition of community 'knowing' is contorted into markers of difference by proximate 'strangers'.

As for Adam, similar threads and experiences accompanied the aftermath of that attack: dreams of escape, a feeling of centrifugal stuckness, the unpredictable ways that memories of violence can resurface. Initially he explored moving with his brother to a new city, London probably, as many friends and relatives implored. This was quickly replaced by a resolve to

confront the attack squarely – he asked me for help in trying to organise trips to schools to talk about racism, migration, violence. In the end, under a mountain of difficult wrangling to secure accommodation, time-off from his newest security job at Lidl, delayed and messy Universal Credit support, and post-natal care for his brother's wife, Adam did what he had always been good at, and took things slowly, rebuilding the rhythms of his life in new parts of the same city. In a way, Adam extended his ideas of 'respect' to the urban environment itself, and found them reciprocated through spaces and relationships that had been forged within. Abdul recovered well, his family finally able to secure some accommodation in a different neighbourhood, and Adam moved nearby. Eventually, Adam was able, with help from the Scottish Refugee Council, to arrange for his wife to be brought to the UK from the refugee camp she had been living in. Adam told me a few months after his wife's arrival that they'd both been struggling to get out the house, she was still shaken by the story of his attack, not used to the cold weather. Feeling 'held' is always a complex thing, and it takes time to 'hold space' in one's own way.

Having considered the role that friendship and care play in spaces of 'detainability' such as the IRC, asylum accommodation and the city of Glasgow, I turn in the next three chapters to consider three key ideas that emerged within such sites during my fieldwork: 'the state', 'healthcare' and 'work'. These conceptual 'holding spaces' were always implicated in the spatial and affective forms of 'detainability' analysed so far, but also worked to 'hold' people at edges of legal recognition, care, and 'productivity'.

Chapter 4 - 'Think like the Home Office': States & Stateness

Pinball Logic

Two training sessions, a few months' apart.

The first: Towards the end of the SDV training described in Chapter One. A woman from 'the Board' tells us a story about a man whose family used to fly up to the detention centre once a month from Bristol for a visit, how people end up inside Dungavel from all over the country. She speaks slowly, her sentences resonating with stern, solemn indignation:

"It seems to be completely random."

"I have learnt over the years – that to imagine there is intelligence or humane strategy on the part of the Home Office would be completely fatuous – once you're in the system, it's like a pinball machine."

"It's frustrating; you can't understand what's happening."

The second: a make shift classroom in a vast office complex, hand-drawn pictures on the walls, sketched maps of Scotland and Glasgow. The warm light of an old projector saturates the room. The crowd are a bit younger, all of them (except me) working for different NGOS around the city. My friend - in a moment of shared self-criticism that touches on academia, activism and work - tells me over lunch: "we just keep hiring young women … young white women, often from London or down south. Everyone has great CVs, they can do the admin so efficiently, lots of them have done a Masters in something very specifically relevant. And they care a lot too, it's not just a job." She pauses, prodding her baked potato, "at some point though it's also just the office culture replicating itself – we all work well together."

The woman doing the training has come up from London, it's a full day thing, bundles of notes. We look over case studies, real people's files with the names blacked out. The powerpoint slides are full with text and information: Section 95, Section 4, The Destitution Test, Asylum Support Tribunals, Schedule 10, how to understand various parts of the asylum support process. At one point, before a break, she rounds up a discussion – "it all comes back to this at the end of the day" - and flicks to a jarringly spacious slide, just five words:

"Think like the Home Office"

<p align="center">***</p>

How do you think like a pinball machine? What does it mean to act or feel like a 'state'? How might 'thinking like' blur into 'becoming' the Home Office? Does 'thinking like' imply a kind of complicity, and to be complicit, do we have to know what we're complicit 'with'?

The opaque 'logic' of the Home Office was a source of constant discussion and consideration throughout my fieldwork. NGO caseworkers would try and trace different strategies in order to help people in the system, often balancing between the need to 'think like' the Home Office and fear of becoming complicit in state practice; treading difficult lines of responsibility and capacity, between knowing enough, and knowing too much. Questions of imitation and identification went beyond 'knowledge' alone, as a number of NGOs in Glasgow had prominent staff members that originally entered 'the sector' through working for Home Office sub-contractors, while many charities took on different kinds of state funding and provision (see Tyler et al, 2014). In a more complex sense, as the friend in the above vignette states, NGOs that hired "young, white women," as a form of "office culture" replication did so essentially to be able to meet the high administrative demands of the workload: to "care a lot" is here also to overwork. But this came with an anxiety around how forms of sameness, though useful for 'getting through the work' and 'speaking the same language', could entrench other forms of difference and othering. Through all of this, the shifting, hard to place figure of 'the Home Office' is registered through a kind of mirroring narrative - as random yet repetitive, unthinking yet discernible, mysteriously distant yet knocking on the door.

What or who 'the state' is becomes difficult to demarcate in such instances, linking to anthropological work that posits 'the state' as "neither a clearly bounded institution nor a unitary and autonomous actor" but a "multilayered, contradictory, trans-local ensemble of institutions, practices and people in a globalized context" (Hakyemez, 2020: 71; see also Sharma and Gupta 2006, Gupta 1995). Abrams (1988) famously argues that ideas of 'the state' form a discursive mask, whereby 'the state' is not a reality behind political practices and contestations, but a reified projection that prevents us seeing such processes. Yet much recent anthropological work has shown the importance of holding onto the everyday ways in which people treat states as distinct things, whether inflected with ideas of protection, oppression or sovereignty (Aretxaga 2003; Hansen and Stepputat 2005; Navaro-Yashin 2002; Wedeen 1999). Such work argues for anthropologists to be open to how the people

we work with understand and frame 'the state', along with being attentive to wider emic understandings of the 'political' in general (Curtis and Spencer 2012; Hakyemez, 2020). For the people I worked with this meant a constant and at times intense unpacking of who and what the Home Office was, drawing out questions of logic, intent and complicity. Discussion of the Home Office became a way to tell different stories about what states are, which in turn helps expand our understandings of the kinds of 'subjects' such states produce, always in a multidirectional process. One of my arguments in this chapter is that such stories are a large part of how people experience 'the state', and of what a state in some sense 'is'. This is a fairly classic anthropological story in itself (Abrams, 1988; Taussig, 1992), but one that extends to daily praxis: acting like, playing with and embodying 'the state' in different ways. Of course, state actors "with a big S" (Taussig, 1992: 112) may ultimately have the power to detain people or act with the power of a certain 'stateness', but as we've seen through the preceding chapters, borders and relations are experienced in ways and spaces that exceed clear demarcation. 'Thinking like the Home Office' thus creates experiences of stateness in varied, differentiated ways, often involving metaphor, play, and ideas of complicity, and I use each as lens through this chapter. Firstly, however, it is useful to briefly lay out how my argument is in dialogue with theories of 'the state' and the human, always interlinked.

State Bodies

Framing the Home Office as 'random' or mysteriously 'logical' in day-to-day discussion links to longer histories of how the 'rationality' of dominant states has often been posited through the disavowal of an 'irrational' and 'stateless' Other. This complicates questions of 'understanding' and 'complicity', as people's incorporation within the British state (and recognition of this) is dependent on shedding sovereign responsibility to a 'country of origin'. This takes place within "a global state system which requires mutual recognition by states" (Anderson, 2013: 113) that was forged through the histories of colonialism threaded through the preceding chapters. Early anthropology (see for instance, Evans-Pritchard, 1940; Lowie, 1948, Levi-Strauss, 1944; see also Yelpaala, 1992), reified ideas of 'the state' partly through the mirrored other of the 'stateless' society, in which (as analysed in the Introduction) the 'kinship' systems of the Other were contrasted with systems of political 'rationality' at home. We can also see attempts to frame 'the state' through its absence in

more recent work on 'egalitarian' societies (Clastres, 1987). Such state/stateless binaries animate classics such as James Scott's *Seeing Like a State,* which in its attempt to criticise 'utopian' and modernist state "maps of legibility and control" (1998: 348) relies on an overdetermined notion of "nonstate spaces" as "subversive" and open to forms of historicized "neutralizing" (1998: 311) from established states – telling us surprisingly little about how people 'see' like states day-to-day. Following Davina Cooper, who argues that "states can take diverse political forms" (2019: 154), we should consider how the historical impulse to classify 'stateless' societies has narrowed contemporary thinking on state formations. Instead, as she argues, "foregrounding heterogeneity can also unsettle the conventional mould states are placed in and so pose questions about state presence within other spaces and practices" (2019: 155, see Hansen and Stepputat, 2005; Navaro-Yashin, 2002).

Such critiques also link to Chakrabarty's instructive takedown of historicist thinking in European social sciences, whereby he invites us "to unlearn to think of history as a developmental process in which that which is possible becomes actual by tending to a future that is singular" (2000: 249). Though his attempt to "wrestle with ideas that legitimize the modern state and its attendant institutions" (Chakrabarty, 2000: 45) focuses on particular expressions of colonial nation-state making, he makes it clear that enlightenment ideas of 'the state' were historicist to the core in a wider sense, imparting notions of 'first in the West, and then elsewhere' that were animated by ideas of 'reason' and 'rationality' at the heart of emerging scientific approaches. Sciences of 'the state' emerge concurrently with a genealogy of what Sylvia Wynter calls 'Man' (see Introduction), a particular white, masculine notion of humanity as a normative, biologised default. As Denise Ferreira da Silva puts it in an analysis of Wynter and Foucault, this was mapped geographically as well as on particular groups of people, "from [the Enlightenment] on, the rational / irrational pair would then remap the "space of otherness" [to Man] and, significantly, be represented by the bodies and territories subjected to colonial power" (2015: 94). Hanging over all these theories are the deep metaphors of stateness that often get taken for granted, particularly "embodied depiction[s]" (Cooper, 2019: 48) of the 'body-politic', rendered most famously in Hobbes' Leviathan. Such visions help demonstrate that the various threads in this section are often held together through depictions of Man as

state, and state as Man – always presuming a 'stateless', irrational other. Thinking, acting or feeling like a state thus points towards WEB Du Bois' famous notion of 'double consciousness' (1986: 364-65), and to what Frantz Fanon would call the "corporeal malediction" of a dehumanised, racialized subject being rendered in "crushing objecthood" (1986: 84, 82).

Attempts to discern the 'logic' or 'rationale' of the Home Office emerge from such contexts, as people are expected to reify a British state that has been cast as historically superior and rational, but is experienced as random, inhumane and irrational. Detention, 'Empire's holding space', structures these attempts at navigating 'the state', as a Home Office power that in practice targets and holds historically racialized groups. In this way 'detainability' epitomises the fact that the "modern state is a racial project, bound up with the making and maintaining of racial difference, and immigration controls are deeply implicated in this project" (Anderson, 2013: 47; see Goldberg, 2002). 'Thinking like the state' is thus a fraught and complex process, particularly when faced with deportation to states depicted as intrinsically 'unstable', often involving narratives and counter-narratives of 'rationality' and 'humanity'. I turn now to consider how people I did fieldwork with often tried to conceive of 'the state' through metaphors that drew on ideas of an 'inhumane' monster, a mysterious shadow, an environment or atmosphere, or some kind of game, trap or lottery.

Metaphorical States

Monsters

As we saw in the preceding chapters, detention, home and the city were all spaces that could become charged with feelings of control, surveillance and care, unsettling any clear distinctions between 'inside' and 'outside'. Moreover, key sites such as the Home Office reporting centre, Serco offices and accommodation, Asylum Appeals Court and post-status Hostels informed what care and carcerality meant for people I met, as spaces of 'an imaginary detention' often experienced as the presence of spectral state figures (Chapter 2). Such sites were often approached in conversation through simile and metaphor that foregrounded 'inhumane conditions' in a register that at once denied and sought to appeal to the 'humanity' of state actors who could make changes. Common refrains around asylum

housing included, "it's not fit for a dog," "we are human beings, but we are not treated that way," and the ubiquitous, "it is as if I am in prison." Concerns about detainability were a dominant factor in such metaphors, as detention felt folded into present and possible future living spaces. Hence, detention was often spoken of as a 'shadow' or 'cloud' hanging over life, anchored on particular state actors who seemed to hold the power to incarcerate, itself evoked through ideas and images of locks, keys and walls.

Such environmental, and in a sense non-human, metaphors are a shift from bodily depictions of 'the state', impacting how people strategized or 'read' the signs of Home Office logic. Discussion of avoiding being detained was particularly common amongst people I got to know, as one man put it to a group discussing concerns about reporting, "my friend, he knows a lot about this, he has been detained a lot, and he said this, if it is quiet when you sign watch out, it means they are detaining people." Silence was here a metaphor for state presence, and learning to read this was charged with the sense of having being caught out once, but hopefully not again. Often, key NGO workers, community figures and legal representatives would become metonymically imbued with knowledge of 'the state', based on successes, communication and rumour, usually spread through word of mouth. But such figures were also often presented as having mysterious access to this capacity to 'read' signs, almost like weather-forecasters or magicians. One Nigerian lawyer based in London, who ran a very popular YouTube channel and Facebook live stream, became a particular source of such mysterious insights for a number of the friends I made over the year. "She knows the secrets of the Home Office", they would tell me and each other, recounting particular bits of advice that had been dispensed in the previous evening's video. 'The state' here is both hyper-rational and magic, human and mysteriously beyond-the-human. For others, including Ginika, who we will meet shortly, the 'shadow' could be undermined through noticing its repeated, racist patterns, as she explained: "I would always go and sign [report] with my support worker, with a witness. I don't like to say it" - she points at a white woman in the room, nodding along – "but if you come, then it is better. Two black people? They don't take that seriously. But if I come with a white person, they will not detain me that day."

Such considerations of the dark magic of the Home Office - its 'secrets', racial biases, and inhumanity – shows how everyday ideas of 'the state' are often attached to particular people, places and processes. However, the fantastical or even phantasmic power of states was drawn upon in wider ways, often through countervailing metaphors of the nonhuman. Tabloid and government pronouncements have long drawn on violent descriptions of migrants as 'swarms', 'waves' and 'plagues', linking to a longer history of state depictions of "monstrousness" and "multitude" (Linebaugh & Rediker, 2000: 39). Journalists interviewed for the *Bad News for Refugees* book project explaining how common it was to be sent on 'monstering jobs' (Philo, Briant & Donald, 2013: 10), writing racist attack articles about asylum seekers that spread fear and violence. Yet, as we see through Aretxaga's summary of state fantasies, this is not a unlinear process, as she argues "the state and its enemies are created and recreated as powerful fictional realities," which can lead to narratives that draw on particular monstrous metaphors of the state such as "witches, vampires, zombies, and ghosts" (Aretxaga, 2003: 402; see Comaroff & Comaroff, 1999, 2000). A popular and well-used activist handbook about the UK Border Regime (Corporate Watch, 2018b) during my fieldwork depicted the system as "a kind of Frankenstein's Monster," explaining, "it has teeth and does real harm to people's lives. But it is not unstoppable. It is made up of many parts, many of which are weak or rusty, many of which don't work well together. When we can identify its joints and weak points, we can see where it is vulnerable and can be beaten." (Corporate Watch, 2018b: 9-10). The book demonstrates this with a drawing (Fig 5):
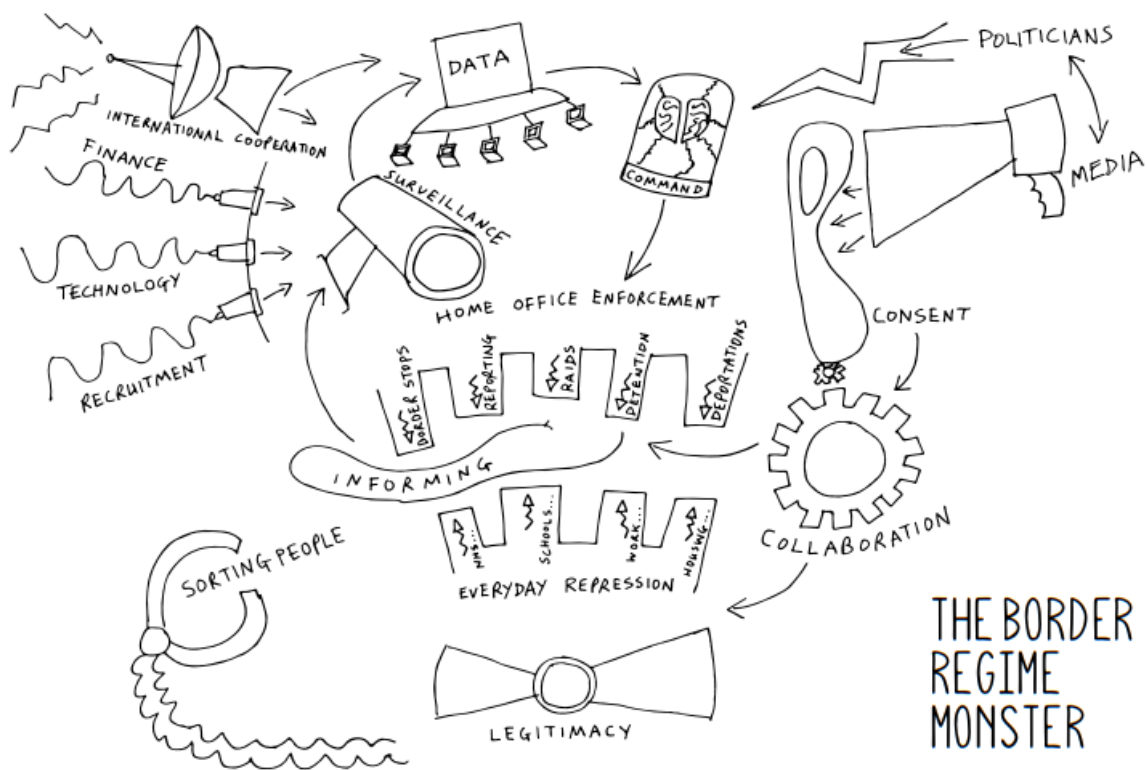
Figure 5: The Border Regime Monster (Corporate Watch, 2018b: 49)

Before explaining how although "the teeth include actual uses of force: border stops, raids, detention, deportations," they work alongside a rung of 'civil society' institutions, surrounded by wider processes of surveillance, consent and legitimacy: "a monster [cannot] be all jaws and teeth" (Corporate Watch, 2018b: 50). The state here is depicted in a metaphor aimed at both demonstrating its power, and showing its possible 'weak spots' for campaigning and pressure, in an uncanny rendering of older Hobbesian Leviathans that spoke to both strength in 'organic unity' and the constant threat of breakdown within this. This composite Frankenstein reminds us that state metaphors implicitly always speak to "the relationship between bodies and parts" (Cooper, 2019: 51), with people able to make claims at different scales of integration within the whole. This could involve disavowal, as with the many Home Office and subcontracted state actors I would encounter, whilst trying to get information or support for a friend, who would exclaim "I'm not the Home Office," or "I'm not Serco!", often wearing a Serco or Home Office lanyard. Being a - human, individual,

somehow powerless – part of the whole could involve veiled critiques of a certain irrationality, even monstrousness to 'the system', but more regularly was simply a denial of responsibility. This is registered even in the very framing of the 'hostile environment', itself a pervasively non-human metaphor, in some sense reifying the state, but also treating it as diffused into the everyday. While Theresa May (whose robotic style of presentation became folded into ideas of the system she espoused) was a key representational figure for this 'environment', it's telling that the more dominant image was of 'Go Home' immigration vans (Fig 6): mechanic, showing a disembodied handcuff and Home Office Badge, publically omnipresent, aimed at an atmosphere of dread along with a morbid 'efficiency' ("106 arrests last week in your area").

Figure 6 : Go Home Vans

Games

The other common set of metaphors used to engage with the Home Office and state more generally were centred around games and lottery, as we saw in the vignettes that opened this chapter. Beyond notions of a 'pinball machine', with its implied lack of rationality and sense of being thrown around, game-inflected language of 'winning', 'beating' and 'losing' legal cases were pervasive, along with tabloid narratives about 'gaming' the asylum system.

During my fieldwork, 'Right to Remain', who produce the most regularly used and thorough lay-persons guide to asylum and immigration procedures (itself called a 'Toolkit', with a cover showing a 'maze') brought out a board game style 'Asylum Navigation Board', as a way to help talk through and explain the different stages of the processes of applying for asylum in Britain (see Fig 7).

Figure 7: Right to Remain - Asylum Navigation Board

Here, despite the aesthetics of boards, cards and wooden figures, we find a purely pedagogic tool, stripped of chance or luck – where people can work through the various parts of applying for asylum in their prescribed, predictable order. Such initiatives offer a distorted mirror to what Patrick Page, a senior caseworker in public law at Duncan Lewis Solicitors, argues in an article for the 'Unlocking Detention' website is "the gamification of immigration enforcement" (Page, 2018) within the Home Office. He cites the "eerily video game" evoking names of immigration enforcement initiatives – Nexus, Perceptor, Magnify, Gull, Vaken, Adoze, Dickens, Crag, Gopik - along with describing how:

> Home Office whistle-blowers have spoken out about a big poster on the Bootle (Liverpool) office wall 'of a winding road with a plastic toy car attached, which was

moved to indicate progress towards the 10,000 target [of clearing the backlog in asylum claims]' (Page, 2018).

This links to stories such as that of the Home Office caseworker "who revealed that a toy gorilla, called the 'grant monkey', would be put on the desk of any case-owner who had granted asylum, as a badge of shame" (Page, 2018). Echoing such ideas of punitive gamification with a return to 'randomness', one former caseworker told the Guardian in 2018:

> It's just a lottery [...] There was one particular guy who had a reputation for never granting anything. He kind of took pride in that as well. On the one occasion when he did grant someone, I think someone brought him in a cake. (Lyons & Brewer, 2018)

Such articles were widely shared around during my fieldwork through WhatsApp groups and email lists, met with tragi-comic responses: "I've always said this," "they are evil," simultaneous emojis of crying laughter and red-hot anger (Fig 8).
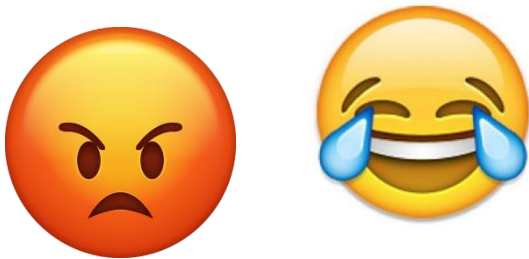
Figure 8: Emojis

The metaphor becomes more than a linguistic or narrative flourish here, the game or lottery *is* the logic, and thinking like the Home Office becomes a serious kind of play, as I expand in the subsequent section. The regular discussion of feeling 'trapped' and 'stuck' takes on another sense here too, still deeply informed by ideas of carcerality, but situating the game as a trap. As Seaver argues in an article about an anthropology of algorithms that resonates with the Home Office 'operations' and Immigration 'direct capture' noted earlier:

> If the tragedy of entrapment begins when prey first, unwittingly, interact with the trap, then landscape traps produce environments where prey is already effectively caught [...] enclosed, known, and subject to manipulation. (2019: 432)

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Here, within "infrastructures [that] are already traps" we also see remnants of 'game theory' that attempt to map and condition human behaviour through notions of 'homo economicus' and rational choice theory (Seaver, 2019: 432). The history of an 'Enlightened' state and its 'lawless' other sketched earlier in this chapter are deeply influenced by such theories, espousing 'rules' that people interpret in their everyday theories of the state through ideas of risk, luck, skill and lottery. It is with these ideas of the 'game' in mind that I turn now to a linked register whereby people attempted to understand and in some sense 'become' 'the state'; through forms of play.

States of Play

"Go home!"

I arrive early at the glass shop-front 'Community Hub' and am let in by my friend Sophia, who got a job with this local community project a few months back, facilitating this group. The space is bright and functional, with sofas and curtains in loud primary colours, tea and biscuits, a projector. I'd passed another group leaving as I arrived, finishing a weekly cookery class, at other times you might find an IT skillshare or a drop in about Universal Credit. The group I'm joining today has been going in different forms for a number of years, and recently started making a resource for NHS Scotland, to educate healthcare workers about the challenges facing asylum seekers in the city. This is my first time coming along, having tried to make sure they had a couple of weeks to discuss me joining. Apart from Sophia and Lorraine, who arrives shortly after me and explains she is "from the Glasgow City Health and Social Care team", everyone else in the group, is currently going through the asylum system, or have 'got their status' recently. I realise as people arrive that I've met many of them before, at different events and groups, though nothing as regular or formalised as this: once a week, around 8-15 people each time, 3-4 hours, 'Participant Action Research'.

First to arrive is Ginika, always on time, eating what she later tells us is mashed cassava, from a tall Tupperware. She stops as she comes through the door and sees me, eyes going wide, mockingly shocked at my presence. We've known each other for a couple of years and have quite a few mutual friends, but it's clear this isn't the kind of setting she imagined seeing me, and I didn't know she was a part of the group either. Her voice carries her in on a wave of loud, uproarious teasing and indignation:

"Oh fuck! It's you that is coming!" She turns to Sophia, who laughs along, "Why didn't you say?!"

Pointing at me now, voice rising: "Well in that case, you better go! Go now!" She laughs again, filling the room with the sound, gesturing with both hands to the door, "just leave, just go!"

"Go where?" I ask, performatively offended, but clearly unable to compete with her exuberant resolve as an actor.

"Go home!" She shouts. "That's what the Home Office say!" Another laugh. "Go home!"

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Thankfully, I was allowed to stay, joining the Participant Action Research group for a remarkable and varied set of weekly discussions over the next couple of months, at which point, to general dismay and anger, the funding dried up. Ginika's style of joking attack was unique to her, but fitted well into the group's general mode of conversation: charged with humour and emotion, a chaotic mix of languages, volume high. Particular tasks, such as the NHS resource pack, often became secondary to sharing general news and tips about the Home Office, catching up, hanging out and gossiping. One member, Simon - confident, tall, head and beard shaved delicately, one diamond stud in his left earlobe – described the 'group style' in this way: "at the end of the day we see the world from a different spectrum. We challenge! We don't listen to each other! it's the African way!" Most of the group had family backgrounds in countries such as Nigeria, Namibia and Cameroon, and there was lot of ribbing about us three white people (me, Sophia and Lorraine) not understanding the group's discussion style or reference points. This regularly overlapped with more serious discussion of what was good and bad about particular NGO organisations in the city, and key people within them, a constant sharing of notes about who could usefully 'think like the Home Office', and who should be accused of acting like them. The group had particular named NGO staff they would regularly reminisce about, almost nostalgically, with Ginika telling me about a retired charity worker we all knew, "He was very active, very calm. He was amazing. He had his own issues but he really cared." She fixed me in her gaze fiercely, with a smile, "you should be like him." Such an invitation to behave and 'be' like a particular well-loved figure was partly about cultivating useful and accountable figures within a 'sector' set up to 'help' asylum seekers. Reclaiming some ability to measure or define such 'help', and upturn directions of 'advice' was at once playful and serious.

Such circuits of advice and counter-advice were then supplemented by uses of Home Office language and shock humour that were playful in a slightly different register. As the above vignette demonstrates, Ginika would regularly turn the language of the state on its head, teasing and provoking the particular sensibilities of her audience, especially around ideas of the 'researcher', 'citizen' and 'whiteness', with a comedian's timing. "I am a border guard! You can't come through!" she would shout at me as I tried to squeeze past her chair to the toilet, stretching out an arm to block my way. "Donald Trump! His name is Donald Trump!" was a favourite way of introducing me to new members of the group, but was also applied liberally as a name for other men in attendance ("Theresa May!" was also used to introduce white women in the group, though less regularly). Sometimes the metaphor was pitched with less overt humour, as in a discussion the group had about attendance at an upcoming weekend event, in which one of the men started chastising people for not committing to coming. "Stop being the Home Office for me!" Ginika would shout, "I take Sundays for myself!" This appreciation of the rhetorical power of otherwise taboo phrases and concepts extended to Ginika's TV habits. She loved to watch the shock register on her audience's face as she talked through a favourite episode of 'UK Border Force', a 'behind the scenes' documentary on immigration enforcement, "Australian Border Force is much worse, I watch them all!" The state here becomes a mode of behaviour to be mimicked and disavowed, unpredictably drawn upon as both accusation of the other and mode of self-performance, in ways that unsettled racialized hierarchies and forms of 'humanitarian kinship' (Chapter 1). As such, public performances of thinking, speaking and acting like the Home Office could be useful, cathartic and hilarious, but still charged with a certain dread.

Forum Theatre

At a Migrants Organising for Rights and Empowerment (MORE) event. Rows of plastic chairs line the hall, all full for this one-off performance (the group's first and last), people craning their necks to see the stage, trying to find a little window through the necks, heads and hair. An urn steams quietly at the back of the room, mingling with the sound of children playing in the crèche next door. The performers arrive on stage to the sound of a Djembe, some with signs saying 'People Make Glasgow'. An early scene is set up like a Home Office reporting centre, my friend Paul is playing the staff member - his voice loud and shrill, luxuriating in the vowels as he pushes tones of condescending dismissal, Englishness and whiteness to their limits:

"Hellooooo Madaaaaaame, can I help youuuu?!" Uproarious laughter from the crowd. "Excuuuse me Madaaaaaame I'm going to have to check your detaaaaails, please can you be patient Madaaaaaaame?" His way of interrupting and talking down to the woman playing 'the asylum seeker' - Alyssa, who we met at the very start of this thesis – clearly resonates with the audience, many of whom, like the cast, are in the asylum system too. Months later I still hear people doing joking versions of Paul's 'Home Office' voice in everyday conversation. He supplants the same voice into different scenes throughout the play: a racist encounter in a charity shop, problems at college and in the library, all devised by the cast from their real life experiences. Here, the similarity of Paul's obnoxious characters is part of the point: various people speak in 'Home Office voice' at different times, to demean, belittle and control, with a pretence of care and professionalism. The final scene sees the audience invited to the stage, in true forum theatre style, to join in a blockade to stop an eviction - a councillor and MP in attendance are some of the first to get up, followed by most of the audience, linking arms as the people playing 'Serco Housing Officers' stomp off in defeat. No doubt it is this sense of collective empowerment, of making the mock eviction resistance 'real', that we are supposed to takeaway, but its Paul's voice that really sticks with me. I can still hear it now in my head: "Excuuuuuuse me!"

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What does Paul's hilarious depiction of this Home Office role, which annexes his own experiences so astutely, do to our understandings of the state? Or to his?

For Davina Cooper, "playing with statehood and its institutions—acting as if the state's sacrosanct objects and practices can be taken up and revised by publics—has a boldly democratic quality" (2019: 171). There was certainly an affective sense of collective coming-together in the Forum Theatre example above, perhaps complicated by the presence of political figures including MSPs and councillors, whose 'representative' function was unclear in such moments, with one making a short speech afterwards to declare that he would "join us for the real thing [eviction resistance]" if it came to it. Certain figures were keen to show they were not playing around, but their presence within the play was also exciting and validating for many of those in attendance. And yet, as Cooper admits, despite "play's mutating "as if" qualities," (2019: 161) in examples such as the mock-eviction resistance above, "a significant part of what gets actualized remains unrealized" (Cooper, 2019: 160). Actual anti-eviction protests over the summers of 2018 and 2019 certainly involved a

playfulness – I'm thinking of times we wrapped the Serco offices in chains and locks (see Fig 9), or the mock 'notice to quit' letters described in Chapter 2 – but the register was usually far more sombre, charged by the presence of police, and Serco or Home Office staff, who made it clear that they were not in on the joke. And yet, such blurs of theatre and protest often involve attempting to foreground the very performativity of these state actors, particularly the police and legal sector. In 2019 a number of activist groups in London held a public 'People's Trial of the Home Office & the Hostile Environment' (Fig 10), inspired by similar tribunals over the years (see Mompelat, 2019; Çubukçu, 2018). Such actions, and the MORE play above, don't seek to reduce the 'serious' effects of law and bureaucracy, but instead show the surreal humour of the original solemn world of wigs, desks, uniforms and violence.

Figure 9: Living Rent Protest to 'Lockout' Mears

Figure 10: People's Trial of the Home Office & the Hostile Environment

Such examples point to Michael Taussig's notion of the surreal, those "flashing moment[s] of mimetic connection" (1993: 179) where familiarity and strangeness feel inseparable. The uncanniness of Paul's Home Office voice, or of an activist in full legal wig shouting "guilty!", has a power to not only mime and mock a vision of the state, but to expose the everyday performances of those who make up an entity like the Home Office. Taussig describes how in anti-colonial forms of performance, "what's being mimicked is mimicry itself—within its colonial shell. You see actors acting, as Brecht would have it, but you wonder about this mimetic capacity as much as any specific action" (1993: 183). The MORE play, along with everyday forms of 'playing' with ideas of the state, work to expose the performances and modes of communication used by those who uphold the immigration system. Such play then also becomes a way to show an intimate understanding of this system, and to try and hold it up to scrutiny, at a distance. Crucially, with a cast of black actors, all with experience of the asylum system, such forms of play push back on Fanon's notion 'crushing objecthood' (1986), unsettling the fixing gaze (and speech) of a white subject. Mocking key metonymic representatives of the state, and thus a certain idea of stateness itself, exposes what Wynter, analysing Fanon and drawing on Geertz, calls 'the fugitive truth' that the white, "biocentric premise of our present culture's conception of the human" (Wynter, 2001: 37) is "but one of the forms that life has locally taken" (Geertz, 1983: 16). That it is itself a powerful kind story or performance.

Playing with ideas and figures of the Home Office can produce certain forms of resistance to the state. But, as we saw through Ginika's argument over the importance of 'taking Sunday' for herself when facing a demand she felt unreasonable, accusations of 'acting' like the Home Office are always charged with the threat of 'becoming' the thing being mocked. I turn now how to questions of how 'thinking like the Home Office' can blur into forms of complicity.

States of Complicity

"No man is an island"

Back in the community hub for another session with the Participant Action Research group. It's rainy today, people huddle under the bus stop outside, peering in through the window. I'm a little late, stopping for a sandwich en-route, and arrive to an atmosphere in marked opposition to the usual joking cacophony that begins each session.

Ginika is the first to break the quiet, angry silence.

"Which day did they put Belinda on the plane?" Her voice is hushed, mournful.

"Saturday", replies Sophia.

I look down at my feet, trying to let the silence sit. Belinda had been detained before I'd joined the group, when she'd gone to sign at the home office. Two of her close friends, Amber and Iris, drop in briefly as we start the session, carrying a wheelie-trolley of Belinda's things. They are the youngest members of the group, whom we met in Chapter 1 following Amber's own detention, which happened a few months after this session. They leave after a few quiet chats and updates, at which point the sadness and frustration of the group pours out, 'like a valve has popped', I write in my diary.

People shout over each other - fraught, nodding, sighing, pointing at nothing in particular. I jot down several phrases, not keeping track of who is saying what:

"The caseworker is wicked to do this! You ruin someone's life!"

"But It is normal! It is normal."

"They are at risk these girls! They are single, no children, the Home Office rejects their cases. It was very quick; she was only here one year."

"But they do not talk about it, they are silent. Even today they are quiet. We tried to help, told them to contact their MSPs their MPs."

"A problem shared is a problem solved."

"No man is an island."

"If you go searching down a path without a map, you will be lost. Without help, how will you find a way?"

"Immigration is not a joke."

The sadness and frustration is difficult to convey. People are clear that the blame lies with the Home Office, but also in a perceived inaction, an impermissible silence or quietness, interpreted as a failure to take responsibility, to take advice.

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Blame feels like the wrong word now; the anger was at the situation, the limits of explanation, coupled with a need to feel there was still some use in plotting strategies together, swapping tips – in trying to discern the logic of a system that would detain a young woman in this way. My sense of the discussion that followed was of deep sadness, an almost vicarious sense of being detained as well, particularly for those who had been inside detention themselves, especially if they'd been to Dungavel, where Belinda was held. As Jane, whom we met in Chapter 3 and was a core member of the group, put it to me in a subsequent chat, "it's like it's me that is there, it could happen to me as well." Such moments, flashpoints of shared frustration, were often times when people feel compelled to share their own strategies and ways of coping with the threat of detention. These were as diverse as the group itself, ranging at the narrative level from wise aphorisms to granular specifics, tools, names and useful tips. Thoughts about avoiding detention (as sketched earlier in the chapter) were rehearsed, names of useful NGO workers repeated. Marcel, one of the older members of the group, reliably in attendance at almost every event and meeting I would go to, spoke for a while on the importance of making contact with MPs and MSPs, taking things to a political register. He told a story about his friend, "Romeo […], he went to address parliament. Then how could they say, he is not gay, he went to talk about those issues at Scottish parliament. These are the things you need to do. He has status now." Marcel's phone background was a picture of him smiling with Nicola Sturgeon, one of

at least five or six people I got to know through the year who had similar photos with the First Minister of Scotland.

Proactively drawing upon MSPs, MPs, councillors, community groups, and NGOs was framed by the group as a personal and collective responsibility in the face of a Home Office that was 'wicked' but 'normal'. Friendship and interpersonal connection, stretching from small scale support groups to Scottish political leaders, is charged here with necessity. Attempts to hold such figures to account for inaction or a lack of responsiveness involved public discussion, gossip and overt political campaigning, which regularly involved general criticisms of who was complicit with the 'hostile environment'. There were mutual forms of recognition and responsibility going on here then, however partial, that extended to academic researchers like myself, with an expectation of support, knowledge sharing and commitment that became read in the light of events such as Belinda's deportation. When one of the group says, "no man is an island," this is what they speak to: thinking like a state in order to avoid its worse violence requires drawing upon figures who 'know' and can act as or upon a multi-faceted state in different ways. Such aphorisms, expressed in what Cheryl Mattingly calls a "deliberative ethical moment" (2014: 27), helped to centre simultaneous collective and personal forms of responsibility: "a problem shared is a problem solved." For Simon, who'd recounted his own traumatic experiences of detention to us a number of times, always with a confident exuberance that seemed to wrestle back control over the things he was retelling, the only solution was through the problem itself. As he would say, fists balled, laughing but with a wetness to his eyes: "if you don't have problems, you won't get knowledge. As you have problems, you get more knowledge!" Marcel called the style of delivery Simon was using here 'crying laughing'. As he explained during the discussion, "we have to laugh and cry!" going on to relay an anecdote about refusing to leave a detention cell when threatened with deportation, smacking his hand on the table and crunching up his body, grimacing but laughing.

The outpouring of emotion and strategizing that accompanied the detention or removal of a friend took many forms then, but was charged with a sense that such suffering could still be learned from, that it had to have some kind of point. For Marcel, and many of the others in the group, clarity around this was ultimately found in God. As he told me:

Before I have fun. Before I submit a form. Before I do – I talk to Jesus, in my head."
He gestures at me. "Before we did that funding application together, before we
press submit. I talk to God. I am with God and God is with me. Even when I think, will
I have to leave this country? God answers. I am here, God has meant that to be. God
is hope, confidence.

Faith was absolutely key to many of those in the PAR group, both in terms of active
engagement in religious groups, and in this wider way, of making sense of the Home Office's
unpredictability and irrationality. There was definitely a religiosity to the concerns
expressed about people 'lapsing' or 'faltering' in their proactive work on their cases or with
community support groups, and to the metaphors and aphorisms deployed. Such an ethic
also speaks, I think, to reiterate the purpose and promise of the PAR group itself, at a
moment of grief and anger, when the friendships and intimacies held within the space seem
insufficient to stop Home Office actors who can decimate such relatedness. Hence, a
responsibility to the group and oneself is both affirming and fraught, and perceived inaction
on this front can be read as complicity with a state that must be constantly collectively
mapped. Framing things analytically as complicity here also then shows the difficulty in
standing apart from such accusations: I was in that room, I had known about Belinda's
detention for a while, could I have done more to involve myself in her case, contact
politicians, support her friends? But also, why didn't I do more to question the narrative of
her being at fault in that moment? Moreover, how much are we all complicit in a system
that can deport a young woman away from her home and friends with such speed and
ease? To attempt to know or name another's complicity is to question one's own, especially
in collective settings where the emphasis is on shared support. Key repeated themes of
personal responsibility and 'self-care' blurred with attempts to 'think like' or embody an
entity seen as harmful, blurring any clear divide between 'care' and 'harm'. Overt opposition
to the state was reconfigured in such moments as a complicity of a different kind, bordering
on self-harm, recalling the words of the woman I introduced in the Introduction: "you know
the Home Office is in my head, when I fight them, I fight myself, I hurt myself."

Collective anger and sadness in such moments also spoke to how important the PAR group
was for its participants. The groups routine, in-jokes and the deeply held relationships
within it, was as much a testament to somehow getting through the brutality of the system

as it was a place to share ideas on how to go forward. As Ginika reflected at one session, her friends humming and nodding in agreement – it was the group itself, and the relationships made within it, that had an essentially life-sustaining effect for her and others:

 "It is better than medicine, it is very important."

"These groups, the friends we make, they do more than medicine."

The group may have been making resources for the NHS, but its primary meaning for most of the participants was as 'medicinal' and relational in itself. Detention was experienced as a challenge to this in both form and content: isolated, outside available explanation, traumatic, further beyond discernment, but also an immediately obvious fracturing of support groups like this. 'The state' emerges in such groups, and at key deliberative moments, such as Belinda's forced removal, as multi-faceted and multi-sited, with internal frictions that should be proactively drawn upon but are threaded with complex forms of complicity. This tells us something about the ways in which questions of complicity can be a key way that people imagine and interpret the state, as something to avoid or strategically engage with. Yet, while the examples above speak to how discussions of the state were linked to detention and the power to detain, these questions often take a different register for those already inside detention. How do you 'think like' a system that detains you indefinitely? What forms of stateness do people inside detention draw upon? How might 'the state' emerge through its withdrawal?

States of Withdrawal

"Rolling down the road"

I ring Jackson from home, thinking about his little black burner phone, Home Office issued, and how he'd passed it to me at our last visit, to put my number in: the strange archaic feeling of the buttons, scrolling through letters to write my name.

He answers quickly – his voice deep and resonant, even over the crackling line. His tone is difficult to place: a mix of jovial acceptance and serious frustration. Whenever we visit it is clear that Jackson is popular and respected amongst people in detention and guards alike, someone they stop and listen to. He often goes off on

astute soliloquys about 'the state of things', peppered with witty anecdotes, uncompromising in his critiques.

I ask him to maybe just start by introducing himself, and talk about his first interactions with detention:

> Who am I? Well […] I'm a migrant from Africa.

> I've been in the UK 17 years. I've been detained here 6 months, and there's nothing I can do with my life at this stage. Listening to the news the other day, watching PMQs and the immigration minister was saying the maximum [stay] is 4 months, and I was sitting here, I've been here more than 4 months!

He laughs, pauses.

> The Home Office don't tell me nothing – they don't tell me what's going on. When I sit down here I don't know what's going on, time is just rolling down the road.

> I was arrested by police: stop and searched in London – they said I was detained on immigration grounds, and they took me to detention.

We talk about his daily routine, things he does to try and relax.

> Most of the time I just watch comedy. To be honest I like 'Barbershop' [a 2002 comedy film starring Ice Cube]! Most of the Black American comedy, Chris Rock, Kevin Hart. And then sometimes, I will just lie and sleep all day, because there is nothing I can do.

> So they come ask me, 'oh are you ok?'

> I say – 'I don't know!'

> I don't know what's happening with my case. It's just more stress.

We move on to healthcare inside, a topic we've both discussed together a few times already.

> The healthcare is good basically – but from my own view sometimes, it's not the best. If they have to take you to hospital they put you in handcuffs, and we put this to the manager. If you take someone from Africa to hospital they put them in handcuffs. But they don't do it with Eastern Europeans and Indians. So this is properly discrimination. When I was going to court they handcuffed me, they said, 'Jackson you are a big man you can fight us', I said, 'I'm not going to fight you, I want to sort this out', they said, 'it's just procedure'.

He sighs and waits – a gust of wind blows at his end of the line.

When you stay here for so long, you just lose your mind, I just need any help.

If people cause trouble, hunger strike, try and commit suicide - they release them one week later.

But I don't want to go down that road.

***

Jackson, in many ways a fountain of knowledge about the intricacies and idiosyncrasies of Dungavel and the detention system, was also very clear about what he did not know: what was happening with his case, why he was still detained after so long, when he may be released, whether the friends he'd made inside might suddenly disappear, whether he was able to affirm that he was 'ok'. He was very clear about the factors that had contributed to his detention – his blackness, his visibility to the police in London, his status as a migrant from Africa - and how these continued to contribute to his treatment as a physical 'risk' on brief medical trips outside the centre. And yet, everybody seemed stumped about how to address his case in a way that could get him out. Jackson's lawyer would occasionally tell him – between periods of inaction and silence – about possible Judicial Reviews and bail options, but they were very slow to materialise. Guards would mention in passing how it was "a real shame" that his case hadn't been "flagged" yet, saying things like "he's been in too long that man" while we waited in reception. Jackson himself, as the final part of the above conversation attests, was clear that one route out of detention was through self-harm and attempted suicide, which he felt marked particular detainees as so 'at risk' that they would then be released quietly, with a view to keep Dungavel's reputation as a 'relaxed regime' intact. This echoes the brutally literal words of the woman I quoted earlier: "You know the Home Office is in my head, when I fight them, I fight myself, I hurt myself."

'Self-harm' as we see in the next chapter, was one way of being medically 'flagged', something that Jackson felt could lead to release, after seeing examples where this had been the case (see Chapter 5, on detention healthcare). Despite this, 'thinking like the Home Office' to such an extreme was unacceptable to Jackson; he wanted to upend the version of 'Jackson' he felt the immigration services had of him - violent, 'illegal', a risk, a troublemaker – as much for his own sense of self as for the ways it may assist his eventual release, which at this stage felt almost beyond discernment. He cultivated relationships on these terms;

with me, with MPs and MSPs, and with his lawyer, motivated by a commitment of not 'giving in' and going down "that road." Yet, as we saw in Chapter 1, Jackson had largely given up on long-term friendship with other people inside, after seeing so many moved or removed. Jackson's descriptions show a notion of the state (and responses to it) that I interpret as a 'state of withdrawal': A Home Office that tells him "nothing", a disappearing lawyer, an indeterminate detention that ended up stretching to over 15 months, and a lack of discernible strategy or support to mitigate this. Yet this absence or withdrawal of the state was experienced within, and in some sense compounded, by the inescapable presence of locked doors, barbed-wire-topped walls and handcuffs on hospital visits; a sheer physical carcerality framed as 'procedure'. Such procedures, it's worth reminding ourselves, officially exist in detention to facilitate a specific form of state withdrawal, whereby an individual is transferred to another sovereign nation-state.

Questions of state withdrawal form a key backdrop for everyone inside detention, and can be particularly lengthy and complicated for people (like Jackson) classed as Foreign National Offenders, who are detained after jail time in order to facilitate deportation. For Noah, another so-called 'FNO' in his late 20s who had lived in the UK for most of his life, such state withdrawal meant a profoundly difficult reckoning with a 'country of origin' he couldn't even remember, and with the future itself:

> Mentally it's like a tug of war, it's like something pulling on your brain. You are trying to work out what you are going to do. You can't make any future plans.
>
> You have to make plan A, B, C and D.
>
> And most of the time you don't want to think about it, you don't want to think about the worst case scenario. For me personally its hypothetical, I don't know what Zimbabwe is like – I have no idea – I see news, about violence and oppression, but If I go there I will stick out. I don't know, you know.

Both Jackson and Noah were navigating both the 'unknown' of their ongoing legal case, and the 'unknown' of a 'country of origin' they didn't remember, in each case former British colonies they viewed as dangerously in flux, telling me at various times that they blamed such 'instability' largely on the legacies of colonial violence.

Alek, who I also interviewed from inside Dungavel over the phone, described himself as, "basically from Russia – I ran away from [the Chechen war] in Russia," though the Home Office 'disputed' his nationality at various points. Such experiences of temporary

'statelessness' (in being held while having to 'prove' his nationality), were common in detention. Alek's response to the situation partly involved trying to show his connections to life in Britain, where he'd lived for years, but also in documenting the brutal reality of being exposed to such a position. For Alek, detention was fundamentally a space of state violence, a fact he felt was masked by the discourses of 'care' within the space, as procedural 'Duties of Care' seemed to expose a 'state of withdrawal' through their hypocrisy and reduction of care to an abstract minimum. Detention itself, but particularly the threat of removal within it, became a form of torture for Alek, an accusation that deliberately recasts the state's presumed role as arbiter of such terminology:

> Detention for me – everybody here is 'here to help', to help with this and to help with that.
>
> But the real truth is, tomorrow they are going to wake you up, 6 or 7 big guys, all of them who were very nice to you, and they will just grab you and put you in a van and deport you. And those thoughts, every day, they are torture.
>
> They called it 'second torture' you know – [that group] who help with health in detention, I was reading about that. [Alek is referencing a report by the charity Medical Justice here, who I focus on in the next chapter]

As Davina Cooper argues, state "withdrawal is an important governmental and political technique" (Cooper, 2019: 49) here taking the form of both obscure legal disputes determining sovereign responsibility for individual people, and the day-to-day ways that the detention estate makes people aware of the threat of deportation, through unannounced moves and shows of force. For Noah, detention's unpredictability made it worse than prison in certain ways, despite the fact that he had been inside on what is called an IPP sentence, 'Imprisonment for public protection', a form of 'indefinite' imprisonment that gave people minimum but not maximum 'tariffs' as sentences, which was introduced by New Labour in 2003 and abolished in 2012 (though not retroactively for existing cases). Noah saw the clear similarities between detention and an IPP sentence, but argued the latter was "a little bit better," because it at least had a legible route 'out' of some kind:

> With the Home Office everyone is against you, you are on your own. There is not any balance, they only write down if you do something bad, but if you do anything good, they don't mention it, they don't make commentary on it. [In detention] – you don't

know how it's going to end. There isn't a clear black and white formula […] it's too vague.

My daughter thinks I'm lying; she knows [that prison is supposed to end] – she's asking 'when are you coming home'?

We don't have a release date.

She thinks I'm breaking more rules, that it's because I'm being naughty.

How do I have to explain that it's not that? I have to explain racism to her.

Accusations of torture, maltreatment and racism were common responses to the heightened kinds of state withdrawal we see in long-term cases of detention such as these. Yet, unlike some of the men we'll meet in Chapter 6, who rejected detention work in an expression of overt refusal, Alek, Jackson and Noah drew upon such ideas in order to further attempts to shake the state back into recognition. For example, Alek regularly spoke with me about the anger he felt about his Home Office monthly reports, and the unknown 'caseworker' who provided them. But, instead of outright rejection or refusal, Alek was clear that he wanted to disprove or reengage such state actors, and demonstrate his position as a father and hard worker:

> If you saw [my report] you'd be like, Jesus Christ, this guy! But my caseworker, he writes the reports, I know his name, but I've never seen him! I'm a hard worker, you know, I clean the kitchen [in Dungavel], the corridors are amazing, spotless. But at end of the day, they never put these things in a monthly report. So people who have never even seen me, know, they are only just working off the paper.

> They are saying [to me], if you want to see your kids, you can see them through the internet – how through the internet can you wipe your son's arse, or change him, or kiss him, it's pathetic – would they do that? They write these horrible things, like I don't have any hobbies, I do have hobbies!

Such evocations of fatherhood, shared hobbies, and work ethic were common ways that people I got to know in detention would attempt to shift the version of themselves depicted by the Home Office, to evade its documents, forms and spatial controls. Even against a 'state of withdrawal', people attempted to show their investment in particular 'communities of value' (Anderson, 2013), that work to reify both state and nation. For Noah and Jackson, this also involved particular narratives around their childhoods in the UK, alongside criticisms of the racist systems that undergirded their detention. 'Thinking like the Home Office' here involved less of themes such as complicity, play or metaphor, and more an

attempt to reassert some narrative control over an entity that was actively trying to withdraw from any sovereign or state responsibility to them. Avoiding the 'road' of self-harm and medicalised intervention was key to this, pushing back against the particular forms of carceral care analysed in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered how detainable people in the British border regime work through ideas of the Home Office, as a key manifestation of 'the state'. I have argued that people drew on various modes of stateness in trying to understand what a state is and their place within it. This was largely a practical process, focused on navigating particular 'steps' in the asylum process, but often fed into wider attempts at instilling a sense of belonging or security. I showed how metaphors were often used to describe states, sometimes as a monster or a game, and how these could involve every day or more explicitly performed types of play which allowed people to think with and act like a state. Questions of complicity and responsibility become important for understanding state practice in such instances, particularly at moments of ethical and relational crisis, with states often being understood through their withdrawals, especially within the strange physical presences and discursive absences of detention. We see then how 'the state' "become[s] a social subject in everyday life" (Aretxaga, 2003: 395) in a variety of overlapping ways, anchored in deep historical stories about 'state formation', 'state rationality', colonial 'statelessness' and contemporary state 'instability'. Such narratives are complicated by Luke De Noronha's astute observation about the simultaneous importance of 'post-colonial' independence for the contemporary deportation regime:

> the racialized global poor are governed not as colonial subjects but as citizens of independent nation-states […] in this context, discourses on sovereignty prove ideologically pivotal, obscuring historical continuities through references to the apparently independence of formerly colonised nation states (2020: 194).

As Jackson, Noah and Alek, attest, personal stories of disavowal by the British state are mapped onto such global contestations over sovereignty, where historical narratives of 'irrational' and 'unstable' states meet the Home Office's need to treat former colonial states as ahistorically distinct and singular. Even at the transnational level then, there are

necessary reifications of state and 'statelessness' that have direct effects on the everyday ways in which people navigate entities like the Home Office.

Attending to the continual, collective processes of 'thinking like the Home Office' can help us see the ways 'the state' is figured day to day, often as something distinct, if mysterious. Gaining recognition by 'the state', within spaces and systems of 'detainability' involves conflicting and bureaucratic processes that can feel like being 'held' or 'trapped' in ways that resonate with the physical sites of 'detainability' seen in Chapters 1-3, emerging from these in a complex interplay. Ideas of complicity can play a key part in such processes, with people using complicity strategically to establish shifting degrees of proximity and distance from systems of racialized violence that they are required to engage with and physically live within. This takes particular forms when we turn to health and healthcare, especially when these are infused with powers to incarcerate, and I turn to this topic in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 - Holding "the key": Contested Vulnerabilities & Detention Healthcare

"It sometimes feels as if I hold the key"

> The house is immaculate, inside and out. A neat little drive leads off from a spiral of suburban avenues, quiet in the midweek afternoon. Dr Dean greets me with a smile and firm handshake, suited, confident – with a piercing, bodily laugh that stops as quickly as it starts, like he's perturbed by his own reactions.
>
> Every surface in the house feels shiny and new, with minimal decoration, the kitchen has just been mopped. I instinctively try to take my shoes off in the hall (I'd worn nice socks), the carpet spongey under my feet, but am told not to worry. We do the interview whilst sitting across Dr Dean's three-piece suite, my phone recording on the coffee table in the middle, catching the clattering of my cup and saucer after each sip.
>
> Dr Dean speaks with a frankness and 'gallows humour' that betrays over two decades working in prison and detention healthcare, often linking back to his working biography to answer my quite broad questions. I think this is partly because neither of us are quite sure what to make of each other, though he is a keen interviewee and "happy to help with my studies." We've gone over questions of consent and anonymity via email and phone quite extensively, but I check in again before we start. He responds briskly, waving a hand to in a jovial dismissal:
>
> "Just say that I'm a GP at an Immigration Removal Centre, that's fine."
>
> Towards the end of the interview, my cup empty and Dr Dean visibly checking his smart silver watch, I ask him:
>
> "One last question then - it seems like there's quite a lot, for medical professionals there's quite a responsibility ['there is!' He shouts in the background] in terms of the impact that can have someone being in or not. How would you characterise that? "
>
> He thinks for a moment, glancing out the window.
>
> "I know... well. It sometimes feels as if I hold the key."
>
> ***

What kind of key does a doctor in detention hold? When is it held, and is this the only key? How does care work through these metaphors of keys and locks?

The last chapter considered how detainable people and those around them try to think, act and feel like the Home Office, raising questions of strategy, complicity and 'stateness'. Following on from the descriptions of 'going down the road' of self-harm and particular medical vulnerabilities that ended that chapter, this one considers in detail how ideas of 'vulnerability', 'risk' and 'harm' are drawn upon within the specific realm of detention healthcare, with a focus on different kinds of clinicians who are at the centre of this process. Dr Dean's affective sense of 'holding a key', to lock or release, within interactions ostensibly situated towards care and wellbeing, was the most overt example I encountered during my fieldwork of what I term 'carceral care': how care can be imbued with forms of control, containment and violence, which has been a focus of recent anthropology around care (Cooper, 2017; Feldman & Ticktin 2010; Mulla 2014; Stevenson 2014; Ticktin 2011). His role as 'caring' medical professional was so deeply intertwined with his capacity to withhold or grant liberty that the two were inseparable.

I began this chapter with this part of our interview not to make some kind of moral judgement of Dr Dean, but because it struck me as a candid account of the particular affordances and power given to a specific type of professional medical knowledge within detention, and the wider asylum and immigration system. I met countless people throughout the year who attempted to access medical care inside, often to try and argue for release, but it was rare to hear the usually 'detached' or 'objective' figures of medical and other authority foreground this as a responsibility, partly a burden, partly a form of care in itself. I was left wondering how many other people in the 'refugee sector' were holding 'keys' (consciously or not) of their own, leading me to a series of other, broader questions: how were forms of 'care', particularly when it came to health and wellbeing, imbued with the possibility of carcerality? How were categories of 'vulnerability' and 'harm' negotiated collectively in different contexts, and how might they limit as much as offer possibility? And what happens when assessments of such harms take place in an environment many experience as acutely harmful in itself? Existing theories of vulnerability and harm can help us start to think through such questions, but need to be brought into dialogue with contested and contingent ways these ideas are used in particular contexts.

Contested Vulnerabilities

Vulnerability is a multifarious, shifting concept that can be used to emphasise biological, psychological, social or political factors at different times, often in contested ways. Key EU directives and case law have historically attempted to position 'asylum seekers' as a group who should be treated as vulnerable in themselves, with the landmark 2011 European Court of Human Rights case *M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece* defining asylum seekers as "a particularly underprivileged and vulnerable population group in need of special protection" (Mouzourakis, Pollet & Fierens, 2017: 10). Such general definitions are "rooted in [asylum seekers'] disadvantaged legal position compared to other groups or nationals" (Mouzourakis, Pollet & Fierens, 2017: 11) whilst concurrent legal bracketing of people into different 'vulnerable groups' - such as pregnant women, or those with a history of torture - can draw on divergent, more overtly medicalised notions of vulnerability.[5]

As this chapter will explore, while previous Home Office Enforcement Instructions and Guidance stipulated that a similarly bracketed set of vulnerable groups should "only be detained under very exceptional circumstances" (Medical Justice, 2017: 2), this has been shifted into a complex 'Adults at Risk' policy that lays out how "detention may still be appropriate in an individual case when immigration control considerations outweigh the presumption of release, even for a person considered to be at risk" (Home Office, 2019a: 4). Wider legal definitions of vulnerability interact with individualised medical ones here, all the while informed by a notion of certain people being deemed 'a risk' to society (whether because of histories of criminalization, potential to 'abscond', or other 'immigration factors'), even if they are medically 'at risk' themselves.

In practice the state regularly detains people classified as 'vulnerable' or 'at risk', and, as we shall see, the process of 'evidencing' a particular vulnerability has increased in complexity and difficulty over time. Alongside such legal frameworks, scholars of migration have highlighted how 'vulnerability' often becomes charged in immigration systems with particular gendered and racialized narratives of victimhood and dependency (Spijkerboer, 2015; Malkki, 1995 & 1996; Freedman, 2019). This overlaps with the Ticktin's analysis of

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[5] The European Council's 2003 Reception Conditions Directive lists different vulnerable persons such as "minors, unaccompanied minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with minor children and persons who have been subjected to torture, rape or other serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence." (Mouzourakis, Pollet & Fierens, 2017: 13).

how people seeking asylum in France come to inhabit a narrowly medicalised construction of what she calls the "morally legitimate suffering body" (2011: 3) in order to gain legal recognition, against a backdrop of "colonial aphasia" (Stoler, 2001) and "antipolitical moralism" (Ticktin, 2011: 64) that erases critiques of inequality and racism, allowing the state to "frame itself as benevolent and enlightened" (Ticktin, 2011: 158). Freedman has argued against how women in particular become "categorized as 'vulnerable' a priori, without real consideration of the structural and contextual causes of this vulnerability" (Freedman, 2019: 1). The clinical and NGO approaches to vulnerability I witnessed through my fieldwork were pointedly gendered and gendering in this way, ranging from attempts to consider the particular issues facing women seeking asylum, to treating women as intrinsically vulnerable and "without autonomy", a generic "object of pity" (Freedman, 2019: 9). Related to such discussions, Judith Butler's writing on precariousness posits a mutual human vulnerability that is socially and politically differentiated but ultimately universal, an "ontological vulnerability" (Tsantsoulas, 2018: 159) of shared interconnection. Here, "we are constituted by virtue of the address" (Butler, 2006: 44) of another in a corporeal, social and interdependent configuration of the self. Recognition is key to Butler's formulation, as is the possibility of transforming the terms of such recognition, as she argues: "Vulnerability takes on another meaning at the moment it is recognized, and recognition wields the power to reconstitute vulnerability" (2006: 43).

Such theories can help us unpack the forms of interaction described by Dr Dean, where, as this chapter will elaborate, forms of clinical responsibility and recognition in detention involve very particular but shifting notions of vulnerability. People worked hard to inhabit such individualised medical vulnerabilities, which often reinscribed established categories and forms of recognition, as well as more structural and political critiques of being 'vulnerablised', sometimes at the same time. As Tobias Kelly reminds us in his work on the recognition of torture, "it is really hard to be recognised as a victim" (2011: 172), or as vulnerable, and people spend a lot of time and energy on doing just this, often in collective ways that draw in family, friends, varying medical 'experts', IRC staff, NGOs and academic researchers. Instead of simply critiquing 'vulnerability' then, or trying to fold the concept, as Butler sometimes does, back into a general theory of human mutuality, I analyse in this chapter how such ideas are drawn upon and utilised in the particular site of an IRC. In this

sense I follow Clara Han's appreciative critique of Butler's work, where she argues: "we might think of Butler as providing a conceptual schema for precarity [Butler's way of understanding the social and political arrangements of vulnerability]. And yet, we can also ask if, by doing so, the bits and pieces of social life get put into a grid under precarity as a master concept rather than present routes to a set of smaller, experience-laden concepts" (Han, 2018: 339). Put simply, there are different, often competing, forms of vulnerability and harm in any given context, and it is worth paying attention to how such concepts operate in specific sites and times. Key to this is understanding that such narratives of vulnerability often work to eclipse the ways in which "one of the key sources of increased vulnerability for migrants lies in their subjection to immigration controls" (Anderson, 2013: 158).

Harmful sites

Sites such as detention are not simply empty stages for contestations over vulnerability harm, but active parts in their production. Harm is experienced spatially, distributed not just amongst different bodies but within and across different sites, often blurring distinctions between where harm 'occurs' and where it finds diagnosis or recognition. For instance, Lotte Buch Segal's work shows how traumatised people, interpreters and clinicians at the Danish torture rehabilitation clinic where she did ethnographic fieldwork would often talk about 'evil being in the walls' of the institution (Segal, 2020), whilst diagnosis of PTSD and other trauma can be charged with the threat of 'retraumatisation' (see Van Der Kolk, 2014). In this sense, spaces of 'detainability', can produce as well as give recognition to 'harm', linking to Foucauldian histories of the clinic as an "collective, homogeneous space" (1973: 196) that objectifies, dissects and confines its subjects. Questions over detention *as* harm were a major part of everyday, NGO and legal contestations about the UK immigration system throughout my fieldwork, including depictions of IRCs as a form of 'second torture', a phrase that Alek, who we met in the last chapter, used in direct reference to a Medical Justice report of that name from 2012. As Alli, a worker I interviewed from Medical Justice, explains later in this chapter, even the Home Office admitted that "detention is a harmful environment," yet state bodies continued to utilise narratives of vulnerability that positioned detention as somehow a space of care. Like vulnerability then, harm is a highly

contested concept inside detention, with its own patterns of usage that will be elaborated on through the chapter.

Despite its ubiquity, harm is rarely foregrounded in anthropological work, other than as adjacent to what Joel Robbins argues is a general disciplinary shift towards a focus on "the subject living in pain, in poverty, or under conditions of violence or oppression" (2013: 448). In contrast, critical criminology, Zemiology and 'social harm' theories have attempted to understand harm in opposition to established narratives of crime, a move paralleled in prison abolitionist critiques of punitive criminal justice (see Hillyard et al 2004; Canning, 2017 & 2018; Copson, 2018, Yar 2012). Despite this, in an overview of such theories Majid Yar suggests Zeimology "suffers from some basic problems with its conceptualisation of harm itself", an "ontological deficit" he seeks to remedy with his own definition of harm as "nothing other than the inter-subjective experience of being refused recognition" (Yar, 2012: 56, 59). But what is involved in recognising a lack? Putting aside the theoretical and disciplinary debates, such a question was ethnographically very common inside detention, with harm often understood as the 'absence' of something (care, support, resources) as well as the presence of violence. With such messy tensions in mind, attending to harm means understanding within harmful environments, "people who are otherwise failed by the state and marginalized by racial oppression—could desire the strange forms of care available inside, even as many incarcerated people may deeply mistrust medical care" within such spaces (Sufrin, 2017: 234).

The argument of this chapter thus runs in the following way. Establishing vulnerability and harm is a collective, contested effort specific to the context of each IRC. Specific procedures to 'express concern' about an individual's welfare such as a Rule 35 or an Adult at Risk report require the shared involvement of groups of staff, steered by key figures of medical authority. Clinical staff within detention foreground pastoral narratives of care and custody to describe their roles, especially when faced with criticisms of detention as harmful in itself. Concurrently, NGOs such as Medical Justice work to try and provide 'evidence' of harm that is often disputed through arguments about credibility, expertise and uncertainty. Finally, we will see how fear, confusion and racialized exclusion condition who can access healthcare outside of detention, with people trying to avoid medical scrutiny that could render them

vulnerable to detention or removal. Ultimately, utilising and drawing upon established forms of medical vulnerability and harm can serve to eclipse narratives that emphasise how detention and the immigration system can be vulnerablizing and harmful in themselves. In short, divergent forms of 'vulnerability' are often in direct friction, with figures such as Jackson from the last chapter and Nasar at the end of this one showing how such contestations are a matter of life and death.

"The relationships make it work": collective procedures

Holding the 'key' of a medical assessment of vulnerability or harm is a collective process that draws on particularly histories and overlapping forms of 'expertise'. Dr Dean's own early biography shows a long-term engagement and deep knowledge of healthcare in a landscape of keys and locks – particularly in his moves between working in prisons and detention. Initially a community GP, he tells me he "thoroughly enjoyed" an early spell as GP in a small high security prison, followed by healthcare monitoring roles for the Prison Service, before eventually moving to the IRC GP practice where he currently works:

> I started work at [the IRC]. And that was fortuitous ... it came about because the manager who interviewed me for the job at [the prison I had worked at] some 14 years' prior, happened to be the director at [the IRC].

Dean's outline of the specific 'healthcare needs' in detention is detailed, firstly harking back to what "appeared" to be the 'pinball logic' (see previous chapter) of the wider system. As he told me:

> I think one of the things I struggled [initially] to get my head round was the administrative nature of detention, and perhaps the random … how to me it appeared random.
> You know when I see a newly arrived detainee I've no idea why they are in detention.
> The fact that detainees don't know how long they're going to be held in detention, and neither do staff, that makes it difficult for providing for their healthcare needs.

In the case of 'new arrivals' this can mean that, "they may have never accessed healthcare services in the country they are fleeing from." But the situation for 'longer term' residents may be little better:

People who have lived here for a number of years, many of them won't have registered with their GP because they fear that in doing so they might be brought to the attention of the authorities, so they'll often buy drugs themselves, you know. And that can extend to anti-psychotic medicine, it can extend to anti-viral medicine, for hepatitis, for HIV.

The point he returns to however, not unlike many of those I spoke to inside, was the temporal uncertainty of detention and release:

Not knowing how long a person is going to be detained is a real challenge. We manage conditions in as close a way as we can to managing the patients we would see in the community or in prison - I say 'or in prison' in the context of prison healthcare being part of the NHS.[6] But for example, if I diagnose hypertension in a patient this morning, then the best drug is a drug that I would have to check their kidney function[..], before and one month into treatment - because these drugs can have [...] a negative effect on the kidney. And that class of drugs would be regarded as the best type of drug that you or I [would be prescribed] if we had high blood pressure. But when I see someone with high blood pressure [in detention] I'm going to think well 'where are they going to be in a month's time?'

In medicine first its 'do no harm', so that particular class of drugs I don't prescribe. What I prescribe is a much more benign drug.

'Do no harm' here means limiting care to a benign or reduced form, to mitigate the possibility of an unknown release – a temporal distortion of standard medical prognoses, where assessment of risk, causation and clinical foresight "requires predictability" (Kelly, 2011: 117). Dean essentially confirmed, with a medical justification, a common concern I heard from people in detention: that they were not being prescribed the most effective or 'best' drugs for the health issues they were facing. A certain kind of 'vulnerability' is reinscribed by the detention system. Dean's rationale – we cannot guarantee medical care outside of detention so should only prescribe treatment that can be continued or discontinued without the usual follow-up testing - is medically sound in one sense, but only when we accept the tacit assumption that such care is less about 'healing' than 'mitigation',

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[6] The situation for healthcare provision inside the IRC itself was a complicated one, with the main detention contractor running the centre subcontracting to a private medical firm, who then subcontract themselves to the individual GPs in the IRC, including Dr Dean. As he puts it: "there can be quite an organisational distance. But, I've been there long enough. If I need to speak to the centre manager about someone, I speak to [them]! You know. [Their] door is …. [They'd] be annoyed at me if I didn't!"

along with accepting (rather than questioning) why there may be so many barriers to accessing continued healthcare for people after their release.

Shared procedures

As our conversation continued that day we moved from the questions of 'healthcare needs' to the other primary role of GPs within the IRC: assessing patient's vulnerabilities and suitability to be detained at all. As Dean explains, doctors in detention have a legislated obligation to report medical issues that may mean someone is unfit to be detained, and in practice this means that "everyone is seen by the nurse [on arrival], and those patients that wish to see a doctor are seen by a doctor." If the small team of healthcare workers think something needs flagging, they use a procedure called a 'Rule 35' Report. This is main procedural 'key' that Dr Dean alludes to, but it operates within a less codified set of processes, influence and relatedness that go beyond the procedures of the document.

As Dean elaborates:

> There are three stems of Rule 35: 1, 2 and 3. Most reports are 35(3) reports - 'may be a victim of torture'. 35(2) is about if an individual is at risk of self-harm. To be honest I've never completed a 35(2). […] Because, if someone is felt to be at risk of self-harm, or they have self-harmed - they are managed under the ACDT [Assessment Care in Detention and Teamwork self-harm reduction strategy] process. The centre manager knows everyone, he knows who's on an ACDT without me completing a Rule 35 2 for the person, because if someone came to me and was expressing ideas of self-harm, I would open an ACDT with the staff and nursing staff, so a 35(2) is – *he laughs, trying to find the words* - it's a form for a sake of it being a form, I don't think it serves any useful purpose.

Analysis by the Free Movement blog in July 2020 corroborates Dean's approach, stating that, "In 2019, only five Rule 35(2) reports, which indicate suspected suicidal ideations, were issued across the entire detention estate" (Free Movement, 2020).

Home Office guidance (Home Office, 2001, 2018 & 2019) reiterates Dean's tiered overview, but in my experience people inside tend not to know about the three tiers or the existence of parallel 'Adults at Risk' and 'ACDT' procedures, with 'getting a Rule 35' being thought of

as a unified process whereby a doctor can write a recommendation of release. As Dean tells it, the '35(1)', an expression that detention itself is injurious to an individual's health, is the 'strongest' kind of recommendation:

> It would be really unusual for any GP at [the IRC] to complete a Rule 35(1) and the person not be released from detention, it would be really unusual. I've had a response to a Rule 35(1) that has come back to say, well 'we hear what you are saying but we maintaining detention'. And then what I do is I get on the phone [*he laughs*], or I do another 35(1).

I get the sense from the way Dean speaks about getting 'on the phone' that this would be almost a transgression of an assumed understanding between the doctor (particularly a long established one like him) and a Home Office caseworker or centre manager. The '35(1)' is issued rarely, and with the understanding it will be acted upon: the conditions of its 'success' are built into this approach and process. This is in contrast to what Dean calls 'the 35(3)s', seemingly conflating the forms and the people:

> They are more challenging. Because, they come about because ordinarily someone who has been a victim of torture should not be held in immigration detention because it's administrative detention. But the caveat is the 'immigration factors', and if there are several negative immigration factors then the decision from the Home Office might be to continue to detain them.

Doctors may use a Rule 35(3) to express the opinion that a person has been tortured and therefore shouldn't be in detention, but as Dean explains, Rule 35(3)s are "not the same as a medical-legal report", which would be a more rigorous device for medical assessment and the documentation of torture. In contrast, the Rule 35 is simply *"an expression of concern",*[7] but as Tobias Kelly reminds us, medical-legal reports are themselves an "erratic" (2011: 68) form of recognition, not "diagnostic", but an attempt to determine the "relative consistency of an account of torture with the scars, lesions, and other indicators presented by the claimants" (2013: 84). Such reports form a key part of the work done by NGOs such as Medical Justice, featured in the next section. Both are contested, but Rule 35(3)s can be far more easily rejected by the Home Office using 'immigration grounds' such as 'they are likely

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[7] Dean also describes a linked protocol he uses in this regard, the PAT C which acts as a "medical hold". He elaborates: "for example if I had a patient in Dungavel whom I was concerned about medically and wanted to refer to hospital I would do a PAT C that said, 'if this person is to remain in detention I recommend they remain in detention at [this particular IRC] because of health reasons [so they can access the local hospital]'"

to abscond', 'their removal is imminent' or 'they are risk to the public'. While Dean is personally affronted if he receives such dismissals for 35(1) cases, he treats them as a fact of life for 'the 35(3)s'. 'Concern' about torture, it seems, is to be noted, but rarely acted upon, as the 'collective procedure' seems to dampen responsibility and action.

Custody as care

Here, it's important to also understand an attendant part of Dean's narrative around his work: that there could be medical benefits to detention. Dean would particularly emphasise this when faced with criticism, seeing himself as part of a particular ethos he located in the IRC and its staff, often in opposition to others around the UK: "the atmosphere is relaxed. The staff value their jobs there, and actually I think they value the role that they have. And they want to make life as good as life might be for the people who are detained there, for as long as they are detained there." Dean tells me later in the interview that he went to school with a number of the guards at this IRC, along with having long-term professional and cordial relationships with other staff, inspectors and religious leaders that frequent the centre. He is clear that there are variations in how Rule 35 procedure "works in practice in different IRCs*", talking at various points about concerns he had about other IRCs (he had regularly been involved in inspecting other facilities both at home and abroad). Ultimately, Dean would return through our conversation to the way that at his IRC, "the relationships make it work*." From initial 'flagging' to final assessment, an individual's 'vulnerability' is here given recognition through a collective set of closely interrelated actors, with Dean's 'key' only really working through shared, iteratively improvised, agreement. Simultaneously, notions of a 'harmful environment' are rejected through narratives of the 'good ethos' of the people within it.

Dean was clear throughout the interview about his sense of the potentially positive benefits of detention:

> For some people, they're able to enjoy a greater degree of wellness and wellbeing and health on their release than what they were or weren't enjoying when they came in [...] drug addiction, for example. Or, a variety of physical health problems that they'd never seen a healthcare professional about.

Dean's ethos of what I term 'carceral care' found formation through a defence of the IRC as a 'caring' space in contrast with a harmful external world. This echoes Carolyn Sufrin's (2017) work on 'Jailcare' in US prisons, where she draws on Sharon Dolovich's (2011) idea of the 'carceral burden' to explain how a state's power to detain also charges it with an obligation to protect that can become ethically important for those who work inside. This notion of "Custody [as] a form of care" (Sufrin, 2017: 186), creates particular ideas of 'pastoral' power and custodianship (Foucault, 2007), as we see in Dr Dean's response when I ask him whether he agrees with NGOs who claim that detention is itself harmful:

> No. I think it's dependent on the person. *[He mutters a little, seemingly uncomfortable for the first time in the interview.]* Actually, for some people it represents safety, it represents security, if you're in an abusive relationship, if you don't have a safe place to stay - if you're on the streets […] then [the IRC] can seem rather a nice place. It doesn't look like a prison.... Ok it's got a big high barbed wire fence around about it, but there's free movement within the centre.

Medical justifications required to open 'the lock' are here met with medicalised justifications for keeping it closed. Contested ideas of harm and vulnerability come into direct friction. 'The Key' is authoritative but vague then, medicalised but only a 'concern', used measuredly, in ways that respect a set of institutional, procedural and state boundaries that are animated by a shared ethos of 'care through custody'. The IRC where he worked, Dean argued, set "quite a low threshold*"* for '35(3)s' (victims of torture), but a seemingly high one for '35(1)s' (detention having injurious effects), with an understanding that the former may be fairly regularly overruled or ignored.[8] Dean, who told me towards the end of the interview that he was in favour of a time limit on detention "in principle*"*, did feel that there was some kind of 'temporal' threshold at work here too, a point when detention (however 'caring' or 'relaxed') could become injurious:

> I think with indeterminate detention, particularly when people are there several months or approaching 2 years for example, then yeah, I can see that their mental

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[8] A Home Office audit of Rule 35 from 2017 found that release from detention was authorised in 15% (9) of the cases audited, with detention maintained in 85% (51).
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/659628/Audit_of_Rule_35_Processes_-_Summary_of_Findings.pdf]
"Only 6% of detainees classified as "vulnerable and at risk" after abuse including torture, sexual violence or trafficking were subsequently released from UK immigration centres, according to new data."
https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/feb/09/vulnerable-detainees-released-from-uk-immigration-centres

health and wellbeing deteriorates, undoubtedly. And in such a circumstance I would complete a Rule 35(1) report.

Potential or past harm can only be assessed individually, but there is an indeterminate point, between a few months and two years, when anyone would 'deteriorate': when 'indeterminate' detention becomes a health risk. The 'road' of medical vulnerability that Jackson wanted to resist, as we say at the end of the last chapter, is an indeterminable length then, dependent on individual 'deterioration', which can seemingly only be acted upon after the fact. Freedom of Information requests submitted by Duncan Lewis law firm in 2019 show this particular vulnerability to be a statistical rarity: only 35 Rule 35(1) reports were submitted across the whole UK detention estate in 2019, with only 23 of these leading to a release (Immigration Enforcement Secretariat, 2020). The chart in Figure 11 shows an overview of the wider disparity between issued Rule 35s and release orders in 2019, whereby out of 2148 Rule 35s issued that year across the 3 tiers only 716 led to a release, a percentage of 33.3%. Ultimately, the shared processes informing the use of Rule 35s are used rarely, the collective procedures work towards a certain inaction as much as anything else. Compounding this, even when 'vulnerabilities' have been identified, the question of proving this moves into problems of 'evidence', and whose evidence counts.
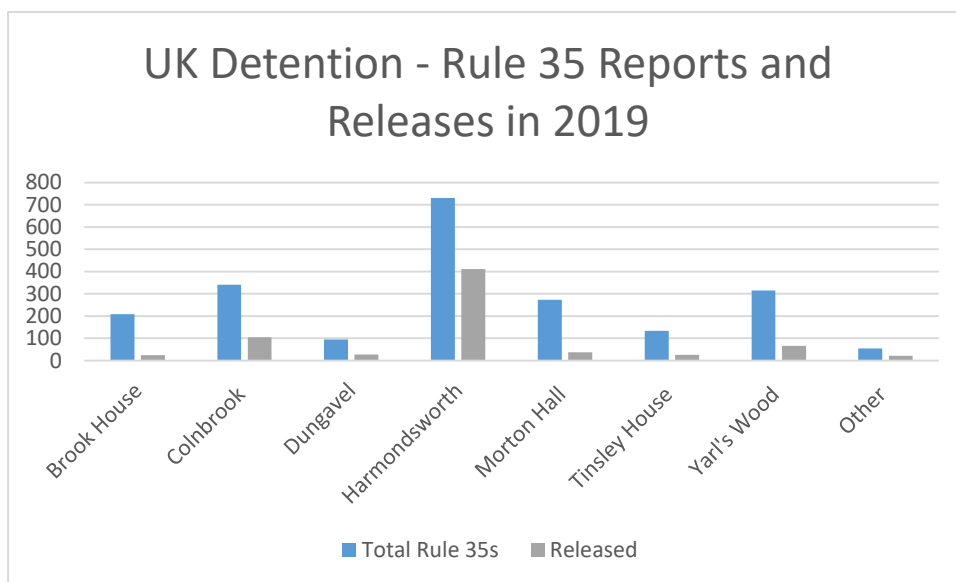

Figure 11: Comparison of Rule 35 Reports and releases following such reports, compiled from Duncan Lewis FOI (Immigration Enforcement Secretariat, 2020).

"Whose evidence is evidence?" Adults at Risk and Credibility

Adjacent to the medical staff inside Britain's IRCs are a range of NGO, legal and campaigning groups who often draw on questions of ill-health, 'vulnerability' and harm in order to advocate for release and wider treatment. These often come into direct opposition with Home Office-appointed medical staff, or privatised IRC practitioners like Dr Dean, further contesting different forms of medical knowledge and ideas of what counts as 'vulnerable'.

One such group is Medical Justice, with whom I tried to do an interview for some time, wary of taking them away from their work in 'offering medical help to people held in immigration detention in the UK', but keen to document this work if I could. After a series of emails and months, one member of staff, Alli, found a time to sit and talk over the phone with me.

Alli has worked with 'MJ' for a number of years now. She speaks at a rapid pace, gregarious and extremely well informed. We talk for some time about vulnerability and the particular paradox of how Rule 35(1) reports can often only claim that someone will 'injuriously affected' by detention after the fact:

> The system is basically a stress test on individuals. Home Office statements will often be, 'just because you are victim of torture doesn't mean you will necessarily suffer in detention, some people are incredibly resilient and some people manage just fine. So we don't want to make a system that excludes all victims of torture just because they are victims of torture. We don't want to label people and then be saddled with a whole category of people we can't detain because they happen to have this characteristic.'

I notice that Alli is talking, as quite a few people would do during my fieldwork, from the imagined perspective of the Home Office [see previous Chapter]. She continues:

> [Because] that was the previous system, you had to demonstrate that you belonged to a category - the system now is that that will get you so far, and will balance against very low levels of immigration factors that can be held against you. [But then] in order to qualify as having level 3 evidence you have to evidence that you in particular, *you individually* are likely to suffer harm in detention.

Alli is speaking here about the Home Office's 'Adults at Risk' (AAR) policy, which came into effect following the 2016 Immigration Act, as a response to the Shaw Review of detention that year, which made multiple criticisms of the Rule 35 procedure. To the surprise of many NGOs, and despite Shaw's initially quite damning assessments, rather than overhauling Rule 35s, the AAR policy brought in a new parallel system, with three levels of 'evidence' to prove

potential harm: 1) self-declaration, 2) professional evidence that the person is at risk, and 3) professional evidence that a period of detention would be likely to cause harm. These were then 'balanced' against 'immigration factors', broadly, the imminence of someone's removal, their previous 'compliance' and any history of 'criminality' (Medical Justice, 2017). Medical Justice produced a helpful visual to explain this process:
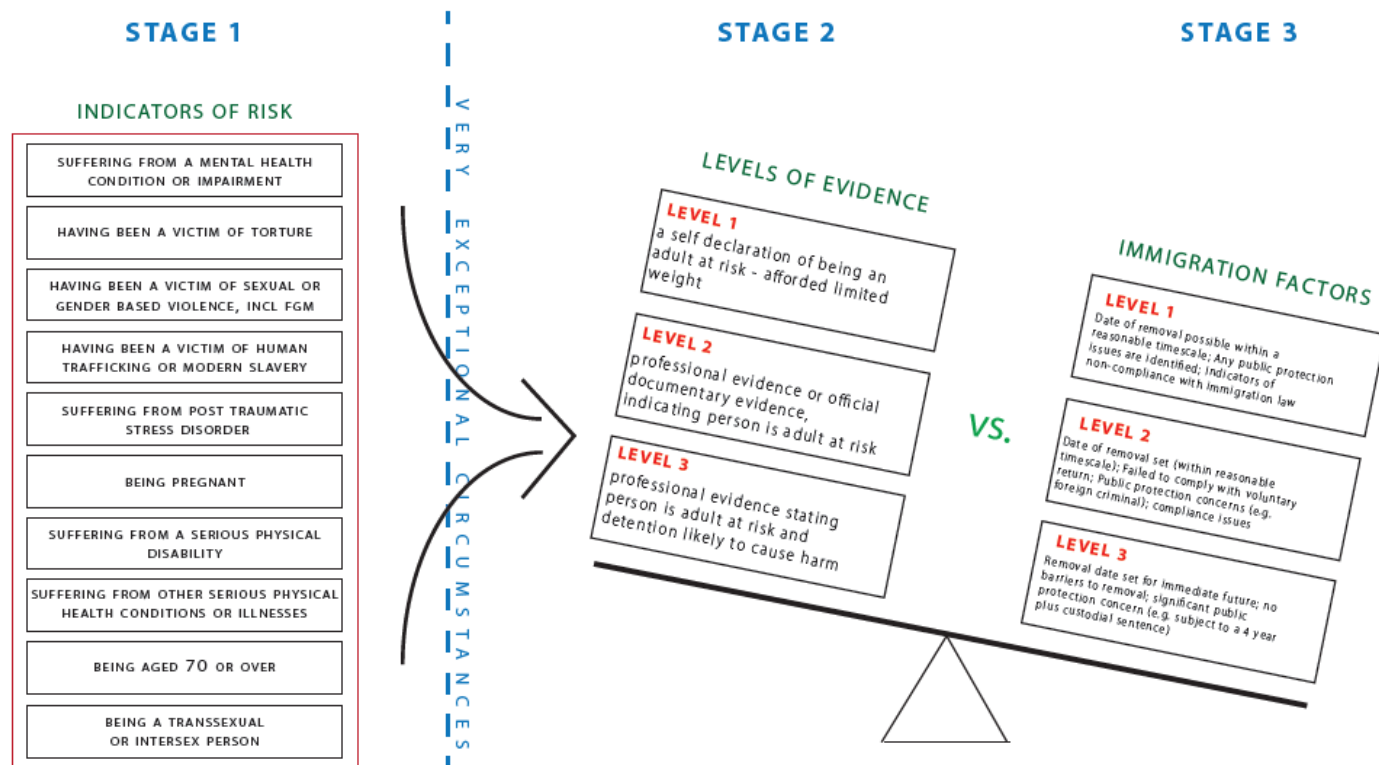
Figure 12: Adults At Risk - Graph reproduced from Medical Justice, 2017

People are flagged as having an 'indicator of risk' and where they would have previously only been detained under 'very exceptional circumstances' they are now pushed into a process where they must 'evidence' individual harm based on these indicators in order to be released. As Tobias Kelly reminds us "any understanding of risk is a product of the devices we have for measuring it" (2011: 113) and the AAR created a new, arguably more confusing and uncertain device by which oppositional 'risks' (individual, medical risks versus public, immigration risks) were produced and drawn upon.

As Alli explained, this is a fraught process, which echoes many of the processes in the wider asylum claims system:

Now, how do you demonstrate a potential likelihood to suffer harm, beyond the fact that you belong to a category known to be of increased risk of suffering harm? Logically and practically, that will only happen when the state has incarcerated you and then harm has happened, so we can document the harm that has happened and then use that as evidence to request that you be released from detention. So it's kind of like, the state recognises that a lot of people are at increased risk by having a particular characteristic, it recognises - as was evidenced in the Mary Bosworth annex to the initial Shaw Review - that detention is a harmful environment. They take a person known to be at risk and put them into what is known to be a harmful environment, and then they wait and see.

Though the AAR policy came about largely in response to failings with the Rule 35 procedure, the two currently coexist, with a doctor like Dr Dean seeing little practical difference in how they operate. As he explained to me in our interview:

[I think] the provision, the intent of the Adults at Risk policy could be more aligned with the intent of the provisions of Rule 35. [..] both are about vulnerable people who need to be identified and should not be held in immigration detention [...] Level 1 is a patient self-declares, Level 2 there is supporting information - that supporting information might be from a variety of sources, including a medical-legal report, a report from an NGO, a report from a community GP, a report from a psychiatrist, there might be a report from the IRC GP. And then Level 3 is when such a report expresses the concern, and I'm paraphrasing, but that there's a real risk of harm. So adults at risk level 3, I'm thinking Rule 35(1).

Rule 35s under this new system become a parallel form of 'evidence' amongst many, including medical reports and records, doctor's letters, probation reports and NGO interventions. As such, they tacitly challenge the 'established' way of working Dr Dean had in place, and the primacy of the 35(1). The Home Office states that a Rule 35(3) report "will normally amount to at least" Level 2 AAR evidence, while medical-Legal reports from charities such as Freedom from Torture will be treated as Level 3 AAR, "providing the report meets the required standards" (Home Office, 2019a: 21, 10).

As Alli elaborates, "the way the policy was crafted is very deceptive in that, rather than measuring people's 'risk' or their 'vulnerability', it measures their available evidence." But this also raises questions of "whose evidence counts." She continues:

If you look at it from a feminist point of view, where men's political activity may be more likely to be documented in other countries than things like sexual violence, domestic violence, gender-based violence. How do you document that, in a country where the state fails to protect the victims in the first place?

Vulnerability, which as Lisa Malkki argues can become synonymous with femininity and victimization through the "institutional, international expectations of a certain kind of helplessness" imposed by humanitarianism (Malkki, 1996: 388; Malkki, 1995), can here also exclude such groups from certain forms of 'evidence'.

Charities like Medical Justice have to adapt their processes to account for this and other factors, as Allie explains, "as a small organisation with limited resources, we can't do medical-legal reports for everyone who might benefit." People are prioritised not just in terms of the severity or apparent medical evidence of the trauma they have been through, but depending on their countries of origin, the credibility of their claims (attempts to secure release from detention often become blurred with wider asylum claims through this process), and available resources (most MJ reports are compiled by volunteer clinicians in their spare time). MJ are operating here within a wider asylum system where, as Tobias Kelly argues, "most cases fall [i.e. legally fail] on issues of credibility. Put simply, torture survivors are not believed" (2011: 47). This disbelief can extend to NGO clinicians themselves, with the 'credibility' of a particular case marking the practitioners who make them (and vice versa), against a back-drop of wider disavowal. As Alli explains:

Say, 10 years ago when Medical Justice started out, a doctor could go up to Yarlswood [an IRC for Women in Bedford, since closed], do three or four medical-legal reports in a day, write them up, so they would be three or four pages, and send them in.

Now, there's a lot pushback on who can be qualified enough - so if you have a junior doctor filling in a medical-legal report, then the Courts can push back and say, well that person doesn't have the adequate clinical history, or background, or understanding in order to make those assessments. And the Home Office can offer up their own medical-legal expert who has higher qualifications, and so that might undermine your evidence. [They sometimes say] 'well this person is a GP they can't possibly assess whether the person has PTSD', even though that is what GPs do as their bread and butter.

So we've had to, over the years, increase the threshold of which volunteers we could take on.

> It's a legal arms race, a clinical arms race - whose evidence is evidence that's good enough?

Despite the sharpness of the 'arms race' metaphor, credibility operates here at the level of uncertainty, (Kelly, 2011: 65) calling into question the knowledge of others. But 'unknowing' can also buttress credibility by pre-emptively undermining accusations of bias through a kind of professional linguistic uncertainty in key reports, with practitioners at pains to state what they *cannot* know, but can try to extrapolate. Multiple other MJ volunteers and clinicians working in the sector that I spoke to over the year highlighted this point: that they had to essentially perform an unbiased 'detachment' from the people they assessed, and emphasise the limits of their knowledge, partly because they knew that their voluntary commitment and association with key NGOs marked them as already questionable in terms of 'credibility'. Here we see how 'knowledge' of trauma and harm can become tinged with the potential of 'uncertainty', as medical and NGO workers come to worry about their own reputations if found to be advocating for someone who is deemed 'not credible'.

Ambiguous recognition

Medical Justice won a key 'battle' in the 'arms race' described by Alli in 2017, when they successfully challenged one of the most contested parts of the new AAR policy: that it had adopted the UNCAT definition of torture, as limited to actions taken by state agents (Medical Justice & Ors v SSHD [2017] 2461). The experience of the seven formerly detained people who brought this legal challenge alongside Medical Justice demonstrated the limits of such a definition, as it included: victims of sexual and physical abuse, trafficking, homophobic attacks, abuse by a loan shark, and one man who had been kidnapped and tortured by the Taliban. That none of these involved a clear 'state', shows the power involved in drawing upon bounded ideas of 'stateness' or 'statelessness', as we saw in the previous chapter. In a slight irony, the successful legal fight to widen the AAR definition of torture beyond 'state actors' followed moves by charities including Medical Justice to frame detention (and by proxy, the British state) itself as tortuous, through policy documents, media and publicity. A Medical Justice report called *"The Second Torture"* from 2012 highlights how this is a common framing for many people inside, particularly torture survivors. The report quotes several:

- "The detention centre was the second torture that I had… the first was in DRC and was physical, the second one was psychological"

- "My time in detention was a nightmare…I found myself having the worst flash backs [of my time in] prison in Cameroon…It was the same event repeating itself twice in detention…I am traumatised…When I see uniformed people I get so frightened. My health is getting worse. My time in detention is something I won't wish my enemy to experience. The whole atmosphere is one of panic."

- 'I was so depressed in detention…it reminded me of torture in Cameroon, they beat me and caused nerve injury to me.' 'I am traumatized from torture from my country and now feel I am being punished again …' (Medical Justice, 2012).

Legal, medical and political understandings of 'harm' are blurred in such narratives, which themselves emerge from intimate moments of heightened, often traumatic medical assessment. Alli was clear about the toll such interactions can take:

> I'd say on average it will take 2 or 3 hours to do a medical-legal assessment. It's quite a traumatic process for the person involved of course, because they have to go through what has happened to them. And we do the best we can to mitigate the negative impacts and the doctors will not push for a person to go into their full history if they seem uncomfortable doing that – they might get part of the history from other documentation. It's one of those things, where something extremely traumatic has happened to you, and you've had to flee your country and you come somewhere seeking refuge - your story becomes a bargaining chip.

Recognition of torture inside detention, even in an expansive definition that allows for critiques of the institution, or awareness of the re-traumatising possibilities of recounting, still often ends up orientated towards documentation of trauma over 'healing' or 'recovery'. Contestations over harm tend here towards processes of discernment and evidence-gathering which may be working towards a release, but still engage in weighing the value of a person's 'story' within established modes of medical recognition. This is compounded by the way in which specific ways of recognising trauma, such as a PTSD diagnosis, ideally rely on longer-term assessment and relationships of trust. That this is lacking or impossible through intermittent voluntary visits to detention becomes another way for the Home Office to cast doubt or question such assessments: how reliable can a diagnosis be when it

emerges from such partial interactions? Limits of recognition create limits of what 'harm' is possible to acknowledge. Even when terminological legal definitions are expanded in order to try and include more people, the process of 'evidencing' such harms is contained by the material and temporal limits of detention. This overlaps with the temporal tensions of evidencing past (medical) harms and future (legal) risk, within systems of refugee law that are inherently future orientated, whilst making such 'evidence' meaningful in the present. Securing physical 'release' thus becomes tied to particularly narrow forms of painstaking recounting and legal notions of 'risk', dislodged from healing or any therapeutic arc that may imply 'release' in other ways.

In such a context, strategic ambiguity can also occasionally be used to shore up 'expertise', as Alli explains towards the end of her description of conducting a medical-legal report:

> After the conclusion the doctor may take some photographs, though I think people are generally moving away from that at the moment, because it's actually more impactful for it just to be the doctor's assessment. If the doctor says 'they have a scar, the scar was consistent with their account of how they got the scar`, If they would then attach a photograph - and scars don't always photograph very well, they might look much more dramatic to the human eye - then you submit it, then you're kind of inviting the judge and others to make their own assessment, because then they'll look at the scar and go 'well, it doesn't look that bad does it?' and may that just be because it didn't translate very well to the photography, or it may just be that they don't have the clinical competencies or experience to assess that, but if you attach a photograph you are inviting the subjective scrutiny of the reader.

Here, different forms of knowledge and expertise are unsettled by each other – the judge may act as a doctor, the doctor must think like a judge, but neither can really admit to doing so (instead, counterclaims are made that the other has overstepped their role), for that would name a dynamic that problematizes the assumed 'neutrality' and expertise of disaggregated roles. The apparent 'reality' of a photo can be less reliable than an expert assurance, but the 'expert' themselves may also be called into question, neither is reliable.

To 'prove' and 'evidence' vulnerability is again collective and contested. Accusations of personal 'credibility' haunt this process, and the 'unknown' of the other's experience creates complex forms of recognition, or its absence. As Alli mentions, 'vulnerability' itself remains indistinct through all this:

I had a conversation with the independent Chief Inspector of the Board of Immigration the other day, and he said he did an inspection of how the Home Office understands and incorporates notions of vulnerability across the board, not just in detention, and his conclusion was that they just don't understand what vulnerability is.

How can you 'evidence' vulnerability to a system that doesn't understand it? And how might the systems that assess what is 'vulnerable' be creating their own forms of harm and exclusion? Such questions are not limited to the 'inside' of detention, and notions of vulnerability and harm can pull people towards the orbit of the IRC, as much as get them out.

Docs Not Cops

It's been a few months now since the first Docs Not Cops Glasgow meeting. Forty or so people sat in a circle in a cold warehouse community space, many of them junior doctors, nurses, retired medics and NGO workers, with a few people in the asylum system also in attendance. I'd done bits of childcare at meetings since then, looking after kids in an upstairs room with a floor covered in glitter, crushed felt-tips and half-finished drawings. I'd sat in on some sessions too, taking minutes or offering ideas as we talked through the nuts and bolts of WhatsApp groups, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, campaigns and public events. The group had coalesced since the first meeting into a regular 15-20 people, almost all young workers in the NHS, who would meet regularly to chat over crisps and humus about how to push back against border enforcement in healthcare, and how to work out what forms this was taking in Scotland.

It was partly this that led me to visit Birmingham, to see an old friend's sister, Sian, who was heavily involved in the Docs Not Cops group in the city, and also a doctor herself. After staying a night at Sian's house, we walked together to the anti-racist history event I describe in the final chapter of this thesis. We talked about her experiences as a doctor, and in setting up the group in Birmingham, along with catching up about mutual friends, music and other bits - me jotting notes on my IPhone as we go. Sian walks and talks with speed and confidence, as we pace for nearly an hour through suburbs, green space, industrial areas, backstreets and, eventually, the city centre. As she tells me, Sian initially kept her political and healthcare work slightly distinct:

It started off as two separate things for me – migrant solidarity and working as a doctor – I was doing both but not together. Then, with the hostile environment policies, the two came together much more.

Four years ago, I did some research whilst working at a General Practice, this was in an area that was probably 80% not-white, very diverse. I met a lady who was heavily pregnant, seeking asylum – she didn't realise she was entitled to care. She was very paranoid, saving up her weekly allowance, wasn't eating [for fear of being later charged for the birth / care] – she was wearing her old clothes, clothes that were not for a pregnant woman. It was horrific.

I think that was the catalyst, I remember thinking – 'Christ this is brutal'.

Such experiences of withheld care and proximity to a kind of gradually mounting 'vulnerability' were common amongst campaigners I met from such groups. I asked Sian next about the early days of Birmingham Docs Not Cops: how it came together, what the group had been doing since?

Well, each Docs Not Cops group seems a bit different - the London group is more campaign-focused, I'm not as sure about the others – Brighton has the clinic with Doctors of the World. For us, it has ended up being focused on lots more individual cases.

We've done quite a bit with the Doctors of the World's 'Safer Surgeries' campaign, getting practices to agree to a set of principles that make them safe to use for migrants.

You see, everyone is entitled to free primary care but it rarely happens, so we get the surgeries to agree to things like: receptionists not ask for ID, GPs won't ask for ID.

Sian goes on to tell me that a lot of the early formations of the Birmingham group were "through friends of friends," along with public events, as was the case in Glasgow. Similarly, individual cases often come through a loose and shifting network of friends and other campaigners. Sian moves to talking about a recent situation where this happened, a topic we've both been expecting to discuss, but perhaps holding back from, as it still feels painful:

Like, we first heard about Nasar's situation from Unity – from you! Laura contacted me at the same time. Laura, you, me, Lila, Sarah [from Doctors of the World in Birmingham] – all getting in touch with each other.

When you got in touch, it was the 21st December I think – do you remember? I was in St Lucia, visiting an old family friend. It's a different time zone, it was very difficult to coordinate. I was texting Sarah quite a lot. I've seen other situations that were similar, but nothing as crazy as that – the threat of discharge, the amount and way they presented the bill. I was very shocked, and sadly I have to say it's uncommon for me to be shocked, but I was shocked.

I came back on the 23rd and went straight to the hospital with Sarah – she'd met the brother but not Nasar himself, we had a WhatsApp group for people on the case.

It all came to our attention because of his cousin, the one [that you know in Glasgow] – but a lot of people wouldn't have anyone to contact. I think about that a lot, about the people who wouldn't have anyone to turn to.

That first day, we went and introduced ourselves to the nursing team at his hospital – they were taking him off medication, weening him off in preparation for the discharge. We introduced ourselves as being from Doctors of the World and Docs Not Cops, and tried to not be confrontational – 'we're trying to best inform you so you can provide the best care.'

They were slightly hostile: 'who are these people coming in and telling us how to do our jobs?'

But I think they were also probably quite relieved: no one goes into healthcare to present someone with a £40,000 bill and then leave them to die.

After a bit of effort, they reinstated his care.

We gave them no option basically: 'We're not sure if you are aware, but this is illegal – you can't withhold care.'

It's tragic, he presented way too late - he was put off accessing primary care, he was so worried – but if he'd accessed a year earlier it would have been very different.

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Nasar Khan died on Thursday 14th February, 2019, after being moved from the hospital Sian visited to a nearby hospice. A widely circulated camera-phone video from the week before his death showed Nasar's wife and young sons hugging him in an emotional reunion at the hospital after they managed to secure 'fast-track' visiting visas to travel from Pakistan, largely thanks to the efforts of groups like Docs Not Cops, Doctors of the World, Unity Centre and Nasar's family and friends. This followed a substantial media response to his situation across Britain and Pakistan, focused on how he had been told by consultant doctors at the Hospital he was admitted to in Birmingham that he was ineligible for a heart transplant, before being presented with a bill for over £32,000 for the care he was receiving. As Elizabeth Bates, one of the doctors from Doctors of the World that supported Nasar, wrote in a piece for the Metro newspaper (Bates, 2019):

His relatives in Birmingham contacted me the week before Christmas in a state of desperation. They had been told that Nasar was ineligible for the heart transplant required to save his life. The hospital explained that without indefinite leave to

remain in the UK (which would mean securing representation and a lengthy legal application), he couldn't be considered a candidate for the operation. […]

As I worked with the doctors caring for Nasar to ensure that he was comfortable, I reflected on this heartbreaking situation – a man who will not reach 40, dying amid arguments around eligibility for treatment and healthcare costs. It might have been avoided. […]

Nasar didn't register with a GP until after he had suffered heart failure. This is common among the patients that Doctors of the World sees at our London clinic. Many are turned away by GP reception staff who ask for documentation they cannot provide even though to insist upon this contravenes NHS England guidance. Others fear that their doctor's surgery will report them to the authorities. Most do not even know that consulting with a GP is their right, afforded to everyone living in the country. […]

I see all too frequently how healthcare and immigration control clash in our hospitals, how bureaucratic identity checks delay appointments and risk racial profiling in our waiting rooms.

Nasar's story shows, in a parallel way to the formal networks for assessing 'vulnerability' and 'risk' within detention, how groups of campaigners, public sector workers, friends and family can mobilise to try and secure care for someone. It also shows, in a brutal way, how this may come too late to save someone's life. Having done small bits of information sharing and support in the initial stages of hearing about Nasar's case (without my academic hat on, and to a far smaller degree than the several key people who actually advocated for him over the subsequent months) I also, like Sian, found myself thinking a lot "about the people who wouldn't have anyone to turn to." This is a lack of recognition in a broader sense, one complicated by the ways in which medical care has become tied for many to the surveillance and power of the Home Office. For many, the fear and confusion around healthcare provision when 'detainable' or with precarious status puts them at considerable risk in terms of physical illness, stress and mental ill-health. Whilst those inside detention must fit into categories of vulnerability that get them 'out', many outside try to evade any such 'caring' scrutiny for fear of being sent 'inside', or removed.

Implicit in all this was the argument that the Home Office's 'hostile environment' policies had condemned someone to an early, costly death on the basis of their immigration status. Healthcare becomes a realm of bordering and financialization that works against any supposed aims of care and recovery, producing differentiated forms of 'vulnerability' in its

absence but also after people do access medical help, as in the way Nasar was initially pegged to be 'taken off medication' before Sian and others argued for the reinstatement of his care. Though Nasar was not detained, his story spoke in various ways to people I met inside, who had to engage with a medical system that was complexly interwoven with immigration and asylum, producing forms of vulnerability as much as 'identifying' them. Nasar's friends, family and supporters managed to put forward a narrative about the Home Office's culpability for his extreme vulnerability, with Sian telling me that Nasar himself was keen to "publicise what had happened, to prevent it happening to others."

Whereas Dr Dean had become accustomed to clinical healthcare in a carceral setting, groups like Docs Not Cops attempted to push back against forms of policing and carcerality in the NHS, whilst naming such processes as harmful in themselves. In such contexts, care itself becomes a point of contestation – between 'slightly hostile' in-house staff, varied NGO representatives, campaigners and friends. Becoming 'vulnerable' in the 'right way' here, in both life and death, can sometimes involve resisting the ways in which the state produces 'vulnerability' through its systems of differentiation and exclusion, at the same time as trying to gain purchase within such procedures where useful. Nasar's story, despite its tragic conclusion, showed multiple moments of shared vulnerability in the Butlerian (2006) sense: rallying around him, exposing the structural conditions that led to his situation, grieving his loss in a quiet rejection of dominant modes of 'greivability', opening up a space for resistance and mutuality. In comparison with the narrowing and codified forms of 'vulnerability' we find in Dr Dean's surgery, groups like Docs Not Cops consider shared, racialized, and gendered vulnerabilities within their social and material conditions, whilst still engaging strategically with institutional categories of 'vulnerability' where necessary.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered how 'vulnerability' and 'harm' are contested within detention, arguing that relational networks amongst staff and healthcare professionals inside the IRC create shifting and divergent contexts for drawing upon such terms. Criticisms of 'harm' within or through detention are often met by defences of the 'caring' and 'custodial' intentions of those who work inside. Meanwhile, NGOs such as Medical Justice have to

navigate such contexts with a delicate and sometimes fraught understanding of credibility, expertise and uncertainty, disputing key terms in both legal and everyday ways, and engaging with established procedures in strategically ambiguous ways. Within these attempts to advocate on medical grounds for another's 'vulnerability', recent policy shifts towards demonstrating 'Adults at Risk' (and to broadly seeing vulnerability through the lens of risk) have involved a 'clinical arms race' whereby greater and more substantial evidence is required to argue that a person is individually 'at risk' but not publically 'a risk'. Contestations over these terms are not mere 'debates' then, but have intimate and far reaching effects on people's health, relationships and lives.

As Jackson articulated in the preceding chapter, to have oneself 'unlocked' by Dr Dean, to be constituted as vulnerable enough to be released, can mean losing parts of oneself that may be constituted within less medicalised forms of recognition. As Judith Butler argues, "the bind of radically inadequate care consists of this, namely, that attachment is crucial to survival and that, when attachment takes place, it does so in relation to persons and institutional conditions that may well be violent, impoverishing, and inadequate" (2006: 45). To name these institutional conditions as harmful risks distancing oneself from other useful or desirable forms of medicalised 'harm' and 'vulnerability' as they emerge within such institutions, which by definition place harm 'outside' the IRC walls. Such distancing takes place within a wider history and context of British exceptionalism and racism where "torture is reserved for acts carried out in other places by other people" (Kelly, 2011: 145), and in practice means trying to fit within the clearly gendered and paternalistic forms of care practiced by figures such as Dr Dean. It's no accident that Dean used the example of saving people from "an abusive relationship" when asked about the 'harms' of detention for instance, in marked opposition to scholars like Victoria Canning, who posit the immigration system itself as structured by gendered and racialized forms of 'corrosive' and 'coercive' control akin to abuse (2020: 261).

Finally, as we see in Nasar's case and his experience of fear around the hostile environment and withheld care after accessing it, many people in the asylum and immigration system in Britain experience healthcare as a space of bordering, exclusion and risk itself. Vulnerability is produced in a more diffuse way here, in the threat of a 'carceral care' that people worry could leave them detained, removed or in debt. Nasar's invisibilised vulnerabilities are

mirrored by the countless people who move through detention and its shadow without ever having their 'vulnerabilities' noticed or 'evidenced', let alone met with care and support. And yet Nasar was 'held' at the end of his life, with grief, anger and love, by family, friends and people who had rallied to push back against the way he was being treated. This too, is mirrored inside detention, in the multiple forms of intimate and caring relatedness that take place between people beyond the procedures analysed in this paragraph. These are often anchored on prosaic everyday practices: swapping clothes, giving tips about lawyers, sharing a favourite comedy DVD, spotting weights at the gym, translating letters, lending your last phone credit to the person who can't get hold of their child, finding an extra 20p for a coffee in the visiting room. People hold onto these shared vulnerabilities in ways that echo Butler's questions around the possibility of vulnerability *as* resistance, as she asks: "does resistance require overcoming vulnerability? Or do we mobilize our vulnerability?" (2016: 16) through acts of mutual interdependence, assembling and support. But they also hold onto the possibility of release and recognition through codified forms of 'radically inadequate care', often drawing on both in a pragmatic friction.

Key to all this, and as will be examined more in the conclusion of this thesis, are questions of temporality. As Jessica Cooper argues in her ethnography of Californian mental health courts: *"It never ends.* The interminability of state intervention for those people whom the state has identified as criminals mocks the broader decline of publicly available social and medical services" (2017: 124). Here, it is detention itself that 'never ends', in its indefiniteness, impacting everything from Dean's 'benign' prescriptions and worries about how release might interrupt treatment, to how such temporal ambiguity impacts possibilities for recognition, trust and recovery. Waiting, in Veena Das' (2007) sense of being attentive and respectful to another, is complicated by the temporal limits of detention, and as Cooper argues, "if temporality, as time and its pacing, illuminated moments of care, it is also a technology of punishment over which the state and its subjects fight" (2017: 126). This is also animated by critiques and defences of privatisation with Medical staff like Dr Dean existing in a complex relation to 'public service', as a private health provider sub-contracted through a Home Office sub-contractor. Such distinctions undergirded the criticisms of detention healthcare from NGO and NHS-linked groups such as medical Justice and Docs Not Cops, with struggles over harm and vulnerability linking into wider debates

about the free, public provision of NHS care. As argued in the introduction, this connects to historic struggles over citizenship, health and resource allocation during the end of colonial rule, with Jordanna Bailkin arguing that "the empire's final gasp could be said to take place in the domain of welfare" (2012: 3). Everyday decisions about harm and vulnerability take place within such complex racialized and gendered histories of who 'deserves' healthcare, and who is pathologized as an object to be refused or removed. Within such debates, people may also turn away from ideas of vulnerability and harm, and try and constitute themselves in different terms. A key way of doing this for many people I met was through ideas of 'work', and the next chapter moves to consider how 'detainable' people engage with different forms of work, production and reproduction, or what it might mean to, as one group put it: "step off this production line."

Chapter 6 - 'Stepping off this production line': Work at the Edge of Production

"Stepping off this production line"

Towards the start of my fieldwork I attended a public meeting about colonialism and the hostile environment, held in a labyrinth office block turned 'African Arts Centre', not far from Glasgow's famous Govan shipyard. A group of us shared instant coffee and triangular sandwiches as we talked through the particular iterations of racialized immigration control we were seeing taking hold at that moment, with new laws particularly targeting access to housing, education, public life, and work. At one point a friend who was involved with setting up the Ubuntu women's shelter project in the city read a statement. The words stuck with me throughout the year, and still do, particularly one section where the group explained their understanding of the system we were up against:

> Colonisation hardwired globally extended production lines that exist today in the guise of the hostile environment. The hostile environment is not complicated, just a few amendments to immigration law with one aim - the extraction of maximum economic value from the most vulnerable amongst us. This scheme was piloted under Labour and refined under the Conservatives. The extraction envisioned is simple but comprehensive: starting from the pharmaceutical companies that profit from over medicating asylum seekers for depression, to the Visa Aspen Cards [people use on Asylum Support], to the private detention centres and private charter flights. Each point an extraction point.

> You don't have to dig deep to see the continuities between colonisation and the hostile environment. British architecture is famous, things are built to last, and the production lines set down over centuries continue to extract value and sustain this white economic and political structure. The architecture is strong, whiteness persists.

> Ubuntu is us stepping off this production line.

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This chapter interrogates what it means to 'step off this production line' in an expanded way, drawing on the power and insight of this metaphor, but also its ambiguity. Whilst in the preceding two chapters I analysed how people engage with forms of 'carceral care' and opaque 'state' logic whilst navigating the spaces of 'detainability' seen in Chapters 1-3, here

I consider 'work' as both a conceptual and physical site of 'detanability', with friendship and care continuing to play a key role. Who is being produced, and who is doing the production? What does it mean to 'step off' a system of extraction, or a history 'built to last'? How do people understand their own production, along with their status as 'productive', or 'non-productive'? What can an understanding of the 'edges' of production tell us about contemporary 'communities of value' (Anderson, 2013)? Or in Gargi Bhattacharyya's expansive framing: "How is it that different forms of human activity lead to differentiated statuses" (2018: 12)?

People's attempts to make sense of that key site of human activity, work, can help expand and illuminate the theories of 'racial capitalism' and 'social reproduction' that Bhattacharyya and others have explored, showing the everyday ways in which being at what she frames as the 'edge space' of capital and production can take multiple, shifting forms. This 'spatial' element of working through 'detainability' will be a key thread through the chapter, with Bhattacharyya reminding us that "capital works to segment spaces and populations, relegating some to the status of outside" (2018: 166). For our purposes in the ethnography that follows, the key 'outside' of production is the 'inside' of detention, a 'holding space' that percolates in complex ways beyond the physical walls of a given IRC. As Agier argues: "The border is everywhere that an undesirable is identified and must be kept apart, 'detained' and then 'expelled'. The space that connects the undesirable individual with the border is the camp in the form of airlock or sorting centre" (Agier, 2011: 50; see Agier, 2016). Detention is a space that holds 'economic migrants' deemed not bring enough 'value' alongside those attempting to prove their connection to the 'values' projected by the nation, against a long history of punishing both 'vagrancy' and 'immobility' amongst an "underserving poor" that does not map neatly onto formal citizenship (Anderson, 2013: 5-10). Exclusion from formal work also raises questions of 'reproduction': how do people sustain themselves and others at the 'edges' of formal 'productivity', and whilst caring labour is already so under-valued?

This chapter will thus briefly overview some theories around racial capitalism and social reproduction, before exploring the ethnographic insights of people I worked with, forming a dialogue between the two. My argument then runs as follows, firstly, detention is a key bordering technique within contemporary formations of racial capitalism in Britain. It serves

a disciplinary function, but also a productive one: creating categories of people from whom the full status of 'workers' s withheld and who find themselves 'extracted' from (in Ubuntu's words) as mere components of a profit-based system that pays the companies holding them per person, per night. Secondly, this strange irony of being 'produced' as 'unproductive' is not lost on those inside, who use multiple strategies to try to understand and navigate being contained within such a legal, social and economic 'holding space'. This includes everyday contestations over what counts as 'work' and 'non-work', mapping onto (and sometimes utilising) existing patterns of racialized and gendered differentiation. Control over one's time is key to survival, with people acutely aware of their bodily and temporal limits. People often push back against their exclusion from work through ideas of their own 'productivity' and work ethic, but also through holding onto practices and forms of care that operate alongside but are not fully encompassed by this system, or capital more generally. For people at the 'edge', recognition as productive can be deeply desirable, but life necessarily exceeds capitalism, particularly when considering the 'reproductive' activities of those deemed 'non-productive'. Here, "the labour of remaking human beings against the battering of racial capitalism takes place for the far more usual reasons of love, care, community, survival" (Bhattacharyya, 2018: 44). Being 'alongside' or at the 'edge' of such systems is clearly not an uncomplicatedly 'positive' thing, however, for such limits are also the space of disposability, abandonment and death. This tension, and the ways people navigate the very real forms of exclusion and control that mediate it, is at the heart of this chapter. Firstly though, it is useful to briefly unpack two key ideas for the discussion that follows - racial capitalism and social reproduction – to help consider what it might mean to be 'outside' a system of production, but 'inside' its punitive control.

Racial Capitalism, Social Reproduction

I draw on Bhattacharyya's rich and expansive overview, *Rethinking Racial Capitalism: Questions of Reproduction and Survival* (2018) to help frame this chapter, as it lets us link together a wealth of writing on capitalism, 'race' and reproduction to understand questions of how 'productivity' (and its inverse) are produced, and the histories of labour control that undergird spaces like detention. Theories of racial capitalism emerge from the black radical and Marxist tradition, with Cedric Robinson's foundational *Black Marxism* (1983) work

outlining a history of how racialized divisions have been key to emerging forms of capitalism since its inception. Robinson traces how black thinkers necessarily theorised and organised beyond any reductive notions of a bounded, homogenous proletariat, with the role of migrant and 'peasant' labour playing a key part in his account. As he argues, "the tendency of European civilization through capitalism was [..] not to homogenize but to differentiate - to exaggerate regional, subcultural, and dialectical differences into 'racial' ones" (Robinson, 1983: 26), shoring up wealth and control for dominant elites through the forms of nationalism, slavery, violence, imperialism, and genocide that Ubuntu mention in the opening vignette of this chapter. Bhattacharyya outlines how such capitalist processes continue to create "the edge-populations that serve as the other and limit of the working class" (2018: 5). Crucially though, while in previous eras such 'edge-populations' had been viewed in both Marxist and development discourses as a kind of 'proletariat in waiting', such arguments have today been abandoned in favour of narratives of scarcity and security: "the pretence that everyone in the world will enter the industrial working class eventually is rarely repeated in our time" (Bhattacharyya, 2018: 23). Throughout this important context for the contestations over 'productivity' which follow, racialised differentiation becomes centred on boundaries of work and non-work, human and non-human, and often, "the 'natural' or the not(yet)productive" (Bhattacharyya, 2018: 54). In Marxist terminology this is "proletarianisation as a process" then, but a partial or reversible (deproletarianisation) process, imposed through force. Despite such fluctuations this continues to produce categories of 'race' as timeless, bodily and biological that interlink with long histories of depictions of the 'idle' and 'inhuman' other (Bhattacharyya, 2018: 166).

Bhattacharyya's analysis is acutely aware of Achile Mbembe's reading of Agamben and Foucault, which posits contemporary colonial spaces as 'death-worlds' where "vast populations are subjected to living conditions that confer upon them the status of the living dead" (Mbembe, 2019: 89). Such a logic extends, we could argue, following Nadine El-Enany, "inside Britain's borders," where, "the racialized poor are differentially yet systematically vulnerable to being marginalised, controlled, policed, deported and killed" (2020: 6; channelling Gilmore, 2002). Yet, in being attentive to the lives of those within this system, and the shifting nature of it, Bhattacharyya avoids any reductive, flattening implication of phrases such as 'bare life' and 'surplus population', which she argues "can

represent an internalisation of the logic of usefulness and of disposability" (2018: 34). Here, while theories of the necropolitical 'living dead' and 'biopolitical' management of populations and life can be useful to think with, we find that such formulations begin "with the assumption that there is no space beyond the logic of capitalist production", missing the porosity of even the most punitive spaces of control, and their varying local iterations (Bhattacharyya, 2018: 34). As Ubuntu's statement makes clear, and as we'll see in the ethnography that follows, it is important (and possible) to be alive to the dehumanising and structuring conditions that inform experiences of such 'edges' and 'extractions', without replicating them discursively.

Questions around the 'outside' or 'back stage' of capital and accumulation are a central feature of another key theoretical strand Bhattacharyya overviews in her book: social reproduction theory. Here, the path-breaking work of feminist scholars like Maria Mies (1986) and Silvia Federici (2004) has fed contemporary analysis of "the work of producing labour power and life" (Dowling, 2016: 453), or how feminised, reproductive labour is integral to the extraction of surplus value from waged, historically masculine workers. Federici's historical work shows how the "accumulation of differences and divisions within the working class" through the development of capitalism involved the forcible expulsion of women from 'productive' forms of labour. This links to contemporary ways in which "poverty, deservingness and citizenship are highly gendered" structurally excluding women or relegating them to narratives of the 'trafficking victim', participant in 'sham marriage' or single mother with a so-called 'anchor baby' (Anderson, 2013: 7, 62). Being deemed an economic 'drain' but restricted from working maps across both 'failed' and 'non' citizens here, in highly gendered and racialized ways, yet for many people I met the response to this was to rearticulate their commitment to the very same narratives of migrants' economic 'value' and shared 'values'. It is for this ethnographic reason that, despite my own concerns about whether the language of 'reproduction' and 'labour' fully describes the practices in the chapter that follows, that I lay out the emic theories of 'work' and 'non-work' utilised by the people I met.

In doing so I still wish to push back against theories of production and social reproduction that focus more narrowly on 'reproductive' labour as always geared towards the

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'productive' worker, from an assumed lack of life 'outside' capital. It is possible to be open to the ways in which ideas of 'work' and 'non-work' are important to people, whilst still being attentive to how the multiple forms of life they build and maintain can't be folded into totalising accounts of capitalist capture. As Emma Dowling argues:

> Organising on the terrain of social reproduction makes [resistance to capitalism] possible because social reproduction has two dimensions. On the one hand social reproduction pertains to the reproduction of labour power for capitalist exploitation. On the other hand, life is not reducible solely to capitalist command, nor are subjectivities and relationships ever entirely captured and shaped by capital […] In the struggle over social reproduction, it is this contradiction between these two dimensions – of reproducing labour power for capital versus reproducing life itself – that helps to shed light on the possibilities of constructing alternatives. (2016: 454)

As such a nuanced theory shows, stepping off and stepping on different 'lines' of racialized and gendered production can take varying forms, always interlinked with questions of reproduction, 'non-work' and relationality. This operates in particular ways, as we will see, within the heavily racialized and surveiled forms of work people enter after getting the legal right to work. But I turn first to ideas of 'work' within the IRC, where so-called 'paid activities' can involve questions of coercion, remuneration, relatedness and colonial history.

Working inside

> The phone sounds clear this time. Alek has finally been released from Dungavel, with its patchy signal and constant interruptions. There's a halted, strained quality to our chat though – he's keen to talk but clearly frustrated at the continual blockages and difficulties of life after release, always aware that any slip-up or new development could see him detained again. Alek may be living back at home in Scotland now, but so far he has not been able to get an address near to his kids and ex-partner: the disconnections persists. He's struggling to find work or rebuild his life and is clearly still angry about his detention and the circumstances that led up to it, as he tells me:

> > You know my detention all started because we had to work against our will? So I ran away from that. Then I was detained in Dungavel, and there was lots of Russians and Ukrainians [like Alek, but with connections to the people who had trafficked him], and because I was trafficked and working against my will,

I didn't want to go back to those people – the Ukrainian mafia – they treated us like slaves. But I was locked in there with them.

I was working in Dungavel all through my time inside, [and when we met], I was this and that. I had a manager asking me to clean every wall, because it's in a disgusting condition. And every week we would clean all the rooms.

It was paid, a pound an hour. But the cleaners who work in there - the women, the housekeepers - they get £10-15 an hour, but we get £1. But obviously with a team we can do that quickly, and we use the pound and go a get a coffee. It's something to do.

But at end of the day, they never put these things in a monthly report, they never say to the caseworker – see this guy, he's a really hard worker, the kitchen, the corridors are amazing, spotless. But none of it makes it in.

So now I have no money, no income – I'm just keeping in touch [with my family] over the phone.

I got kids, I need to try and support my kids and myself. That's life you know. I haven't got money to go jump on the bus.

I'll be honest, it has been difficult. I told my daughter I had been working, but when she found out I was detained … she is still not talking to me. And she hates her mother now for that [for not telling her the truth either]. And with my current girlfriend, after months and months pass, people start giving up.

They thought I would never get out. I was only talking to my girlfriend once a week in the end, there was nothing to talk about, they just have different lives, you know.

Because I was reading about all these things a lot. You know they [the Home Office] were calculating how much in a year they were spending on detainees – and they know, they are not telling these things to people, but it costs three times more to keep person in detention, it would be three x cheaper to give people a £120 a fortnight and a temporary house, than for detention. It costs the government three times more. They calculate all these things, and the numbers are catastrophic. It's a nightmare.

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Forced Labour

Detention is the only place that a large number of people in the UK asylum and immigration system can legally work. For many, like Alek, this a galling fact, considering the profits being

made, general difficulties in accessing work, and histories of being criminalised for working 'illegally' or at the mercy of forms of forced work. It also raised a number of questions for him: Why am I paid so little? How can I provide for my family? What is the logic of this expensive system? What counts as 'forced' labour? How do I become seen as 'hard working'? Alek's experience of trafficking and forced labour was not accepted as such by the same authorities who paid him £1 an hour to work in the IRC, so he could not use it as a grounds for a release. Officially, someone who has been a 'victim of modern slavery and/or trafficking' will be entered into what is called the 'National Referral Mechanism' (NRM), "a framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support" (Home Office, 2020b). As the Home Office put it, "Modern slavery is a complex crime and may involve multiple forms of exploitation," including, "human trafficking, slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour" and this is supposed to be treated as a barrier to detention (Home Office, 2020b).

Yet, similarly to the limited forms of medical recognition in the previous chapter, I met a large number of people inside detention who had been rejected by the NRM system, or who had not been identified yet, despite articulating experiences of trafficking and forced labour. These included a young Vietnamese man who the Home Office refused to believe was under 18, had been trafficked, or was at continued risk of retribution from the men he'd escaped, despite his experiences fitting exactly with a pattern of people exploited by drug operations using trafficked Vietnamese minors. Sometimes people in such situations have been prosecuted under anti-drug laws (see Bulman, 2019; Taylor, 2019), criminalised as 'perpetrators', by activities they saw themselves as 'victims' of. Alek's own set of circumstances was complex, involving him being targeted through the years for working 'illegally' on the terms of his captors (as trafficked forced labour), 'illegally' on his own terms (without proper documentation), 'semi-legally' (without appropriate tax and paperwork), as well as 'legally', all to try and support a family that his working, if discovered, could see him removed away from. His experience of seeing the familial bonds he held dear threatened not just by physical distance, but by financial limitation, was very common, particularly as wages inside the IRC may be good for a 'coffee', but certainly not for supporting a family. Despite this, engaging in 'paid activities' was one of the few ways in which Alek felt able to

assert some agency and skill, to reposition himself within a realm of 'production' that could point towards other desirable forms of status.

Others were more overtly critical of the role of 'paid activities'. Noah, who we first met in Chapter 1 and was detained for some time following a stint on an IPP sentence (examined in Chapter 4) in prison, framed this in terms of demeaning pay and how the very nature of the work being done transported him back to prison, seeming to underline a certain proximity to 'criminality': "It's just like prison work, you know. Kitchen, cleaning work, very basic. The wages, that's the problem. How much is a can of coke? [That's what we get in an hour]." Many people experienced IRC work as arbitrary, unnecessary and 'basic' and felt this in their daily routines and sense of their own body 'losing' its capacity to do 'real' work, with some reflecting on a feeling of stasis in terms of bodily and mental progression, in ways that mirrored their legal and physical limitations. Noah's question – 'How much is a can of coke?' – spoke not only to his clear and unsurprised sense of how little value was placed on an hour of his labour, but also to the length and indeterminacy of his incarceration and to the lack of commodities one could actually purchase with money earnt inside at the IRC 'shop'.

Paid Activities, Unpaid Activities

The Home Office frames work inside detention as 'paid activities' – alongside a wider set of 'entitlements' to "participate in activities to meet, as far as possible, [a detainee's] recreational and intellectual needs and the relief of boredom" (Home Office, 2019b: 5). The latter was the most common explanation I heard for engaging in 'paid activities' in the IRC – which ranged from cleaning, cooking, showing new arrivals around, and library work – as Alek said, "it's something to do". This is supported by the lack of other activities inside the IRCs, which unlike prisons have no obligation "to provide educational or therapeutic boredom-alleviating activities such as arts and crafts, English language classes or training in IT support" (Bales & Mayblin, 2018: 197). However, once I got to know people inside better, many would increasingly offer more complex explanations for working in the IRC, beyond relief from boredom and the meagre extra cash: one man had been detained multiple times but took pride in his job welcoming new arrivals to the centre and showing them around, "No one understands this place like me at this point," he would say, laughing but serious.

Others would hold court in the visiting room about the grinding monotony of kitchen work, with its pre-determined menu of largely frozen items, but explain with gusto how they had managed to convince management to get a particular spice or ingredient in for a special 'cultural food' night, where they were able to demonstrate skills and connections to 'real food' from home. Library work was seen as a particularly relaxed and desirable job, with the possible benefits of access to newer DVDs, books, and time to oneself - several times I spoke to people while they were at work in the library. People thus articulated a range of different explanations for their work-lives inside detention, often both critiquing and finding some use for the 'paid activities' available, whilst often being wary of becoming overly incorporated in an environment they wished to escape.

Other than those who had been chefs (or on one occasion a barber, whose haircuts became very popular), there were few connections made between people's work identities outside the IRC and those inside. More common was a desire to demonstrate a general 'work ethic', particularly for those who had been working 'illegally' before being incarcerated. Questions about work outside were immediately suspicious, to be avoided, and even chatting about professions 'back home' was relatively rare in my experience. As Alek put it, "I told my daughter I was working," when initially detained, and though he couldn't full redress this untruth, an active engagement in IRC work was seen as a signal to family outside of effort to try and shift the situation. Many people also undertook unofficial 'activities' that were not framed as work, particularly informal mental health support and language interpreting. The former was part of wider forms of care and friendship within detention, occasionally recognised in partial ways by officers who would ask people to 'keep an eye on someone' or check in with them, whilst the latter was much more commonly recognised by officers, verbally though never 'on paper' or in official terms. I witnessed countless lawyer's visits and officer-detainee interactions that were mediated by untrained interpreter-detainees, usually because it was 'easier' and less hassle than engaging with the often unreliable phone translation system that was available. Bilingualism in certain languages, particularly Vietnamese and Chinese or 'rarer' languages that were harder to get quick translations for, could become an almost full-time job at certain times, depending on who else was detained. Usually this was just seen as the 'done thing' by those who took on interpreting duties, offered in terms of friendship and conviviality, despite the stresses and difficulties involved.

Such unpaid work is here integral to the functioning of the IRC, yet even less studied than the scant amount of research on 'paid activities' inside detention. Whereas people like Alek hoped accredited work inside detention could feature in his reports and help move towards his release, unpaid and unrecognised labour such as interpreting and mental health support usually came from a sense of shared responsibility, peer pressure or to extend kindnesses and care that had been received oneself.

People inside detention thus often attempted to demonstrate a work ethic which pushed against their detainability in ways that showed an implicit understanding of the link between 'productivity' and 'citizenship', but also engaged in forms of support that were not framed as 'work' despite being commonplace and very useful to the IRC. In a large part this is because such unpaid interpreting and pastoral support was officially 'against the rules', and would be denied by IRC providers who, no doubt, also sometimes encouraged a useful blur between officer and detainee to cultivate 'good' detainable subjects who 'worked together'. But in another sense, informal translation and mental health support were key forms of collective care and 'survival' in Bhattacharyya's terms, not fully folded into either the profiteering 'extract points' of the IRC, or its meagre system of 'paid activities'.

Remuneration

'Paid Activities' were introduced in 2005-06 by Labour Home Office Minister Tony McNulty, who argued at the time that:

> In order to provide opportunities for detainees in removal centres to participate in paid activity, we need to exempt them from the national minimum wage. Detainees may be regarded as "workers" for the purposes of the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 if they perform paid activity of any sort, and would therefore be entitled to receive the national minimum wage. That would not be viable financially, nor reflect the true economic value of the work likely to be carried out, which is likely to be remedial and assistive. (House of Commons, 2005)

But as Isaac Ricca-Richardson and Franck Magennis argue:

> This denial of worker status is wholly divorced from reality. Detained migrants are permitted to work up to 30 hours per week, the equivalent of full time employment. Once they have accepted a role, they are given an 'Employment Job Description', setting out their hours, shift patterns and responsibilities. Indeed, between April

2016 and March 2017, detained migrants carried out 887,073 hours of paid work within IRCs. (2020)

In Scotland specifically, "GEO Group is reported to have saved over £727,000 in less than three years [from 2015-18] by paying Dungavel detainee labour below the minimum wage" (Corporate Watch, 2018a). Numerous researchers have concluded after examining the economics and experiences of work inside UK IRCs that the work done by those detained is "is integral to the running of the detention centres, reducing the need for paid staff who would otherwise fill these positions" (Bales & Mayblin, 2018: 197; see also Miller, 2014; Standoff Films, 2015; Wheelan, 2014). Despite this, recent attempts to litigate in favour of a tiny inflation-linked 'wage rise' for workers inside the IRCs were rebutted in the High Court and Court of Appeal, with the latter judgement referencing the original logic of 'paid activities':

> Parliament intended the paid work regime in IRCs is not to be conducted on the basis of any kind of assessment of, or compensation for, the true *value* of work undertaken, whether from the perspective of the detainee or that of any recipient of the benefit of the work undertaken [...] So far as concerns IRCs, there is no requirement of detainees to work at all. There is no absolute obligation to provide paid work for detainees. (Royal Courts of Justice, 2020, my emphasis)

The courts argued that people in detention are free to choose if they wish to engage in 'paid work' (a slip away from 'activities'?), but that the 'value' of this work is extracted without remuneration, or even assessment - though presumably the IRC providers now factor it into their spreadsheets. Put another way, the problem facing the legal fight for a wage increase inside IRCs was trying to argue for the 'productivity' of workers who are legally denied access to the realm of 'production', and told their labour was merely 'remedial' and yet still not 'financially viable' to be remunerated.

My sense from people I met inside detention was that any attempt to increase wages, widen job options and recognise the 'productivity' of their labour should also be tethered to support for better legal access, increased resources, and help towards their release. They were acutely aware that their labour was in some sense 'reproducing' the detention centre, along with their position in it, and while they questioned the profits being made by the companies in charge, people's priority was to get out. Working within what Bales & Mayblin

rightly characterise as a system of "forced labour, unfreedom and hyper-precarity" (2018:
192) in this instance was specifically linked to the maintenance of the institution people
wanted to escape. People's routine and mental health – "I work because If I'm in my room I
think too much" one man told me – were folded into the maintenance of the IRC, whose
profits and sustainability have become tied to such under-valued forms of labour. The
proposed granting of 'worker status', though clearly desirable and worth fighting for, must
be understood within this context, where people inside increasingly felt that a full
remuneration of their labour would actually mean the collapse of a system 'not financially
viable' without it, as Ricca-Richardson and Magennis (2020) also argue. This is analogous to
the 1970s Marxist feminist call for 'Wages for Housework', central to the development of
social reproduction theory, in that such demands point towards capitalism's reliance on
unpaid 'reproductive' labour, with a knowing sense that a true social 'wage' would topple
the system (see Federici, 1975).

Refusals

Such analyses speak to Ubuntu's statement quoted at the start of this chapter, and to the
critique I've been making throughout of seeing all 'non-work' as either serving capitalism or
awaiting encompassment by the system. In an overt, politicised sense, this also reminds me
of three men I also met in Dungavel, only once. From Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan
respectively, the trio had been detained following targeted racist immigration raids on their
restaurant workplaces. All three refused to engage in what they called the 'rubbish' work of
maintaining the IRC. This was unusual at a time when most people I met were annoyed that
they were not able to do more hours of 'paid activity'. In the middle of a slightly stilted
conversation about an England vs India cricket match, one of the group turned to me and
said:

> You are doing research? I want you to answer me this. Why are we three held here
> like prisoners, simply for wanting to work? You know the history between our
> countries, my relatives worked for the British, in my country. Yet I am held here now.
> I'm a good worker, a strong worker. There are men here who have hit women,
> committed crimes, but they were able to work, because they are from Europe. Not
> us. We have to hide, and now we are here. Why?

My garbled answer failed to account for how the British state's partial incorporation of racialized colonial subjects into its forms of production has consistently involved zones of 'forced labour' such as detention, where people's status as 'productive', 'reproductive' or as a resource to be extracted from and disposed of, can shift.

Contestations over access to the 'community of value' expose the shifting points of composition and differentiation that inform this, along with how people utilise such narratives day-to-day. The trio were not only acutely aware of how "differentiated exclusion from the labour market is a racializing process" in itself (El-Enany, 2020: 24), they are drawing on forms of differentiation too: cantering their historical connection to Britain and distance from (white, European) 'criminals' who have 'hit women'. This interaction also sharply illuminates how detention's disciplinary function, whereby both bosses and the state use the threat of capture and deportation to condition hyper-exploitable classes of people, continually produces categories of work on the edges of 'legality' and 'production'. This is 'inclusive exclusion' in De Genova's terms, where, "if the Border Spectacle supplies a scene of ostensible "exclusion" […], it nonetheless conceals (in plain view, as it were) the public secret of a sustained recruitment of "illegal" migrants as undocumented labour." (2013: 6, see also Bachelet, 2016). Yet, in their refusal to engage in IRC work, and positioning of counter-narratives of connection and responsibility, these men show how 'inclusive exclusion', is again perhaps too strong in assuming the holistic encompassing of capital: their story was about way more than being allowed to work. Similarly, others I'd meet would foreground racialized, classed and gendered versions of themselves that involved concurrent notions of 'productivity' and 'non-productivity' but these usually told far more complex stories than simply an 'exclusion' which always looped back into (partial) 'inclusion': one man was particularly fond of regaling us with a different chapter of Scottish history he had memorized at each visit.

The evocation of national connection and colonial ties complicates Ubuntu's strangely Fordist idea of a 'production line', along with conflicting ideas of 'illegality' and 'Britishness', in that these men felt an injustice in being denied access to realms of 'productivity' that were entangled in colonialism: they wanted to step back on, but on their terms. As Nadine El-Enany argues, "borders, articulated and policed via immigration laws, maintain the global racial order established by colonialism, whereby colonised peoples are dispossessed of land

and resources" (2020: 3) and many people I met inside detention would question histories of colonial extraction, whilst continually striving to access forms of 'productivity' determined by the system. This was again a kind of collective survival that surpassed the purely economic, involving (for some at least) an enactment of justice not available within the existing framework of immigration law: migrant work as reparations (see Achiume, 2019; Gonzalez, 2020). Whereas Alek, racialized as white, but subject to various forms of anti-Eastern European racism, worked inside to pass time and relationally build towards a future release, the trio here rejected the reproductive work of the IRC, invoking a shared history, and present, of colonial labour relations. Unlike Alek, their stay in Dungavel was far shorter, and when they did leave the IRC it was (as far as I could ascertain from asking around, and as is extremely common for people from such 'countries of origin') through a chartered removal flight. 'Detainability' can blur far more quickly into 'deportability' for certain racialized groups then, with 'work' – as a key site where people are targeted on the 'outside' and a space of differentiation even within the IRC - playing a key role throughout.

However, moving outside detention does not necessarily mean an escape from such blurred forms of exploitation and contested 'productivity', nor does it mean leaving the realm of "unfreedom and hyper-precarity" (Bales & Mayblin, 2018: 192) that is so evident within the IRCs.

The Working Day

> It's the first week of January and I'm meeting Adam at our 'usual café', for what has become our regular selection of green teas, technicolour carrot cake and chat. He insists on paying for the teas, I'd got them last time, and he'd had to rush off after twenty minutes because he was called, with an hour's notice, to a shift at the warehouse where he works. I ask him about his new year, and his answer is about work once more:

>> I was working! Working security. At the Hogmanay in Edinburgh. 24 hours, 5pm till 5pm with a 2-hour break in the middle, £200, that's not bad is it? Just lots of people with drinks hidden here – *he points to his chest and waist -* trying to come in, you have to stop them. They can drink it in the street but not bring it in. People get angry because the drinks inside are very expensive. It's a hard job, because sometimes they try and punch you! *He laughs, miming a punch.*

The conversation turns to friends who, unlike Adam, have no legal 'right to work', but continue to take part in the so-called 'grey' or 'informal economy' to get by. Adam tells me about one friend, "he is from Pakistan, he works 12 hours, in a van, for £50! Can you believe that? But he is not allowed to work."

Another guy came to Adam for advice, because he'd been working in a shop without permission. "I told him that it was a bad idea," says Adam, "that he would always be nervous. But you know, it was for a girl! For his girlfriend, he wanted to buy her things. Many people do this."

We turn back to Adam's main job over the Christmas period, in an Amazon warehouse, sorting packages for their delivery trucks. We decide to write down an 'average day' for him at the job, and he dictates it to me, typing furiously at the laptop:

> I leave the house at 4-4.30pm - I will be sleeping beforehand, waking up at 3pm. I get the food ready. I take a shower, get dressed, get the bus to George square. A lot of the food is takeaway from the city centre, because I don't have time to cook.
>
> Sometimes I'm running because time has already finished. They are fucking shit! Sorry – the management have something called a time system, they have an ID to open the door, I don't know if the problem is from that system – because it's a machine, and the machine is not going to lie. But, sometimes there are 2-3 hours missing from your week. And if you ask the agency they say you were late. So that's 2-3 hours unpaid. I'll show you, because I keep my payslip, always. They are cheating, because the card is not going to lie. A lot of people they are complaining about this one.
>
> When coming from college I sleep from 1pm till 3.30pm.
>
> My alarm is on my phone, I leave it in my shirt pocket, so I feel the vibrations – I don't use that phone for talking, I apologise to people, It's not about saving battery, I just don't have time.
>
> I get the taxi from George square – the last taxi is 6.30pm, but I never get that one because you'd be a bit late. I get taxi at 5.30pm or 5.40pm latest. In rush time there are 35-40 people waiting – you get in big taxi, an 8-seater.
>
> Mostly it's a lot of Africans - Eritreans, Rwandans – the same people, we know each other – a lot of Scottish too, but they leave, because the job is very hard.
>
> Some people talk in the taxi, but normally I sleep. Not only me. When we are coming we are tired, when we are going we are tired. We talk about normal job things – how the shift is going, guessing volumes - in induction they said

the heaviest thing would be 50kg but sometimes you find smart TVs – 55kg. Sometimes we talking about managers, supervisors. We talk very bad about the supervisors!

The day you meet the supervisors, that is a shit day – lots are from the EU: Poland, Spain, Belgium, and Romanian, Russian. They all started out in the warehouse, and became supervisors. It takes 2 years to 4 years, some it only takes 1 year. They are like me, they don't speak English very much – so if something bad happens, or a job is delayed because something has gone wrong, they are not going to explain the situation well – they don't want to go to the head manager.

 In our group, sometimes people make a mistake, and there was one supervisor who always comes and shouts at all of them. But another supervisor asked about him and I said, "he is very difficult, he is just being like Donald Trump, he spoke to us very rudely" – the guy just laughed but the shouting supervisor, he didn't speak to us like that again.

[The supervisors] talk about safety every night, I think it's good to talk about the safety rules – but when we are working there are no safety rules at all – you see young girls taking heavy boxes, too heavy – the managers don't respect the rules themselves.

At rush time for Christmas there are sometimes 50 or more people, not all from Glasgow. As things slow down the Agency stops the taxis, they text me asking, "When taxis stop would it be possible for you to find another mode of transport?" but they wouldn't pay for it. I told them no.

The break is 30 minutes each shift, in the canteen. It's this big room, with TV, seats, tables, no music. Everything is Amazon colours and logos everywhere, it's quite a new building. I never really see the area outside, it's just lampposts. Lots of cameras - watching you, whether you are working hard or not.

There is very, very loud music playing inside, from these big speakers, I think its Clyde 1 FM or something. But its better having music. You can talk, but you have to be close.

After a shift my body feels sick, totally – it's very hard. But a good experience to have. I've met a lot of people, chatting to each other, swapping numbers, trying let each other know about other jobs, in Glasgow maybe. The job is not complicated, the people make it harder than it is supposed to be, the supervisors and agencies, they are very annoying.

At the end of the shift, you stop the machines, and put everything on new lorries for each city. Normally we do eight hours, back to Glasgow in the taxi about 4.30am and I'm back at home about 6am. I sleep and then wake up 7.30am, shower and have some tea before College. One day I fell asleep on the bus, it took me very far, to Silverburn. It's difficult to concentrate at College, I'm not understanding anything, but I'm attending!

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The Right to Work

Adam's experiences of trying to access and hold down work after getting refugee status were a constant source of discussion between us. While he had formally moved from the rank of 'asylum seeker', for whom there is an effective ban on the right to work, to 'refugee', who broadly share the same work and welfare entitlements as British citizens – he found this access curtailed in various ways. New Labour's 1999 Asylum & Immigration support structures, analysed throughout this thesis, set the scene for the diminishing rights in work for those seeking asylum. Up to 2002, the latter could apply for permission to work if they had been waiting for six months or more for an initial decision on their claim (see Gower, 2019). This is in contrast to other European countries where "most comparable states allow asylum seekers to work sooner than the UK" (Gower, 2019: 12). Britain's legal architecture around working rights emerged from a specific historical relation to its Empire, with a focus on limiting (after very minor post WWII incorporation), forms of recognition for former colonial subjects who wished to work in the metropole. Alongside an increasingly narrow regime of visas, salary thresholds and constant calls for 'points-based' immigration over the last three decades, there has been a discursive and legislative attack on 'economic' migrants and 'illegal working' that explicitly extends to those in the asylum system, despite their supposedly distinct status. Such shifts were concurrent with wider attacks on workers' rights and the welfare system, increasingly tied to punitive forms of conditionality linked to austerity (Tyler, 2013). Today, as the Lift the Ban coalition, who formed during my fieldwork to fight for the 'Right to Work' for asylum seekers, explain:

> People seeking asylum in the UK are only able to apply for the right to work after they have been waiting for a decision on their asylum claim for over a year. Even then, the few people who are granted such permission are rarely able to work in practice because their employment is restricted to the narrow list of highly skilled

professions included on the Government's Shortage Occupation List (Lift the Ban Coalition, 2018: 3).

If people do manage to get refugee status or leave to remain, many find that their qualifications and work experiences are not treated as valid within the UK, or that the time away from work that encompassed their migration and asylum claim is difficult to account for. When filling out application forms with Adam we'd often get to questions asking, 'Why did you leave your previous employment?' or asking to recount a job history that meant raking over traumatic episodes. "Why do they ask this shit? They are just like the home office!" Adam would sometimes say, laughing while he showed me the special pen he'd bought for such forms, which allowed you to erase mistakes: "I made so many that I had to buy it!" The paperwork wasn't the only aspect that mirrored Adam's experiences with the Home Office, as often the physical arrangement of jobs mirrored spaces like detention. An early job as a security guard involved having to:

> Lock yourself in [to the booth]. It's a small box. *He gestures a square around himself.* You are there alone. But you see people at the end of shift, I would come at 3pm, to relieve the guy on that shift, and then 6am the next day someone would come for me.

In a less physical, but more pervasive way, Adam's work at the warehouse in the vignette above involved constant monitoring and technological surveillance, ranging from the 'time system' and Amazon 'scanners', to managers who would "sit at computers and watch us. There are lots of security too. They search you."

Adam's main source of employment before this was in security himself, mainly through agencies that functioned by maintaining a group of precarious, constantly available workers, with very little in-work protections or proper contracting. Such jobs were populated by people in a similar position to Adam, and he would often remark that he had seen the same faces at a range of different agency jobs, with people forming relationships and sharing news of jobs or other opportunities. Adam exercised discretion over certain parts of the work, refusing to handle alcohol as a Muslim, challenging unfair practices such as with the 'Trumpian' supervisor above, and taking a certain power in being able to quickly leave jobs he felt were unjust. At times, this would expand into more organised resistance against his employers, as he explained to me one day in reference to a different warehouse shift:

The management, they exploit us. They say, if you don't want the hours then you don't need to take the work.

You remember I told you, they capped our wage? They told us we had to have 3-hour break but it wasn't a break, we were still at work. There were 2 Scottish guys, they were nice, and 24 black African guys. We meet in my house. I got them together. We said we would all not go into work if they didn't change it.

But some guy called my boss and told him. I have an idea of who it was. One of the guys, he became side manager that week! But I'm not sure. I had him to my house still! The manager rang me and said, 'I've heard you are doing this.' In the end 7 people, we lost our jobs.

It was not a union. You have to be careful. They knew I was a leader. I'm happy to become a leader, but I lost my job. But I did the right thing. And you know the funniest thing, that boss still calls me, offering work! I wouldn't do it again, because people are liars, I don't mind losing the job, but I don't like being lied to. Also the companies talk to each other, managers on phone share ideas – 'Adam, he was a bad boy!' *He laughs.*

Adam was acutely aware of how the hierarchies of the work he took on usually involved 'black Africans' at the bottom, and how easily disposable (yet seemingly re-hireable) they were, with a layer of EU migrants in graded 'supervision' roles that could occasional incorporate compliant others. Moments of solidarity across such racialized forms of differentiation could be spiked by complicity with management in ways that echo Robinson's discussion of the disciplinary function of differentiation, as discussed earlier. Adam reserved particular anger for people who "are migrants, they have their status, and they use it to do bad to others." Generally though, his approach to the jobs he did was one of nonplussed acceptance and pride in his work ethic, a way of sending money to his family and wife - in a far less dangerous fashion than the friends he saw who still worked without permission – whilst supporting his college studies and future plans. At various times he spoke about opening a barber's, a shop for electronics in town, or running workshops with young people; finding material hope for these plans in the money he was finally able to save. This was always approached with a caution and desire not to 'talk big' without thinking through an idea, "I am a very good barber. But I don't like to talk if I can't do it. I need to be very careful. Take time."

Taking time

Such 'taking time' worked alongside Adam's rigorous and controlled managing of his own timeframe, against an unpredictable schedule where he would normally be warned of work via text on the day. Adam had a certain pride in this capacity for time-keeping, which was linked to his growing knowledge of work opportunities through the year, and clear sense of ethical 'red lines' within work. All these factors contributed to him being in demand for advice and help with work from others, something that also partly grew out of his involvement in voluntary groups prior to getting the Right to Work. As he relayed to me after a speech he made to a packed coach of people from the Sudanese community on the way to a protest in Edinburgh:

> I was saying that people should get more involved in things by volunteering. You know, in Sudan, we do not have this thing – volunteering! It's an idea people do not understand. But here it is very important, especially when you cannot work. It can help with a job later too. So I was telling them they should do it.

Adam himself had volunteered with a wide range of volunteer groups, including Unity where we met, becoming involved for a long time with a charity geared specifically towards supporting refugees in accessing work. Working and 'non-working' - whether volunteering or collectively refusing work - were both intimately relational things for Adam, in terms of friends and a wider community of fellow-workers, especially where there was a shared acknowledgement of the barriers (but potential to collectively orientate towards 'future' jobs) facing 'Africans' and people in the asylum system.

Time-keeping, as we see in Adam's working day, also involved an acute awareness of maintaining his own bodily capacity and ability to access a wage. Within a racially stratified shop-floor and precarious job market, Adam's main struggles were framed around time: the agency stealing hours through falsified 'lateness' and mandatory 'breaks', the supervisor who made everyone's nights harder, longer. The night shift is here a particular space of racialized exploitation, linking to the ways in which industrial centres in Britain extended their productive capacity through the incorporation of colonial workforces through the 1960s and 1970s through the use of night shifts, a practice that continues in the present (see Cohen & Jenner, 1968; Macarie, 2017; Silver, 2001). Day-to-day, this meant not only a rigid schedule of alarms and naps, but existing within a strange liminal version of the city at the edges of dusk and dawn, populated by similar 'night-shift' workers, before taking in as

much college education as one's exhausted body could allow. Adam knew that each hour and kilogram counted, as part of a calculation of what his body and mind could put up with during a limited period of intense employment through the Christmas rush. He also knew that his body and mind were in a sense 'disposable' to his employer, recounting stories of friends who had been injured at work, or failed to keep up with the pace, and were quickly replaced. Fundamentally, Adam knew that he was seen as part of a pool of racialized, exchangeable workers that may have been legally incorporated into the 'productive' working class, but were not treated as such by either management or the mainstream trade union movement. Adam had to rely on himself, his friends, and his own strategies of time-keeping in order to maintain both his 'labour-power' and his wage, always aware of the 'reproductive' limits which have been stressed by social reproduction theorists. Eating, sleep and preparing for work, Adam had to know the limits of his own exploitable body, whilst aware that despite the legal 'right to work', the productive activities available to him were often coercive and temporally uncertain in ways that echoed the experiences of those inside detention.

The Gendered Backstage

Adam's intimate relationship with his own reproductivity seems in this sense slightly at odds with the social reproduction school's focus on the gendered 'backstage' to the working day, but this is complicated by further analysis. On a material level, Adam was very clear that the focus of his labour was supporting family, back home and scattered in different refugee camps, through remittances. However, this was positioned as part of a wider plan to use the British state's family reunification legislation (currently being curtailed in the wake of Brexit – see Grant, 2019) to bring his wife across to Britain from the refugee camp in which she was staying, something he was able to eventually organise towards the end of my fieldwork. Though the relational networks of male, 'African' friends and colleagues that Adam worked and occasionally cohabited with were very important to him, there was an understanding between everyone involved that this in some sense a 'temporary' set up, pending establishing a family and reintegrating a gendered division between reproductive and productive labour. The strength of this desire was acknowledged in examples such as the

man Adam described working 'illegally', and no doubt way below the minimum wage, to buy gifts for his girlfriend, but also in narratives about the forms of work being taken on.

Adam's in-work ethical code had a gendered dynamic here, as he explained: "during the work sometimes, the girls need help. [We are lifting heavy things]. I'm not caring about myself but you see the ladies and you think, what the fuck, this is shit, this is not nice for them. When there are women doing the same kind of work, you help them out sometimes." Though articulated as an example of the duplicity of employers who had misled workers about the weights being lifted, this example speaks also to a certain idea of 'hard' work as masculine, within a system that denied many of the usual markers of masculinity in its productive and familial modes. Hard and sometimes coercive work in my field site could here offer a complicated version of masculinity, in the absence of a wife's reproductive labour (see Bachelet, 2016: 243), usually positioned towards the re-establishment of that very gender binary. Whereas Alek demonstrated unease about doing cleaning work inside detention that was normally done by, "the women, the housekeepers" who were paid better, but saw it as necessary to help rebuild his own familial relationships – Adam undertook extreme periods of productive exertion, at the limits of his own bodily reproduction, in order to try and rebuild a gendered familial arrangement down the line.

Clocking in to such hard, exhausting forms of labour and self-reproduction was positioned then as a way to set things up for a 'clocking-off' which re-established a gendered realm of reproduction, where the kinds of 'future plans' described earlier could be more effectively worked towards. On a deeper level, Adam and Alek's experiences at the margins of full 'productivity' were about using whatever forms of work they could access to navigate towards further incorporation, and less precarity, within the economic systems around them. At the risk of stating the obvious, work creates the 'worker', but in Adam and Alek's case this also meant building relational and material forms of life that pushed back against forms of racializing and gendering exclusion.

Conclusion: "reproducing life itself"

Though it has been the focus of this chapter, 'work' in the asylum and immigration system was part of a wider set of economic processes that many people I met saw as both 'costly' for the Home Office and profitable for the companies being contracted to run the immigration system. [9] Corporate Watch's investigative work on GEO Group, who only run one IRC in Britain, Dungavel, shows the kinds of figures involved. As they state, "The GEO Group UK Ltd's revenue from "custody and offender management services" in 2017 was £5.2 million. The accounts tell us "cost of sales" – i.e. the costs incurred when delivering the contract, such as paying staff, maintaining the centre, feeding and monitoring those detained – came to £3.6m in 2017. That leaves a profit margin of 30%: very much in line with the sums G4S is reportedly making [at Brook House IRC]" (Corporate Watch, 2018a). This is also in line with Home Office documents that show the contract at Dungavel to be worth "£45.2m over eight years […] £5.65 million" per year, "or roughly £23,000 per bed" for a year (Corporate Watch, 2018a). As Alek argued at the start of this chapter: "They calculate all these things, and the numbers are catastrophic. It is a nightmare."

Beyond the IRC itself, what Ubuntu framed as 'extraction points', or parts of the border regime geared towards profit making, were discussed regularly by those I worked with. These included: lawyers just 'taking the legal aid money and doing nothing', the difficulty of navigating small grants and a parallel world of 'food bank' and clothing vouchers, debates around charity funding and 'outcomes' or 'indicators', pharmaceutical and medical costs, and of course the huge list of visa and citizenship application fees, NHS surcharges, expensive tests and everyday debts that increasingly underpin the contemporary UK border regime (Andersson, 2014). This points to the emergence of what Jackie Wang calls a 'predatory state', where police and state agents take on "the role of directly generating [state] revenue" in ways that are no longer clearly mediated by tax or debt, but through financial predation on marginalised groups (2018: 17). Here it is important to understand how the Hostile Environment, whilst mandating a certain "everyday bordering and ordering" (EL-Enany, 2020: 26) of perceived 'illegal' others, functions predominately as a system of

[9] In the fourth quarter of 2019, the Migration Observatory found that the daily cost to the Home Office of keeping someone in detention was about £95, with the annual cost of detention in Britain for the year ending March 2019 coming to over £89 million (Silverman, Griffiths, M. E. B. & Walsh, 2020)

extractive civil fines for workplaces, landlords, healthcare workers and migrants themselves. What Wang calls 'Financial Citizenship' (2018: 34) mandates a financial as well as affective 'indebtedness' amongst 'new citizens', whilst creating systems of monetised incentivisation and penalty across the board. As scholars such as Ruben Andersson have shown, illegality itself here becomes a point of production and extraction as the "multifarious agencies purportedly working on 'managing' illegality in fact produce more of it, like bickering workers on an assembly line" (2014: 15). Such analysis link with a growing body of work on the so-called Non-Profit Industrial Complex' (see INCITE, 2017) or 'Refugee Industrial Complex' (Al-Dasouqi, 2016), drawing on the more established idea of a Prison Industrial Complex (see Davis, 2003: 84-105; Abu-Jamal, 2000). While such notions of a profiteering, self-reproducing system can be useful and instructive, they can also push our attention away from how people actively engage with such systems, and what may be 'outside' or 'alongside' capital. As Wang also argues, "an economically deterministic analysis" of contemporary capitalism and its carceral forms, "would just paper over and soften the raw brutality of […] racism," manifested in processes that speak less to 'economic rationality' and more to "gratuitous violence" (2018: 88, 91).

This chapter has attempted to refocus some attention on the people within such a system: how they inhabit this 'edge' of 'production' and what 'production' means, particularly inside detention and after getting refugee status. Through attending to the ways people narrate, access, refuse and engage in activities at the margins of 'productivity' we can gain insight into the way 'work' is so deeply embedded within ideas of who 'deserves' citizenship, and how this involves racialized and gendered hierarchies of differentiation. Work raises questions of coercion, remuneration, relatedness and historical connection, particular in terms of colonial legacies of extraction, that were very important to many of the people I met. Navigating these questions involved particular understandings of 'killing' or mastering time through rigorous management of one's daily routines, often orientated towards the establishment of familial modes of gendered 'reproduction' that were (at least temporarily) unavailable for the many of the single men I got to know. Such ethnographic understandings help illuminate and expand theories of racial capitalism and social reproduction, whilst pointing to the limit of versions of such theories which aim to fold all human activity back

into a story about capitalist totality. Care, survival and interconnection, both outside and inside the IRC, always involved something beyond either 'reproducing' a body for work (especially when that body was barred from legal work), speaking to the danger of reducing all human activities to gradations of 'labour'. This is what I think Ubuntu ultimately speak to in their metaphor of 'stepping off the production line': attending to the forms of human life that are not captured or extracted from by capital, and how to nurture and expand them. They do so with an acute awareness that for many women, black and POC, queer and disabled people the 'production line' has always been an 'edge', but that ways of "reproducing life itself" (Dowling, 2016: 454) or "remaking the terms of life" (Bhattacharyya, 2018: 55) have persisted through collective effort. This isn't to be sanguine: survival always implies death and disposability. But here, it also implies the shared forms of friendship and care that people enact at the margins of 'productive' recognition by the state. Some may call this mutual aid, or a form of solidarity, and as we'll see in the final chapter that follows, such ideas were also deeply important to the people I met through my fieldwork, often in unexpected ways.

Chapter 7 - "Who are we?": Solidarity as a Moving Image

"You can only hide so much"

The sound of the River Kelvin roars around the flats as I lock up my bike. My phone has just died, but luckily Amina is waiting at the door, tall, relaxed and beaming down at a small puppy writhing at her feet. "Joel, meet Pada!" She says, laughing as she hugs me hello, the dog yelping excitedly. We head into her flat, grab some cans of juice from the fridge and are soon joined by Natalie, decked out in a selection of brightly coloured gym clothes, fresh from a jog.

We spend a while catching up: gossiping warmly about mutual friends, political meetings, parties, and film screenings, before moving on to talking through the idea of a 'Unity Film Club', holding various small screenings together, with a vague idea of doing some filming ourselves. The idea came up at a screening we'd attended a few days previously, of a film from the early 1990s called 'Tasting Freedom', about resistance inside detention centres. Amina's tone switches abruptly as we chat about the event: "I personally found it very triggering, I had to leave the room quite a few times." We talk a bit about how harrowing certain scenes in the film were, and what kind of film we would want to make. Our discussion takes in questions of anonymity, audience and who gets to film, who gets to be filmed. It's a conversation we come back to a lot in the coming weeks, overlapping with the discussion we'd had about me writing up these meetings.

"Because I hate telling my story. You know, I don't want to." Amina says, with a tone that is emphatic, melancholy.

Natalie nods, agreeing, "yep, because it can be so re-traumatising, and can create problems [with an asylum claim]."

Amina nods, continuing – "And also, it is about who knows, because I don't want anyone at university to know I was an asylum seeker, because why should they? But then they ask so many questions: did you go home for a visit? Why not? When do you see your family? You can only hide so much."

Eventually we move onto flicking through Youtube on Amina's smart TV, finding a short documentary about the use of Iris scanning in a Syrian Refugee camp. "It's really creepy," Natalie mutters at one point, as a woman on the screen explains how people in the refugee camp have their eyes scanned to collect groceries.

Amina responds: "Yeah you know it's funny, because when I was in Yarlswood [IRC], it was all about the finger! They'd say, put your finger here, show us your finger, finger please – you'd pay with your finger. We'd always laugh and say, 'give them the finger'!"

The short documentary finishes and I suggest an archival film that an artist friend of mine had sent me. He'd been commissioned to do some work with the Trade Union Resource Centre in Birmingham, who had a small 'video department' in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which he was going to try and look through, help digitise, and 'respond' to artistically. I find the video on YouTube: titled 'West Midlands Anti-Deportation Campaign', it is 23 minutes long and only has a handful of views.

The film is a grainy VHS overview of anti-deportation campaigns in Birmingham in the early 1990s, people speaking in their kitchens and front rooms, at meetings, weddings and protest marches, holding children, waving banners – a mix of domestic intimacy and public political action. It begins and ends with a man called Muhamad Idrish, moustached and suited, with a mop of black hair, and a playful, confident demeanour. He speaks at various points about his own deportation struggles, finishing the film with a direct address to the camera, close up:

> If you are faced with deportation, first thing: you must never think that you have done anything wrong. You haven't done anything wrong. The law is wrong; the law is racist. The law wants to exclude you. And you are not one in your situation. There are hundreds of other people like you around, and there are hundreds of thousands of people around you who will support you. That is the experience we have got. Talk to other people, there will be people to support you, and stand up, don't take it without a fight.

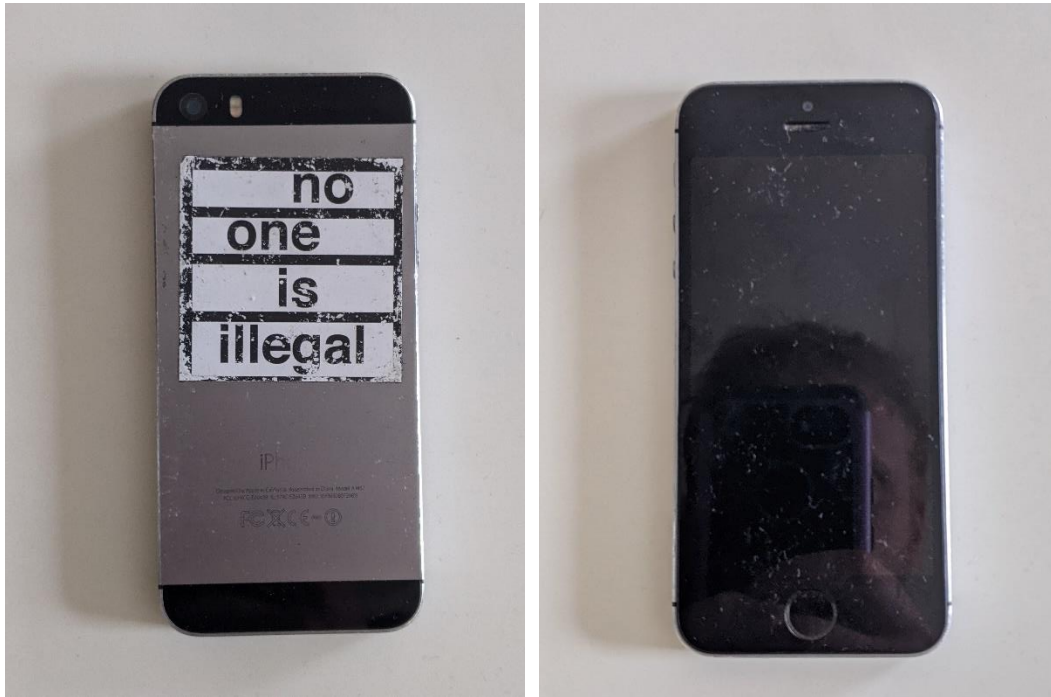"Wow," says Amina as the film ends, YouTube recommendations filling the screen, "that was intense."

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Figure 13: The Ethnographer's IPhone

Detention is marked by an absence of images, and images of detention or deportation can be charged with a troubling, violent 'intensity' for people like Amina. Within an IRC there are no camera phones allowed, a limited selection of films in the library, and only very recently the introduction of Skype for personal calls. Certain images do seep into the IRCs however: the medicalised diagrams and photography we saw in Chapter 5, smiling portraits in handbooks about 'voluntary return', and the (not uncommon) availability of smuggled smart phones, some of which contribute to the grainy 'video evidence' of malpractice presented in TV documentary exposés (see BBC Panorama, 2017). As the conversation above attests, images can be 'triggering', 'retraumatising', and exposing in terms of their circulation and interpretation, making it harder to control 'who knows' what about a person. And yet the compulsion to come back to images, as a way of 'recording' stories that may be lost, or with the hope of taking some control back over such stories, was a persistent and important thing for a lot of people I worked with through my fieldwork. Partly this was due to the sheer omnipresence of shared images: in the constant whirlwind of photos, videos, Tiktoks, memes and emojis sent via WhatsApp groups, engaging in visual communication becomes a necessity of sorts. But as Amina and Natalie make clear, images were also an important domain for negotiating ideas of the self and group, documenting injustice, connecting

people and movements across time and space, and 'hiding' through foregrounding other kinds of visibility. In both regards the phone, as simultaneous screen and video camera, was a key part of everyday life. My own phone, old and tatty with a propensity to suddenly lose battery life, was a key, prosaic medium for all this, and I start the chapter with an image of it (Fig 13) partly to highlight its importance; to centre this chapter within the small, shiny black frame that acted as a conduit, mirror, camera, journal and communicative extension of my anthropological position.

It is through this phone that I navigated many of the experiences discussed so far through this thesis, from detention visiting and city-wide accommodation struggles, to events focused on discerning 'the state', accessing care and going to 'work'. Throughout this, my discussion of the role played by friendship and care in systems of 'detainability' has returned to questions of 'solidarity': the visits and protests of Chapters 1 & 2, the support of differentiated 'strangers' in Chapter 3 and attendance to shared vulnerability in Chapter 5. Here I consider 'solidarity' in more detail, hoping to illuminate how important it was for people I met through both words and images. I try to think through what focusing on and communicating through images can offer in terms of thinking about solidarity and collectivity, friendship and care; and what this might illuminate about our anthropological methods more generally.

 I ask: How do 'detainable' people find ways to form and communicate collectivity and solidarity, in the face of an asylum system that is highly geared towards individualised legal 'casework' and personal atomisation? What is involved in films and images that simultaneously invite people into a struggle, and force some to leave the room? What role do images have in getting together, 'showing up', feeling 'seen' and collectively 'holding space' across different temporalities and geographies? And, as the repeated chants of a Sudanese solidarity protest (analysed later in the chapter) rang out: "Who are 'we'?" How does this 'we' come to be?

As we shall see, one way in which Amina managed to evade the trap of her 'story' and find new such connections during the time of my fieldwork was through a series of solidarity protests, focused on supporting large-scale mobilisations in Sudan, against the dictatorship of President Omar al-Bashir. Amina took on key organisational roles; organising meetings, public demonstrations, theatrical performances and social media activities over a period of

several months. This episode initially came as a surprise to me, not planned into any of my fieldwork, and I found myself fielding requests for support and engagement without really considering whether this was what I had set out to 'study'. The protests were an invitation to care and friendship in a specific, political, register, leaving a strong mark on me partly because of the unplannedness and intensity of what came about. Similarly, Muhamad Idrish, who arrived on Amina's television that day via a VHS uploaded to YouTube (TURC, 2018), became another unplanned part of my fieldwork, as I ended up traveling to Birmingham to meet Idrish at an event about the video archives he was part of, and hosting him and his wife in Glasgow, for a similar screening and discussion. Images and film were deeply important to both sets of events, seeming to create a space for and sense of 'solidarity' for people taking part. In considering Amina and Idrish's stories through this chapter, I focus first on how solidarity was framed through a focus on sharing images and 'showing up' at public protests, and the importance of video-phone footage and live-streaming in such instances. I then move to consider how solidarity can work across temporal as well as geographic distances, focusing on a particular video-focused 'reunion' of people and images, exploring ideas of 'opacity' that shall be outlined shortly. I find opacity can be put in productive dialogue with my ethnographic work to expand not just ways of thinking, but anthropological ways of seeing.

Opaque Ways of Seeing

Martiniquan writer and poet Édouard Glissant's declaration of the 'Right to Opacity', shares much ground with Amina's desire to avoid the trappings of her 'story' and "only hide so much". In his *Poetics of Relation,* Glissant evokes the speech patterns and collective 'we' of protest and manifesto, stating: "We demand the right to opacity" and "we clamor for the right to opacity for everyone" (1997: 194). He frames opacity as a form of resistance against colonial and Western knowledge systems that seek to render 'difference' and the other as transparent, knowable and hierarchically mapped. As the artist Zach Blas argues, "while Glissant theorizes opacity specifically through postcolonial conditions in Martinique, the concept is increasingly deployed in political thought, media studies, queer theory, and art criticism today" (2016: 149). Glissant writes against the West as "a project, not a place",

which seeks to impose a false "ideal of transparent universality" (1989: 1, 2) and render the "world in its own image" (1997: 111, see Simek, 2015). In contrast, as Blas argues:

> Opacity is an unknowability—and, hence, a poetics, for Glissant—that makes up the world, and it must be defended in order for any radically democratic project to succeed […] [Opacity] exposes the limits of schemas of visibility, representation, and identity that prevent sufficient understanding of multiple perspectives of the world and its peoples" (2016: 149)

As such, opacity is not pointing towards some "fundamentally unknowable kernel of difference" (Simek, 2015: 369). Rather, it is a material condition and a tactic, a mode of interpretation that acknowledges that "absolute transparency is unattainable and undesirable" (Simek, 2015: 372).

In Glissant's words, through the opaque, "that which cannot be reduced, which is the most perennial guarantee of participation and confluence" there is a possibility to overcome false, transparent 'solidity' and feel in mutual 'solidarity': "I thus am able to conceive of the opacity of the other for me, without reproach for my opacity for him. To feel in solidarity with him, or to build with him or to like what he does, it is not necessary for me to grasp him" (Glissant, 1997: 193). As a term, opacity thus captures much of the critique and discussion I heard through my fieldwork about the invasive and reductive 'knowledge' gathering of the Home Office, and its colonial origins (see Introduction), along with how 'solidarity' seemed to work in opposition to this for those who evoked it. The term also offers rich methodological insight, as Glissant was explicitly referencing ethnography in his writing on opacity and relation, having studied with the surrealist anthropologist Michel Leiris at Le Musée de l'homme between 1953 and 1954 (see Kullberg, 2013). Glissant viewed Leiris as a rare example of anthropology that allowed for a less extractive and more multi-directional ethnographic engagement, stating: "we hate ethnography: whenever, executing itself elsewhere, it does not fertilize the dramatic vow of relation" (Glissant, 2010: 122). Relation for Glissant is an ethical, political and sensuous 'reaching out', a "poetics of extension" (Kullberg, 2018: 979) that "reconciles the search for the self with the search for the other" (Glissant, 2010: 120). Ideas linked to these concepts animated the discussions at

our Unity film club and hover over this chapter: What would an ethical, usefully 'anonymised' and collectively made film look like? How is a 'gaze' returned or unsettled? Why does 'visibility' and 'representation' often seem so partial, or fraught? What does it mean to share a 'perspective', or make room for more than one?

Glissant's writing interweaves usefully with anthropological work on perception and representation, much of it drawing upon Walter Benjamin's famous essay 'Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1969). Here, Benjamin posits that mechanical reproductivity severs an artwork from its aura, its unique "presence in time and space" (1969: 214), and thus "emancipates the work of art from its parasitical dependence on ritual" (Benjamin 1969: 218), to offer revolutionary potential. In Micheal Taussig's characteristically freewheeling interpretation of the text, Benjamin (and his surrealist impulse) points to the 'tactility' of the mimetic 'commodity-image' (1993: 20) as a kind of fetish, encouraging anthropology to consider the sensory procedures involved in 'getting hold' of such images (Benjamin 1992: 217, see Pinney, 2002). Here, where a "a bodily connection is implied in the mere act of perception" (Taussig, 1993: ix) Benjamin's aesthetics are a not a narrowly 'ocular' enterprise, but "a form of cognition, achieved through taste, touch, hearing, seeing and smell – the whole corporeal sensorium" (Buck-Morss, 1992: 6). Without having to debate the extent to which Benjamin (or Taussig!) engage in "utopian fantasy" (Pinney, 2002: 356) through such depictions, we can find in their writing an attention to how images are reproduced, felt and sensorially experienced, along with offering an expanded idea of the 'image' itself.

Further, such questions appear in the work of Anna Grimshaw as attending to how the 'ethnographer's eye' (or Iphone?) is always deeply embedded in this world of images and cinema itself, "tracking between panorama and close-up" (2001: 12). For some visual anthropologists, this creates the possibility of joining interlecutors in their own video-based 'cultural activism' (Ginsburg, 1994, 1995; Turner, 1990, 1991) potentially creating what Ginsberg calls a 'parallax effect' (1995), in which the different perspectives of ethnographers and emic media producers can be viewed alongside each other in insightful ways. But, as Grimshaw makes clear, the history of anthropological 'ways of seeing' has also regularly involved "visual techniques" that were "perfectly adapted to the needs of a state seeking to

order, control and confine its subjects" (2001: 31), something I was constantly aware of reproducing through my fieldwork (see Introduction). Simone Browne's work allows us to position this as part of a long history of "racializing surveillance" (2015: 8) within what Judith Butler calls a "racially saturated field of visibility" (Butler, 1993: 18), where the black and racialized subject is framed within a limited and confining set of representations. Such theories allow us to think carefully about how our own ways of seeing (anthropological or otherwise), emerge from particular contexts and histories, charged with the possibility of both reductive, differentiated 'transparency' and complex 'opacity'.

While not discounting such dangerous possibilities of surveillance, this chapter tries to be open to the possibility of finding opaque 'ways of seeing', largely because the people I worked with presented solidarity, 'grassroots' documentation and experiences of collectivity in a celebratory register. Perhaps (like Benjamin) this involved a form of utopianism, but as I argue in the conclusion of this chapter, I think 'opacity' and 'solidarity' necessitate a certain leap of faith in allowing for hope, courage and love. However, this doesn't mean hiding or ignoring violence or hierarchy within such images and spaces - and as the Sudanese diaspora protests in Scotland demonstrate, experiences and images of violence were often a catalyst for coming together.

Solidarity and the Sudanese Protests

"Integration is a mutual process"

> George Square is busy: tourist groups, buskers, shoppers stopping to mingle at the statues and war memorial, suited workers hurrying from Queen Street train station. Adam waves me over as the bus fills up quickly, various men in high-visibility jackets chaperoning people on and taking names. The mood is buoyant, joyful – people hug and shake hands, quite a few give me a smiling, quizzical look: 'what's this guy doing here?' I realise I'm the only visibly white face, other than the coach driver.

> I sit down with Adam, who still fielding a deluge of phone calls, WhatsApp messages and texts, whilst noticing that the bus feels somewhat stratified, with Adam, me and the high-visibility 'community leaders' towards the front, followed by a large group of women, some couples, and then a few stragglers at the back – mostly younger men, a bit less smartly dressed, slightly cut off from the general conversation, all in Arabic.

As soon as we've moved off, people start to chant some now familiar phrases. Adam talks me through their meaning again: 'Tasgot Bas' / 'بس تسقط', is very popular, "it means 'he will fall' or 'just fall'." 'Thawra' / 'ثورة' – "revolution," 'Huriya' / 'حرية' – "freedom," ' 'Eadala' / 'عدالة' – *"justice,"* 'Salam' / 'سلام' – "peace." Many chants anchor on the collective rhythmic utterance of a core word, interspersed by quicker, improvised sections in between from a series of shifting 'lead chanters'. Adam explains that some chants are a little less popular, too complicated or linked to a particular opposition party, but is emphatic that today is about group unity: "you see all these people here," he gestures around the bus, "we all love each other."

In between chants people stand up to make little jokes and speeches to the seated crowd as the bus rolls along. Adam gets a big laugh at one point and I ask him what he said:

"Oh, oh - I was talking about how Al-Bashir is a good dancer!"

"A good dancer?!" I repeat back, confused.

"Yes! I was saying this man can dance, but he cannot do anything else! He is terrible at everything, apart from dancing!"

These jokes morph into longer orations, particularly when a guy towards the middle of the bus begins a very long and passionate speech, stopping and starting a few times – I get the sense that he's moving away from the focus of the day's protest, opposition to the Sudanese regime, and is consequently losing his audience a bit.

Adam explains:

> I actually am upset about this too, he is talking about the Sudanese guy that died recently, in Glasgow. You know nobody found him for four days? He was dead for 4 days before anyone found him, this is very bad. And this guy - he gestures down the bus - began by saying that we are all here now and are all Sudanese in Glasgow, but that we do not see each other most of the time, that we need to be there for each other more, and then he spoke about the man that died.

A man at the front of the bus - tall, broad, shaven, with a smart blue shirt and yellow vest, Adam had introduced him as "very important in the Sudanese community" – makes a speech too, followed by polite applause. One of the women behind me goes next, passionate, quick-fire, punctuating her words with jokes and laughter. Along with the speeches, people are constantly live-streaming and FaceTiming with friends in Sudan and elsewhere, where protests have been organised simultaneously – Adam also pulls up a video of a second Glasgow bus, ahead of us on the motorway, laughing as a guy dances down the aisle, smiling at the camera.

We arrive at Dynamic Earth, next to the Scottish Parliament, and pile out into a chilly but bright Edinburgh day, sun dappled in the clouds. Walking round to the front of

the parliament, we come upon around 100 people already gathered on the grass outside, facing each other in a wide circle. Our group chants and waves as we come across to join them, the circle opens up.

It's an unusual shape for a protest, everyone has their backs to any onlookers and the banners face inwards, but all the participants can see each other and it gives a sense of scale to the gathering that might not be as impressive if we were all just in a cluster. There is mixture of handmade banners and very slickly printed signs, with messages like: 'Solidarity with Sudan', 'Sudanese martyrs' and 'Stop Killing in Sudan', 'Al-Bashir to ICC' (the International Criminal Court) and 'All Sudan is Darfur'. Many have pictures and names of 'martyrs' that have been killed in protests in Sudan, along with maps, flags, fists, peace signs. Chants bounce around the circle, corralled by a different people taking a wireless mic, powered by a little PA speaker, which echoes around the space loudly, processed with some kind of effect that makes it boom and delay, like a nightclub MC. A few MSPs come out to address the crowd; people seeming very appreciative of their attendance, despite the often quite vague content of their speeches. The first MSP to speak is at least very honest, simply saying, "I know very little about the situation but agree with all these signs," though he manages to misread the Sudanese Flags dotted around, saying: "it's also good to see the Palestine flag on show today."

Towards the end of the protest, a woman I recognise from the organising meetings makes a speech in English, linking the struggle against the dictatorship to an opportunity to have "free education for all, women's rights" and other goals. Surrounded by cameras, banners and bodies in motion, her words cut through: "you know it needs saying more often, but integration is a mutual process – we are here in Scotland and we contribute and become Scottish, but we are also Sudanese, and we ask for support for our homeland."

To finish, everyone huddles into a tight circle and sings one last beautiful song – "about freedom," Adam tells me later – hugging goodbye before heading back to buses and cars.

<div align="center">***</div>

Showing 'solidarity with'

Solidarity was a key rhetorical device throughout the meetings and protests I attended around the Sudanese revolution. Indeed, initial planning meetings constructed the revolution itself as one of 're-uniting' 'the people' against the dictatorship of al-Bashir, in a kind of populist solidarity across ethnic, gender and geographic lines. Amina herself stressed

this point repeatedly, for instance at an early planning meeting she organised, arguing: "al-Bashir was very good at dividing people, using this against them, but everyone is becoming united now," with diasporic 'solidarity' a key part of that process. The 'division' was regularly linked to historical and lasting patterns of colonial violence, corruption and economic hardship across the country, and the complex issue of South Sudanese independence. Amina prepared compilations of video-phone footage for such events, gathered from YouTube, Twitter and Instagram, much of which demonstrated this 'rediscovered' unity through images of the crowd as a physical manifestation of solidarity: hundreds of people walking together through cities in Sudan - "having walked for miles to get there," as she'd tell us - flashing peace signs, singing and chanting. Such images draw on a long history of visual representations of 'the crowd' and its revolutionary potential, pointing to a simultaneous multiplicity and 'unity' in ways comparable to the word 'solidarity' itself. The words, chants, images and screening were charged with a hard to place sense of potentiality, hope, but also dread. This was linked to how these crowds were targeted for state violence, another fact that was stressed repeatedly at early meetings. "42 people have already been killed at protests over the last few weeks," Amina told us at a screening of footage during the early days of the protests, before being quietly interrupted by an older man, pointing grimly to his phone: "no, its 47 now."

Amina also included this violence in her video montages, which we'd watch at these meetings on old dim projectors, sighing and shaking our heads: confusing, jolted video-phone footage of running bodies, empty streets, patches of blood, shooting sounds. Circulating these images was itself presented as a form of solidarity: there was no doubt that these were risky and intensely 'triggering' images to share, but this was overcome by the desire for international recognition, for moments of collective anger and grief. The images fitted into a broader international genre of video-phoned state violence, and resonated with the grimly familiar grammar of silence, noise, fear associated with videos of police and state violence, particularly through the Black Lives Matter movement. As Bonilla & Rosa argue, in a piece about the police killing of unarmed African American teenager Michael Brown in Ferguson: "the increased use and availability of [video phone] technologies has provided marginalized and racialized populations with new tools for documenting incidents of state-sanctioned violence and contesting media representations

of racialized bodies and marginalized communities. (2015: 7). Many images of the Al-Bashir regime's violence also turned up at the protests themselves, with one particular large banner on the day outside Edinburgh Parliament listing images of 'martyrs' and victims, while the banner on Fig 16 shows both a photograph and drawing highlighting the diversity of the protests, text focused on 'killing' and 'violence against women', and another photograph of a wounded man flashing a 'peace' sign from his hospital bed.

Figure 14: Solidarity with People of Sudan

Figure 15: Sudanese Communities - Scotland

Figure 16: Stop Killing People

Figure 17: Alaa Salaah reading Azhari Mohamed Ali's poem: "The bullet doesn't kill. What kills is the silence of people."

The word 'solidarity' itself, as we see from the images of Fig 14 and Fig 15, also featured prominently in the protest language of the various Sudanese diasporic events, while the '#blueforsudan' social media campaign 'trended' internationally, encouraging people to 'show solidarity with the people of Sudan', after the killing of 26-year-old engineering

graduate Mohamed Mattar, whose Instagram avatar had been blue. Similarly, a video of a young woman in Khartoum standing on the roof of a car (Fig 17), leading a series of protest chants and singing poems, went 'viral' in April with the hashtag '#IamtheSudaneseRevolution', and became incorporated itself into the signage and imagery of subsequent protests. At times this meant focusing on specific groups or people - women, victims of a certain attack, Mattar himself – but this always implied a wider collective both showing and receiving 'solidarity', a 'we' that constantly shifted in scale and boundary. Crucially, the sharing of such imagery took place against a backdrop of "'near-total' internet blackout" (Sajjad, 2019) in Sudan itself, lending a heightened importance to the idea of 'showing solidarity' through the sharing of images.

These examples speak to the opacity of 'solidarity' as a word and a kind of image, expressed in shots of the crowd, experiences of violence and through focusing on specific groups. Along with other key phrases such as 'Tasgot Bas', 'Thawra', 'Huriya', 'Eadala', and 'Salam', Solidarity became a mode of joining with the rhythmic iteration of a protest chant or online '#', retaining a certain opacity of both the individual parts and the collective whole. The collectively voiced, musical, and constantly improvised chants epitomised this by speaking directly to this sense of process and connection: solidarity as polyphony. As one of the few chants shouted in English went, already in its translation performing a certain opaque situatedness: "Who are we? – Sudanese!" Yet this was a 'we' opened up by the protests, as the speaker outside Scottish Parliament attests, who invites those present to participate in what one speaker on the day called, "integration [as] a mutual process." Such an expression helps to consider more deeply what it is to feel 'in solidarity' in such moments, refashioning the unidirectional NGO-speak of 'integration' into a shared, participatory acknowledgement. This was an offer to proactively take part, an invocation of something shared but distinct, spoken with an openness to not just 'share', but be changed by the circumstances.

Communal Visibility

Feeling 'in solidarity' in this mutual, transformative way may have foregrounded 'integration' and a transformative 'we' in certain ways, but it was still grounded in forms of intimate relatedness and stratification. The struggle against al-Bashir's 30-year rule was intensely personal for almost everyone I met at such protests, linking to family and friends

still in Sudan or in refugee camps in neighbouring countries, with most people having fled violence and persecution specifically related to the regime. Al-Bashir's image often became a useful negative proxy for this, crossed out in the banner in Fig 15 and often jokingly evoked by many people, including Adam, who first showed me a picture of the dictator on his phone via a Facebook meme that depicted al-Bashir's head on the body of a donkey. This was early January, the start of the protests, and Adam was jubilant: "I am very happy! Very happy about Sudan, because I think he will have to go. Al-Bashir, he will have to go. I have many friends in prison already, my cousin was arrested. When he goes, they will get out. He will go." Sharing images of the uprising and undermining the regime, was for Adam, like many others, a direct link to the freedom of kin and friends. This often meant navigating a tricky sense of distance, in articulating a connection from 'afar', linked to difficult sensations of disconnection, anger, isolation, and crucially, hope. There was no doubt that the revolution could signal a possible 'return' for Adam, but this was a 'return' to something new, a Sudan less marred by legacies of colonialism, violence and dictatorship: "when there is no war, when we have hospitals and schools, jobs and money, then I will return!"

To be 'in' solidarity then, was to be 'out' of the direct situation being highlighted, to being open to seeing or feeling the perspective of another, whilst being clear about the limits of this. It was also to share in hopes for changing the conditions which gave rise to the necessity for solidarity in the first place, to notice the structural conditions as much as the immediate issue. Such articulations took on particular resonance in the spatial arrangements of the protests, situated within key sites of Scottish political and social importance. The Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh, George Square and Buchannan Steps in Glasgow, these are spaces marked by their regular use for protests and a certain register of politicised 'Scottishness', linked historically to everything from the 1919 so-called 'Battle of George Square' to the unfolding story of devolution (see Gallacher, 1990; Gibbs, 2018). There is a wider ritual and generic form to the protest as situated in such spaces, expressed with ironic clarity by the MSPs who attended without really knowing what was happening - misrecognition being no barrier to participation when the ritual is powerful. The protests drew on resonant patterns of resistance in Britain and Sudan, whilst also highlighting ongoing connections between the two countries anchored on colonial rule, in which, as Adam made clear, Britain had violently "divided the country" and established long-term

patterns of "internal colonialism." As well as this, there was also an important focus on assembling and connecting the Sudanese community within Scotland, a sense of trying to reinvigorate a proximate togetherness in facing the 'homeland'. As the figure of the man whose death had been unknown for days attested, this notion of communal visibility was fraught and important - "we do not see each other most of the time" - but must be seen to be 'here', be seen to see each other, and carry this forward to ensure marginal members of the community do not become 'unseen'.

As Figs 14, 15 and 17 show, the constant use of camera phones played a central role in this shared attempt at being seen – as well as in the substance of the images themselves (nearly every photo I took had someone else taking a photo in it). I couldn't help but be surprised throughout the protest at just how much filming was being done. At any one time, maybe five or six people would be videoing from the centre of the circle of protestors, arms outstretched, eyes focused on the small screen in front – whilst many more continually filmed from the circle itself - behind, around, from all angles. One guy in a crisp black suit seemed to be doing live TV reportage throughout, while the arrival of a BBC video van half-way through the protest caused much excitement. It turned out the BBC were here to film MSPs' reactions to the upcoming vote on Theresa May's Brexit deal, but took a few shots of the protest anyway, though these never turned up in the news. This omission, after the fact, didn't seem important to people however: the presence of the cameras themselves was key, and the main function of the mass filming seemed to be streaming or sharing, live, to friends either in Sudan or at similar events elsewhere.

The Live-stream

This mass, multiply-situated video live-streaming involved forms of affect and opacity that deserve unpacking in detail. The mobile video live-stream is a fairly recent and still developing format: Twitter's 'Periscope' and Facebook Live' were both launched in 2015, with the companies waiting for widespread 4G internet access before rolling out the function. Consequently, the particularities of live-streaming have had little coverage in anthropology, and problematize many of the historical theses of visual culture and film studies. This is a different kind of 'reproduction' from Benjamin's 'mechanical' form, in that live-streaming foregrounds both "aura" and "presence" (1969: 223) by centering the camera-operator in an unfolding present and particular space, in this case the postcard like

backdrop of Arthur's Seat and Scottish parliament. Live streaming is marked by the uniqueness of each individual filming and receiving screen, its duration specific to each paired connection. The directness of the live-stream is often interrupted technologically, rather than aesthetically – through lapses in internet, or dying phone batteries. While all edited film is in a sense montage, piecing together parts into a whole, the live-stream is fundamentally not, instead drawing attention to the possibilities of a predictable unfolding future (we see what is coming in real time), and to the limits of the frame (both the action that exceeds the camera, and the surroundings of the screen receiving it). It is at this limit of the frame, and the availability of different simultaneous live-streams, in the collision and multiplicity of images being shared and swiped through, that the live-stream can still take on the effect of montage, in unique 'real-time' ways, controlled by the viewer. As Bonilla and Rosa argue more generally about contemporary social media: "One of the differences between Twitter and these earlier forms of technology [such as television, radio or email], is its multivocality and dialogicality (Bakhtin 1981). Twitter does not just allow you to peer through a window; it allows you to look through manifold windows at once" (2015: 7). This is a form of communication anticipated by John Berger (channelling Benjamin), though for him, filming 'Ways of Seeing' in the saturated technicolour of a 1972 BBC studio, "there is no dialogue yet […] you cannot reply to me" (Berger, 1972, 2008). Here, people acted as both auteur and audience, often at once, within a blur of images, sounds, chants and bodies.

This proliferation of multiple perspectives, captured but instantly lost in the rigid present of the live-stream, had a sense of ordinariness: people were used to filming themselves day-to-day, saw other people filming and decided to film too. But it also seemed to play an important part in the shared, affective feeling of potentiality being collectively explored through the protests. As I, encouraged by Adam and Amina, repeatedly passed my own camera over faces in the crowd people would inevitably laugh, smile, flash a peace sign – and I would do the same. A passed phone showing pictures and videos from elsewhere would elicit similar reactions. Beyond such overt filmings and screenings, the general sense of being 'seen' and 'seeing' in ways distinct to the moment seemed to create a kind of joyous affect: "the experience of an enhancement of the body's capacities and an enhancement of their capacities for productive relationality" (Gilbert, 2018). The lack of

clarity about where these images were going, who was watching (beyond the anonymous 'viewer count'), where they specifically were from, and who had filmed them, was not a barrier but a catalyst for this excitement, energy. This was a conversation without (many) words, a documentary broadcasting without narration, direction or editing, centred on a set of political affinities that were loose and iterative. The protest felt scaled up by all this, far wider than its circle on the lawns of Scottish Parliament, in an experience of shared potentiality, both in terms of the people participating, and the wider 'protesting' body they made up.

Of course, such images, montages, and mic-passing should not be thought of as intrinsically 'horizontal'. 'Joy' in such readings is not 'happiness', but an intensity of feeling and capacity that can take many forms, linking to Glissant's notion of 'relation'. It was also clear from the divergent ways people were able to speak, be listened to, be seen, and 'direct' or become the focus of such images that there were multiple forms of difference and possible hierarchy at play, including with my own positionality. The coach on the way to the protest showed multiple ways in which visibility and 'showing up' did not necessarily guarantee equity in the space, in terms of 'high visibility' authority figures within and outside the group. Yet I read Adam's comments – "you see all these people here, we all love each other" – as wanting to unsettle these divisions, however temporarily, through the shared, risky power of words like love, solidarity, freedom, and revolution, and the images that mixed with them. Such concepts may mask, reinforce or question hierarchy, but – at least in situations like the protest – can retain an unstable "participation and confluence" (Glissant, 1997: 191), never fully fixed.

These tangles of relatedness and community, generically charged images of space and 'protest', and the opaque living montage of 'live-streaming' crowd all provided important context for what it meant to feel 'in solidarity' through the protests, an intensity that coursed through my own body on those days in heightened waves of elation, anxiety and connection. The Sudanese protests drew on a visually mediated 'we' that crossed geographic distance and eventually contributed to the end of al-Bashir's 30-year rule, officially declared on the 11th of April 2019 - though the struggle over Sudan's political future continues. But as another unexpected episode in my fieldwork demonstrated, solidarity and the affective power of images and words can also work across temporal

distance. Solidarity *as* a moving image, productively unfixed itself, can involve interrupting the present with visions of the future, sometimes from the past.

Here to stay! Here to fight!

Sian and I arrive just on time, slightly breathless. We've been walking for an hour at least, across half of Birmingham, through parks, industrial sites, residential blocks and finally, the city centre itself. The Art Gallery is bustling with people when we arrive, a new 'Women, Art & Protest' exhibition has just opened, and it takes us a few moments to get our bearings and find the small series of arrowed signs leading us to the event: 'Here To Stay! Here To Fight!'

I'd booked the free online tickets weeks earlier, luckily, as it had 'sold out' in a couple of days, with nearly 300 people joining the Facebook event, though the room, a functional white rectangle without windows, looks to hold maybe 40. The blurb ran:

> Two and a half thousand people marched with veteran Birmingham activist and campaigner Muhammad Idrish through Handsworth to Birmingham City Centre on 8th October 1983. Their simple slogan: Muhammad Idrish Must Stay - Stop the Deportation!

> Vivid Projects and BMAG are proud to present Here To Stay! Here To Fight! a screening of anti-deportation films made for the NALGO led Anti-Deportation Campaign in the West Midlands, produced by TURC Video with Muhammad Idrish.

I recognise Mohammed straight away as we arrive, having watched the West Midlands Anti-Deportation Group (WMADG) video on YouTube many times by this point. He looks remarkably unchanged by the years: hair a bit greyer maybe, same bright eyes, sleeveless woollen jumper over a shirt. He's stood near the front chatting with Andrew, my artist friend, and some people I assume are from 'Vivid', the organisation funding and hosting all this, who take photos throughout, 'documenting'. Then there is Margaret, who ran the Trade Union Resource Centre (TURC) video project, and is laying out the final bits of that archive on a trestle table: video tapes, flyers and magazines, pulled unceremoniously from a 'Lego Land' carrier bag. I overhear a young woman say, "you know this makes me love nana even more," as she leafs through one set of news clippings with a friend. Most of the rest of the audience are from Idrish's generation, in their 60s and 70s, apart from the small cluster of younger activists sat with Sian, who I join.

The room fills with the excited chatter and greetings of old friends as people take their seats, but it's when the lights are dimmed and film starts screening that things really come alive. People laugh and joke along with the material almost instantly,

responding partly to the haircuts and clothes of 30-40 years prior, but mainly to the site of so many old faces, familiar yet distant. Many of the people in the audience are in the films, which show meetings, gatherings, domestic moments, street scenes and protests – firstly focused on Idrish's own struggle against deportation, then the expanded work the WMADG did on scores of other cases (see Fig 18). Various people at the end remark how, despite having just been on screen, "that's the first time I've ever seen that footage!" There's something potent about the strange, joyous atmosphere at such moments, as people recognise themselves and each other in a kind of living 'flash-back', looking around at the audience as much as the projection. Marion puts it well afterwards when she says to me, "it was a bit of a reunion I suppose," and the word sticks with me long after: *reunion,* a coming back together after distance, but often implying instability, difference. The images seem to form as much a part of this reunion as the bodies in the room.

The screening is followed by a spirited Q&A, talking through various parts of the story: the importance of Idrish's NALGO (National and Local Government Officers' Association) trade union in supporting him (after some pressure at the national level) and disseminating VHS videos about his campaign to every branch; difficulties around the role of the Labour party; thoughts about the importance of sharing these kind of resources. Questions too: what were the challenges back then? What did we learn? What has changed? How can we support struggles today?

Before we leave, one of the ever-keen photographers gathers the assembled crowd towards the front of the room, where the films had just been projected. We stand in their place, awkwardly bunched up, laughing as the man bounds onto a table for a better angle, chiding us for our lacklustre postures:

"Come on everyone, let's try and chant like we used to – what was the slogan? 'Here to stay, here to fight'!?" People join in slowly, the volume rising – "that's great, yes! But, let's remember – this is a photo, it doesn't record sound – I need to see the energy – let's get those fists up!"

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Figure 18: Video Stills, all from TURC 2018, 2017

I left that meeting, and Birmingham, buoyed by powerful sense of potential and hope, excited by the connections that had been made. Within a week of being back in Glasgow I'd organised for Idrish and Heather to come up to screen the films in Glasgow, and a few months later they were here, at the same community space that Amina had booked for that first Sudanese protest organising meeting. In a small way, I felt invited into the relational circles that had animated that Birmingham screening, sharing parts of our respective lives at meals and drinks through the trips, as we shared those long unseen videos. Though clearly threaded with emotion, care and connection, the established relations animated through the TURC video screening were not encompassing or cohesive: many people hadn't seen each other for years, and existing political and personal differences bubbled up. As Idrish, Heather and I joked later, though it felt like a 'family reunion', we should remember that "families always argue."

This messiness, along with the abundant openness of the key TURC and WMADG figures, ensured that the 'reunion' was also open to those not originally present. This was not just in the proud 'love' of the granddaughter at the archive table, but in the event of the 'screening', in which a large proportion of the Q&A was dedicated to connecting with "the young people here and struggles today." This intergenerational relationality was quite distinct from the mass shared video-phone 'screening' of the Sudanese protests, but elicited similar ideas around solidarity, connection, love and friendship – sometimes expressed here in that old, charged word, '*comrade*' (see Dean, 2019*)*. While the Sudanese protest opened up geographic proximity in simultaneous live-streaming, the TURC video screenings had a sense of "heterogeneous" (Wolf, 2018: 264) or "ecstatic" time (Muñoz, 2009: 186), foregrounding (partially) lost ideas of possible anti-racist futures: "looking back to project forward" (Wolf, 2018: 254). While the specificities of Muñoz's invitation to queerly "remake the past to reimagine a new temporality" (2009: 185) should not be missed, it can point here to how 'lost' or partially 'erased' pasts can interrupt the present in ways that unsettle temporal linearity. As Nicole Woolf puts it, in a discussion of "cinematic solidarities and friendships" that draws on Walter Benjamin and Mark Fisher, this entails trying to "actively link to the unfinished possibilities of struggles of the past, to create what he [Benjamin] calls

'now' times that interrupt the 'empty' and 'homogenous' time of linear progress" (2018: 264).

The images within the films were themselves filled with a potent blurring of the domestic and political, filmed in a formal style that was definitively 'unprofessional' but beautifully shot and assembled by a volunteer team from TURC and WMADG. Public protests highlighting the family life and community of a person threatened with deportation cut to kitchen-table orations about the impact of racism, colonialism, injustice and bureaucracy. These were the exact videos I'd watched months earlier with Amina and Natalie, potent then in their rawness and lack of context, but even more so when surrounded by the human manifestations of their message, as if from the future: *they stayed! they fought!* Politically, the images ruptured certain political consensuses – speaking from a moment of labour and anti-racist militancy without the mediation of hindsight. As Idrish put it to me later, "[Back then we knew that] a black person's struggle is a struggle against racism, so whoever is coming to fight behind me, on my behalf, they knew very clearly that they are fighting a racist establishment." But perhaps most strikingly, the films placed the people who were facing deportation at their heart, in terms of production, narrative and intended audience (specifically in the latter WMADG film, where the first ones were pitched more towards trade union branches). This is the quite specific, 'you' of: "if you are faced with deportation", meeting the 'we' of "and there are hundreds of thousands of people around you who will support you. That is the experience we have got." This sense of political collectivity was evident at the event, where, despite the formal surroundings of the art gallery and academic screening format, the images inaugurated a kind of noisy 'political meeting', with people speaking from the floor as much as the panel.

In a very different way to the use of live-streaming analysed earlier, the reproduction of dormant or partially lost cinematic artefacts again complicates Benjamin's notion of artistic 'aura' as depleted through contemporary forms of reproduction. The film's 'aura' seemed animated here both through the 'official' space of an arts venue, and the direct connection the footage had to particular histories and places, eliciting a burst of affective and sensory responses from a crowd 'getting hold' of images they were a part of.

Opacity of Image

Historically, I noticed through the screenings that there was a shift in focus from the TURC films, on racism and the injustice of the immigration system as a whole, towards films like Tasting Freedom (Ken Fero, 1994) - the film that had prompted our small 'Unity film club'- which centred more on Britain's obligations under the 1951 Geneva Convention and the particular persecution faced by key nationality groups. The most striking visual difference between the two however was the blurring or obscuring of people's faces in the latter, often in the recognisable 'darkened face in front of a window' shot (see Fig 19), sometimes accompanied by a masking of the voice. The films Idrish and the TURC Video group made were striking in how central they made people's names, faces and families to the depiction of those facing deportation. The banners at Idrish's 1983 protest (see Fig 18) showed a succession of different 'Defence Committees' for fully named individuals, while the archival materials (Fig 20) were full of personal and familial depictions. This was something we picked up straight away at Amina's Film Group screening, where the consensus was that such un-anonymised depictions, "would never happen today". This aesthetic shift highlights different forms of opacity, demonstrating how the grounds for what Idrish would sometimes refer to as the 'courage' of those who 'stood up' and 'fought' can change over time. It also starkly highlights how narrow the figure of the 'asylum seeker' has become in contemporary visual depictions, almost never the intended 'audience' or producer of such images: no name, rarely even an obscured face, and certainly not behind the camera.[10]

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[10] For example, See BBC Panorama, 2017; Real Media, 2019. However, it's important to note that Scottish Detainee Visitors (SDV) produced a number of videos in opposition to this trend, with 'detainable' people involved in multiple elements of production and narration. These involved use of framing to obscure identities in partial ways, as well as disrupting the presumed positionality of the white 'film-maker' (Holtom, 2015), and creative use home–made mobile phone videos (Myers, 2018).

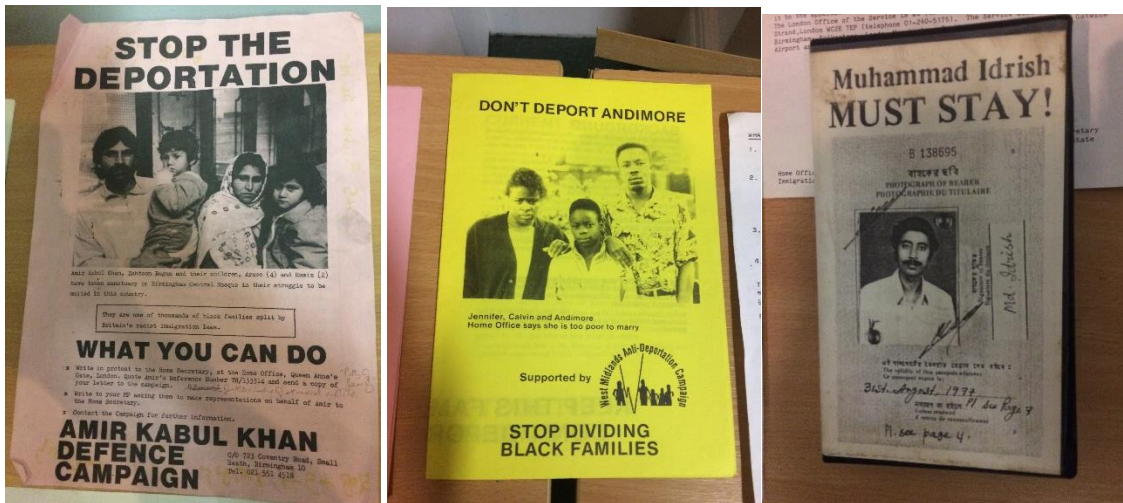*Figure 19: Still from Tasting Freedom: Fero, 2014*

Figure 20: TURC Archive Materials

It would be mistaken however, to read either the TURC or Ken Fero films as 'less' opaque than one another, as opacity is not anonymity. In centring individual people and their families as part of a shared anti-racist struggle the TURC films maintain an opacity beyond these politicised aspects of life: the audience never really meets the Muhammad Idrish who isn't marching, campaigning, and organising (beyond the one wedding photo in Fig 18), but his existence is respected and implied. The other key characters from the WMADG film were able to foreground their full names, rich family and community lives, and political resolve in ways that linked them to a wider rather than individualised struggle, and always articulated the injustice and racism of the system. This isn't to advocate for such an approach in the very different context of struggles today, when many feel anonymity is the only option, but to highlight the continued affective power of these images, along with the rupturing ideas of

a different kind of 'future' that they speak to. The films embody Glissant's advocating of a right not to comply with the demand to be knowable and transparent within racialized systems of violence, but also points to possibility of 'getting hold' of forms of collectivity through acknowledging the "opacity of the other" (1997: 193).

Opacity of frame

Here it is useful to think of an 'opacity' of framing, rather than just representation – that which constitutes the edge of an image, the 'containing' as well as what is contained. In his writing on cinema, Gilles Deleuze attends to the importance of how framing always speaks to that which is "out-of-field", that which is "neither seen nor understood, but is nonetheless perfectly present" (1986: 16). He identifies two aspects to this: the first can be intuited through the image within the frame, along with the sound and other devices that point beyond the frame – they speak to what is coming as the framing moves. The second is a "more disturbing presence [...] a more radical Elsewhere outside homogenous space and time" which he characterises as 'the Open' (ibid: 17). While Deleuze's schema of different cinematic 'movement-images' specifically explicates the use of 'Affection-images' that could be relevant for analysis of the TURC films – for instance in the 'iconic' close-up shots of Idrish, or the 'dividual' crowd shots, both in Fig 18 - it is this second 'out-of-field' that I think best captures both the Sudanese protest and TURC videos. In their messy communality, most vivid at the public screening-protest-meeting-filming, the films invite the viewer into an unstable frame. The images point to the edges of their frames, where viewer, image and producer meet, blurring such limits, and to a deeper affective 'openness' in Deleuze's terms. Of course, there is a complicated potentiality or 'intensity' here too, described by Amina at the start of this chapter, as what the image implies can also compel you to leave the room (if the 'intensity' or 'triggering' becomes too much): the 'affect' of the 'out-of-shot' is not always an invitation 'in'.

Yet the TURC and Sudanese protest films compel the viewer to participate in both their DIY form and 'solidarity' focused content. The TURC videos were made and disseminated to encourage people to get involved in 'the struggle', and continue to invite contemporary viewers into a particular (marginalised) history of militant anti-racism and trade unionism. The Sudanese protest live-stream clearly brings people into the action, but also invites a

response: to come and live-stream this yourself, to both be and do the 'documenting'. The edge of the crowd, the empty chair at the meeting, the way the shakiness of the hand holding the camera subverts the frame itself, the home-video style zoom – the images imagine the participation of the viewer, creating a hard-to-place sense of communality. Their production attests to this too: in the DIY rawness of a loaned 'Resource Centre' camera and distributed VHS, the TURC video project anticipates the 'camera in a pocket' of video streaming. If we follow Deleuze that "a film is never made up of a single kind of image […] Nevertheless a film, at least in its most simple characteristics, always has one type of image which is dominant" (1986: 70), then I would argue that it is the 'out-of-frame' that these films allow to dominate. The films chant, ask and demonstrate 'who are we?' in an ongoing blurring of what usually constitutes the cinematic frame, allowing for the affective 'presence' of Deleuze's temporal 'Open'.

Concluding with Courage

During his trip to Glasgow I asked Muhammed Idrish about what solidarity meant to him, and whether the meaning of the word had changed over time. He thought about the question for a while before answering:

> Well, mmm, yes. Solidarity. …. I think, generally, in those days, and now - what I've found is that if you have the courage to challenge something, stand up, you do find a lot of people will support you, individually, and as organisations, because people like somebody who is fighting against some injustice. And that has not changed.

In an echo of his words from the WMADG video, decades earlier, Idrish speaks again here about courage, which for a long time I interpreted simply as a courage to face the fear of being targeted by a punitive, racist Home Office. This is clearly an aspect of what Idrish is saying, but as I sat with his words in the months since I realised he is also speaking about courage to trust in the capacity of others, that, to quote his younger self, "there will be people to support you" if you take the leap of 'fighting'. Idrish clearly found that solidarity meant acting as if injustice would be met by collective action, but also that demonstrating the action of an injustice, rather than the plight of the victim, should be enough. The videos, the movement of which he was a part and Idrish's own life story, all attested to a certain courage in not knowing the exact identities or histories of those being stood in solidarity

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with, of 'showing up' for people who may be 'strangers'. There is a courage in allowing for unknowability, particularly in systems which try and render the subject transparent through invasively targeted state surveillance or charitable salvation. Solidarity and opacity necessarily overlap here, a point Glissant made clear in his conception of "self and other as '*solidaires*'" which Celia Britton argues "is very close to what he himself would later call 'identite´-relation' — an identity that does not define itself by its differences from others but is constituted through its relations with others" (Britton, 2012: 48).

This chapter has attempted to put such ideas - from Glissant, Benjamin and others to Amina, Adam and Idrish – in a dialogue that points to an image of solidarity as a key emic term, and a mode of understanding in itself. As such, I've deliberately left existing anthropological literature on solidarity in the background, as although it offers many rich insights I wanted to experiment here with trying to convey a particular impression of solidarity forged through the actions, words and images of my interlocutors. It is also worth noting by way of conclusion that much existing literature views solidarity mainly through an economic lens, with a focus on 'reciprocity', 'mutual aid' (Rakopoulos, 2016; Theodossopoulos, 2016), and 'the gift' (Mauss, 1967; Gill & Kasmir, 2008). This bears traces of a longer, Durkheimian (1964, 1965) history of 'solidarity' in opposition to 'anomie', with early work often focusing on the city as a space in which "social difference and personal desires are presented as a challenge to the achievement of solidarity" in a functionalist mode (Coleman, 2009: 757; see also Wirth, 1938; Zorbaugh, 1929; see Chapter 3). In contrast, through this chapter I've tried to show how claims of solidarity can involve a complex interplay between 'friends' and 'strangers', creating forms of collectivity and affectivity that allow for but do not require interpersonal knowledge. Images, text and film are used to draw on a multiplicity of perspectives here, creating moments of visibility as well as opacity.

This, as Jeremy Gilbert argues, involves an expression of cohesion, which he links to Deleuze & Guattari's (1987) notion of the molar: "the scale at which any aggregation of elements acquires a certain level of stability, at which objects or subjects emerge as coherent, individuated entities are individuated, if only partially. It's where things hang together" (Gilbert, 2018). This does not imply coherence as 'solidity' however, as "a piece of granite [only] looks solid because the molecules that make it up are organised and move together in

a particular way" (Gilbert, 2018) and, as Denise Riley makes clear, "it's hard enough to be solid in myself" (2000: 174). Here we see how "identities may first have to be loosened or laid aside for the sake of solidarity" (Riley, 2000: 177), a reversed mirror to the 'breaking down inside' we saying Chapter 1's discussion of vicarious 'detainability'. The 'we' informs the 'I' in new ways, resonating with Veena Das' own respectful invocation of what we might call ethnographic opacity: "when I reach bedrock I don't break through the resistance to the other, but in this gesture of waiting I allow the other to mark me" (2007: 17). Friendship, care and solidarity all involve attending to such 'resistance', and a willingness to be changed by the process.

This chapter has shown how the framing of solidarity can be as wide as a global live-streaming of protests against the Sudanese regime, or as intimate as an anti-racist 'family reunion', leaking into other screens, rooms and public spaces way beyond this. Following Idrish, we find solidarity can be the courage to fight, to stand with someone unknown, to be marked by their struggle, and to acknowledge how we are often opaque to ourselves. Solidarity, like hope or love, is itself a 'moving image' then of sorts, always reduced by attempts to pin it down or capture its 'essence'. Anthropological 'ways of seeing' can learn a lot from attending to this movement, to opacity, where overlapping forms of friendship, care and the 'stranger' can play a key role in moments of resistance against systems of 'detainability'.

Conclusion

"One of their own"

On Thursday 13th May 2021 I sat down to check my computer and heard the familiar ping of a WhatsApp message. It was from one of the many groups we have for the Glasgow No Evictions Network, a short statement, "Kenmure Rd in progress," quickly followed by another, "RAID IN POLLOKSHIELDS – now". The address was just around the corner from my flat, and I arrived there shortly to find about ten people blocking a white van emblazoned with 'immigration enforcement'. A few doors down, a large group of people coming out of the local mosque stopped to ask us what was going on, having been at their morning prayers for the holy day of Eid al-Fitr. Police were arriving and starting to form a cordon around the van, next to a bus stop that later became a distribution point for water, snacks and sun cream. Over the subsequent eight hours the crowd around the van swelled into the high hundreds, and the stream of messages that started "raid in progress" turned to videos of two detained men being released.

What was quickly tagged as the 'Battle of Kenmure Street' became an international news story, focused on the narrative of collective 'people power' beating the Home Office. In the outpouring of reports, media requests and people wanting to get involved that followed, many asked what had contributed to this success: the use of online messaging, drawing on existing local groups? The speed of the mobilisation? The intervention of Scottish politicians and well known legal figures? The sheer volume of people in the face of a police force that seemed, right until the last moment, to be preparing for a largescale and violent dispersal? Or a mixture of all these factors, and more? As friends from the No Evictions Network, writing for the Tripod blog in the weeks after, put it:

> The successful anti-raids action on Kenmure Street on 13th May was a spontaneous mobilisation, but one with a decades-long history of organising behind it. It is the latest iteration of a long history of militant working class resistance to evictions in Glasgow dating back to the days of Red Clydeside and Mary Barbour's rent strikes over a century ago. At Kenmure Street, a Glasgow community demonstrated an unbreakable solidarity—ultimately more powerful than the Home Office and Police Scotland's show of force— resulting in the release of two men detained in an immigration van for over eight hours. Lakhvir Singh, one of the men detained and later released said "I am lucky that my fate brought me to Glasgow, where the people come out to support one of their own," perfectly encapsulating the spirit of anti-racist working class solidarity of the day, in which hundreds of neighbours and activists surrounded an immigration van and chanted "These are our

neighbours, let them go!" a slogan which directly breaks the Home Office's attempts to demonise, 'other,' stigmatise and scapegoat migrants. (Mitha & Hughes, 2021)

***

Figure 21: Holding Space on Kenmure Street

I was struck throughout the day by how many of the ideas and people I've written about through this thesis were present at Kenmure Street. Friends from Unity Centre, We Will Rise, No Evictions Network, Docs Not Cops and Living Rent were scattered through the crowd. WhatsApp groups full of people from the Participant Action Research Group (Chapter 4) exploded with coverage and photos as the day went on. The street was full of faces and banners that were familiar from protests throughout the year, documented (as in Chapter 7) through camera phone footage from all angles. As I wandered around the street through the hours - trying to keep track of police numbers, nipping to the toilet in a nearby friend's house, being passed crisps and juice by people I'd never met – I couldn't help but reflect on the spatial composition of the crowd: a holding cell within a Home Office van,

circled by a cordon of Police Scotland officers, itself surrounded by an ever growing cordon of local people and protestors. Who is held by whom in such a moment? And how do the lines of state power and resistance blur or become distinct? This was an acute question in terms of the frictions between British 'Home Office' immigration enforcement and the devolved powers of Police Scotland, a quiet but persistent thread throughout this thesis, speaking to the complex entanglements of state and nation in a polity with devolved powers. But beyond these intra-national debates, the sense of being part of such concentric circles of support and control spoke to the questions of relationality, spatial containment and friendship that have been threaded through each chapter. In various ways, the people and groups in this thesis have tried to 'hold space' against a system and material environment that constantly tries to monopolise control of both mobility and immobility. Yet, as Kenmure street showed, this isn't definitive, and particularly when immigration enforcement encroaches into particular neighbourhoods and community, people are very willing to fight back.

Key to this was not just the history of organising that helped prepare for such a 'battle', but the way such organising was overtly geared towards 'unconditional' support, a solidaristic version of the 'unknown stranger' examined in Chapter 3, which rejects the notion that only certain kinds of people deserve fighting for. Kenmure Street was a profoundly moving example of the kind of non-judgemental kinship that Alyssa spoke about in the vignette I used to introduce this whole thesis, sat in a café on my first date of fieldwork. Here, "friendship means strength in the struggle, but vicariously. Vicarious support," not requiring transparent 'knowledge' of the person being supported. Opacity and solidarity, which I linked together in the last chapter as both involving a 'leap of faith' and sense of mutuality, were key here: people came out to support a 'neighbour', a 'friend' (a word I heard being used to describe the men throughout the day too), perhaps drawing on their own experiences of racialized policing, discrimination and immigration controls, but not needing to know 'the details' of the person facing such detention in order to offer support to them. Though a few of us gathered small bits of information through the day about the two men inside the van, trying in vain to get the police to let us pass them a phone or allow an immigration lawyer inside to speak with them, we never really knew much more than names and family contacts. With this in mind, it is hard to express the emotional impact,

after staring, shouting and chanting at a closed van door for over eight hours, on seeing it opened, and two people come out, waving and gesturing out their hands in a diamond prayer of thanks and love. 'One of their own,' was the evocative, interpersonal phrase one of the men, Lakvir Singh, used to describe himself in subsequent interviews, a phrase that echoed in my head whenever I walked down Kenmure Street in the weeks that followed.

Figure 22: Release

Contested Temporalities

Like one of Alyssa's other points from the Introduction – "the importance of hanging out, at people's houses, talking rubbish! To be outside all that – we chat, we laugh" – Kenmure Street also reminded me of how many things that informed this thesis existed outside it. Here was a key episode that happened way after the 'end' of my fieldwork, reminding me of the usefulness of seeing both 'end' and 'start' as blurry, indistinct things. The degree to which I became a part of the lives of people I befriended, worked with and spent time alongside is partly measured by how hard those lines are drawn. Academia has certain understandings of 'entering' and 'exiting' the field that are questioned by Alyssa's notions of vicariousness, commitment and 'hanging out', along with 'spontaneous' moments such as Kenmure Street. To create a domain of friendship and care 'outside' the grim struggles of life in the British asylum and immigration system is fraught and tricky, but has animated this thesis. This is evidenced through sections on friendship and befriending within detention, to forms of home-making, city-dwelling, collective support, healthcare and work. As with any anthropological project, a large amount of intimate, meaningful and important stuff was also left 'outside' this thesis, but is hopefully still present in subtle and instructive ways within it. While the 'outside' and 'inside' have been a general organising theme throughout, these have never been distinct: relations of care and friendship are often about the blurring and negotiation of boundaries. "Becoming part" of another (to quote Alyssa again) involves a sharing of 'inside' and 'out' which complicates the distinctness of these two categories. And, as with the layers of containment we saw at Kenmure Street, these are always in relation to other boundaries and borders, sometimes concentric, sometimes overlapping, never impermeable.

The three chapters which I began with focused on the ways in which such forms of control, support, care and friendship operate within Immigration Detention and its wider spatial forms. Chapters three to six moved to consider how different forms of relationality and subjectivity are complicated within such spaces of 'carceral care', in navigating ideas of the 'state', drawing on categories of 'harm' and 'vulnerability' in an intrinsically 'harmful environment', and attempting to be 'productive' and 'valued' when denied the right to work. Chapter seven and this conclusion have attempted to connect some of these threads

through thinking about solidarity, opacity and resistance**.** Linking all these sections, and Alyssa's initial, vivid notion of friendship in the face of detention, are particular forms of temporality. As Clara Han argues: "selves are not unitary subjects who are stable and fixed in time, but rather are enmeshed in multiple relations" (Han, 2012: 231) and understanding "different ways of being oriented to and living in time allow[s] one to attend to *how* the self is enmeshed in relations" (Han, 2012: 233). For Alyssa, at a certain time in her life, this meant the steady repetition of phone calls from strangers-becoming-friends at a distant volunteer drop-in centre, and then finding herself on the other side of the phone once 'out'. 'Vicarious strength' is built into the rhythms of action then, always at risk of falling away or going off course, but maintained through a mutual process of 'finding time' for one another. In a similarly granular way, the iterative protest chants of the preceding sections - "Who are we? Sudanese!", "Here to stay! Here to fight!", "These are our neighbours, let them go!" – make temporal claims in both form and content, inviting speakers to join in a collective effort of articulating a shared 'we' in re-articulations of past, present and future.

Boundaries of the collective are made and unmade in small ways with each shared utterance, but these build into a collective 'we' that is both solid *and* in process, always also 'enmeshed in multiple relations'. With a slightly wider temporal lens we can see the importance for Jane (in Chapter 4) of opening a letter from the Home Office in her 'own time', or Adam's constant reminder to 'take time' over friendships, research and work. This works against a backdrop of temporality that can be understood through Alyssa's notion of 'deautonomization', the removal of autonomy: indefinite detention, waiting for asylum decisions that can take months and years, clocking in to various Home Office checkpoints, the constant inability to plan for a withheld future. Thinking of conflicting temporalities in this way allows for a nuanced and wider understanding of 'mobility' (see Sheller, 2018) that can appreciate the people who wish to 'stay put' (as in Chapter 2), along with those who move, at a pace they try to make their own.

This thesis has been my attempt to try and carve out time to think through and work against such systems of 'deautonomization', bordering and 'detainability'. Control over one's time is a privilege afforded by PhD research, and I tried to use this throughout my years of funded study to be available, useful and politically committed to those I worked with. Focusing on friendship and care throughout this, as a methodogical as well as theoretical focus, meant

never losing sight of these inequalities of time, and so much else, but in hoping that both the record and process of such a project could have political utility. As such, whilst I have expanded upon literature around relatedness, care, carcerality, work and 'the state' throughout, I have attempted to weave such work into practical discussions of complicity, shared vulnerability and solidarity, always orientated to political action. My discussions of 'friendship', as fraught with risk but charged with radical possibility, always had this goal in mind: to create theories and practices of interpersonal political action and ethical engagement with those experiencing the violence of the UK Border Regime. As outlined through the thesis, this also involves complex but vital forms of 'unknown' others: strangers, comrades, colleagues, neighbours, and kin in the broadest sense. Friendship does not exist 'above' but alongside such connections, with solidarity (as discussed in the preceding Chapter) involving a 'leap of faith' in trusting the capacity of others to act in mutual ways, and a respect for each other's 'opacity'. This can feel particularly necessary within the invasive, carceral and violent spaces of 'detainability' I've outlined through the thesis, where being on the 'edge' of inclusion or recognition is a 'holding space' in itself. Expanding our understanding of how the contemporary British border regime produces and enforces such spatial and categorical liminality is vital for trying to dismantle it. Central to this, and foregrounded throughout the thesis, are the ways in which people within this system navigate, make meaning and create interpersonal connections throughout their 'detainability', creating theories and practices that resist the power of these 'holding spaces' in multiple ways. Friendship and care play key, complex roles in such narratives, structuring how people make interpersonal connections, inhabit carceral space, access legal recognition, healthcare and work, and 'hold space' in different ways.

Of course, people are 'held' whilst detainable in a more overtly carceral sense. Though resplendent with rhetoric around 'duties of care', Immigration Detention in Britain is a fundamental deprivation of liberty, indefinite and invisibilised, that has grown in roughly thirty years from being a marginal part of the British border regime to being one of its most central tenets. It operates as a locus for a whole range of disciplinary techniques that predate but are amplified by the Hostile Environment, in which citizenship itself becomes imbued with responsibilities to police and determine the non-citizenship of others. Such

processes fit into far deeper histories of racialization, colonialism and border violence, which get buried under narratives of the British state as 'saviour' of suffering others, with a 'proud history of welcome'. 'Detainability' is thus experienced for many as a sensation of 'being held' in time and space by an indistinct 'state' that withholds access to legal status, physical liberty, relational support and, in the unpredictabilty of it all, temporality itself. Ultimately though, by attending to the ways in which people 'hold space' themselves within the 'holding spaces' of British immigration enforcement, we can glimpse forms of resistance, solidarity, care and friendship that push back against the horrors of the present, and point to different possible futures.

Adam and I swap a string of messages and voice notes over WhatsApp, before eventually managing to meet in Glasgow Green. We find each other near the white glass tower of the People's Palace, and greet with the awkward negotiations of proximity that have become everyday practice during the Covid-19 Pandemic: outstretched elbows, feinted handshakes, laughter. He offers me some mysterious seeds from a pocket: "it's good, for the body and immune system." We chew and walk in a slow rhythm through the park, the stringy bitter taste of the seed numbing my mouth slightly.

It's a warm grey day, the Clyde swollen with autumn rain as we walk alongside it, away from the city.

"I'm sorry it was so long that I didn't get in touch," he tells me.

"Not at all, I'm sorry if I was being annoying – I got a bit worried that you were ok."

"Yes, everything is good. You know, I just felt I needed to take some time. Lots happened, sometimes it's good to wait."

Adam fills me in about his new college course, training as a car mechanic – how they're still allowed into the campus once a week for some practical teaching, but everything else has had to go online. We talk about his brother and niece, my partner and sister, filling in the picture of our lives through the people who make it up. I talk a bit about teaching over Zoom, and trying to finish this, my thesis, of which Adam has been such a key part.

We circle back through the park as the chat continues: political shifts in Sudan, mutual friends and campaign groups, memories of parties and events we'd been to through the previous year. Out of the blue Adam points to a small grey car parked at the side of the park – "you like my new car then?"

"Oh wow, yeah – I didn't realise you'd bought one. It's a Nissan right? This is like the one my mum and dad had when I was a kid."

"Yes, Nissan. A good car. I use it for the Uber deliveries. I drive to the rich areas and wait for orders there, it's a shit amount of money for each drop off but I can fit it around everything."

I check my phone, and Adam pulls his out too.

"You have to go right? To meet your friend? Well there's one other thing, I haven't told most people yet, I wanted to see you first. But, my wife gave birth this April, in the middle of this whole Covid thing. I have a son!"

He shows me a grainy picture of a him holding a baby on his phone, laughing at my uncontrolled cooing and joy.

"I'm so happy for you! Congratulations!" I smile, patting his shoulder in a momentary lapse of Covid etiquette.

"It is good; we are very happy. It is a strange time; the world has stopped. But not him. He just started crawling. At some point, you will have to come and meet him."

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