

**A Micro-Ethnography: Exploring Relations between
Somali and South African traders in Clarehill, Cape
Town**

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Abstract

Xenophobia has become a dominant narrative in contemporary South Africa. In this thesis, I hone in on a micro, informal economic market that functions cohesively and convivially with both South African and Somali transmigrant traders in it. Religion is one of the key ways through which migrants are able to access social networks and social capital. Islam, the dominant practised religion in the market, thus forms a foundation for strong, emotionally supportive, caring relationships between Somali transmigrants and South Africans. The relationships between South African traders and Somali transmigrants are mutually constitutive, as they lean on one another for stability during a time that is unstable for both groups. The closeness of their relationships is evident through the way in which they tease and joke with one another, and the many ways in which they offer intangible support to each other. This thesis illustrates that despite the dominant xenophobic narrative, a close social kinship is formed in the Roelof Street market between South Africans and Somali transmigrants.

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Introduction

I watch Azhar walk towards the storage space where they keep all their merchandise. As usual, he walks while looking down at his cellphone. Mohammed stands beside me. We barely speak as we are both still in the process of waking up. It is 6:30 in the morning and darkness still pervades Clarehill station. We pull our jackets closer, patiently waiting for the sun to surface and provide us with some much needed warmth. We look towards Azhar who seems to be taking his own time. Out of the darkness walks a young man towards Azhar. Azhar looks up; I can see he doesn't know the young man as he waits in confusion for what the young man wants. I am a little surprised that Azhar is not acquainted with the young man, as Azhar and Mohammed for the most part, know almost everyone who passes through the Roelof street market. The young man addresses Azhar. He gestures to the cellphone in Azhar's hand. Azhar shakes his head. The young man assaults Azhar, as he is thrown to the ground. The young man punches him through the face and kicks him repeatedly. I freeze, unsure of what is happening in front me. The early morning silence is broken by Azhar's shrieking and swearing in both Afrikaans and Xhosa. I turn to Mohammed who is beside me. By the time I look his way he is gone, rushing towards his cousin's aid. When the young man realises Azhar is not alone, he runs away. Azhar still has his phone. I am told later by Azhar that the fight started because his assaulter felt Somalians are not supposed to own cellphones and the young man, as a South African, had a right to it¹.

Transnational migration has been a growing field of research over the past two to three decades both internationally and locally. Here in South Africa however, ethnographic work on the lived experiences of transnational migrants has been limited in scope and methodology (Owen, 2015; Sichone, 2008). In this thesis I therefore provide further ethnographic data which can be compared to work done by Sichone (2008) and Owen (2015) on transnational migrations to Cape Town specifically. Further my work adds to the growing focus on transnational migration

¹ Technical note:

Throughout the thesis, I use Arial size 11 that has been indented by 1 cm each side as a way to indicate my raw ethnographic data. I believe the narratives of each of my research participants should be experienced the way they were told and heard.

My research participants' names and that of my research site has been changed so as to protect the identity and anonymity of the people I worked with.

as produced by the African Centre for Migration Studies in Johannesburg (Landau, 2006; Amisi, 2006).

In May 2008, South Africa experienced two weeks of xenophobic violence that estimates “62 dead, including 21 South Africans; 100 000 displaced; [and] more than 1000 arrests” (Monson and Arian, 2001: 24). Since May 2008, South Africa has been constructed as a largely xenophobic country (Harris, 2010). The ethnographic vignette above reflects a moment in the field. Considering the xenophobic nature of violence aimed at foreign nationals as reported in the South African media, the above vignette would be expected in relation to the dominant xenophobic narrative. However, during my time in the field this particular experience was an anomaly; an experience disjointed from what I had observed on a day to day basis over a period of about six months.

In a small informal market in Cape Town, I was drawn into fieldwork by the relationships that exist between South Africans and Somali migrants. Wise and Velautham (2013) state that in the contemporary world of globalisation and multiculturalism, the dominant focus has been on the ways in which diverse societies are dysfunctional rather than the ways in which they are convivial. As a counterpoint to this assertion, I offer my own work which underscores how migrants and South Africans are able to co-exist in a convivial space. The ethnographic chapters pay careful attention to the ways in which these relationships were created, maintained and continue to exist².

In Chapter one, I locate my field of study in relation to broader discussions on migration and social cohesion. I discuss the way in which migrants can exist transnationally by maintaining connections to their home countries in the receiving country. I further discuss the concepts of social capital and social networks and how they function in guiding migrants through the integration process in the receiving country.

In order to fully understand my research participants, it is important to understand their socio-historical context. The people I worked with have constructed their identity and the way they understand the world through their enculturation and their past experiences. Thus, chapter one and two provide a socio-historical context of both Somalia and South Africa; the origin of my Somali informants is thus provided, as well as that of my South African informants. Chapter

² As I write (February 2017) the threat of further xenophobic violence exists as a group, identified as anti-immigrant, marched in Pretoria to protest the presence of African immigrants resident in South Africa (see <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/02/24/xenophobic-violence-erupts-south-africa>)

two refers to the pre-migration phase, where my Somali research participants were still resident in Somalia. This chapter discusses the origins of Somali transnational migrants, the environment they were raised in, and why they eventually left.

Chapter three considers the post-migration phase, which details their arrival in the host country, South Africa. In this chapter, I discuss the socio-political environment the Somali migrants entered, and the 'home' of my South African research participants.

In chapter four I unpack my fieldwork experience, detailing how the research was done. I discuss my limitations and my socially constructed subjectivity. I also discuss the complexities of working in a fieldsite that is both 'home', and 'alien'. This particular chapter is therefore reflective and reflexive in nature.

Chapter five provides the conceptual framework for the thesis, as I discuss three concepts that have particular resonance in my work. These concepts are, social spaces, habitus and conviviality. I show how these three concepts, while conceptually separate, are interlinked in relation to the broader themes of the thesis.

The Somali migrants and the South Africans experience a similar feeling of disconnection and dislocation. Chapter six, the first substantive ethnographic chapter, thus engages with this shared feeling of disconnection and dislocation. Through this discussion I allude to a similar void felt by both my South African and Somali research participants. I show how this shared void plays a role in creating a convivial space of belonging in the Roelof Street market.

Somalia is an Islamic country and the majority of my South African research participants are Muslim. Chapter seven thus considers the role religion plays in assisting migrants in the integration process. I pay specific attention to how Islam and the values of Islam have contributed to creating close emotional relationships between South African citizens and Somali migrants in the market space. I also highlight individual agency through detailing biographic experiences of two Somali migrants who have similar trajectories but experience South Africa in very different ways.

In the final ethnographic chapter, I discuss two elements of the market as a social space: teasing and joking relationships, and care. These two elements illustrate the level of comfort that exists among the 'residents' of the market space. This discussion leads me to argue that a fictive kin system has been created and exists in the market which further strengthens the bond between South Africans and Somalis.

In the concluding chapter I weave the various threads discussed in the chapters together. I show how my work is of particular importance against a backdrop of a dominant xenophobic narrative that exists in South Africa. I further illustrate how my work fits in to the migration literature with particular focus on social capital and social cohesion.

Chapter 1

Locating the Field of Study: Migration and Social Cohesion

Migration is a multi-faceted, complex phenomenon that has drawn much attention from researchers across various disciplines. Migration, as a research topic, is interdisciplinary as it can be analysed from many different lenses and through various phenomena and social aspects (Richmond, 1988). Castles and Miller (1993) suggest that migration can only be truly understood in its complexity “when researchers accept common theories, concepts, tools, and standards [so that knowledge will] begin to accumulate” (Massey, 1994: 700).

It is only in the mid-part of the twentieth century that anthropologists in particular have brought their attention to the complex study of migration (Castles and Miller, 1993). Brettel and Hollifield state that

“anthropology did not give the study of migration high priority as an area of research until the late 1950s and early 1960s. As anthropologists progressively rejected the idea of cultures as discretely bounded, territorialised, relatively unchanging and homogenous units, thinking and theorizing about migration became increasingly possible” (2000:97).

Despite this late anthropological interest in it is not a contemporary phenomenon. Migration dates back to prehistoric times where hominids moved in order to survive. Inskip (1978: 148) suggests that hominids began to move into southern Africa between 3 and 4 million years ago. Migration has since continued and increased unabated with modernization and globalisation. With the modernization of technology and communication, movement has become more plausible to a larger number of people that includes people categorised as refugees, sojourners, temporary workers, immigrants, undocumented migrants and transnational migrants. Migration is thus driving the creation of a more complex and interconnected material world. As Coombe and Stoller argue, migration “is a complex encounter between multiple cultural worlds all of which are transformed through this encounter” (1994:257).

Transnationalism

Transnationalism is defined as “the processes by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement” (Glick-Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, 1999: 1). As a theoretical framework, transnationalism is the understanding that immigrants maintain a connection with their home country. It rejects the notion that immigrants abandon their enculturation and the roots they created in their country of origin.

Transnationalism thus illustrates that individuals are not bounded by national boundaries but instead carry it with them as they migrate (Glick-Schiller et al, 1999:1; Appadurai, 1999: 463; Leonard, 1997: 120; Beck-Gernsheim,2007: 276). It is “redolent of multiplicity, pluralism and fertile hybridity” (Van Hear, 1998: 253) and as Owen states “the transnational understanding of migration therefore shifts the understanding of static cultural identities, or the loss thereof, to a more nuanced understanding of constructed identities that are particular to time and places”(2014:19).

Technological advancement in the 20th Century has made for a broader range of transport and communication which has strengthened the possibilities for transnational ties (Brettell, 2000: 104; Van Hear ,1998: 256;). Immigrants maintain a connection to their country of origin through letters, emails, text messages, phone calls and various forms of social media and applications. In terms of my research, the young Somali migrants use Facebook and minimal phone calls and emails to maintain a connection to Somalia (those back home). In chapter five, I discuss the limited communication the young Somali migrants have with their families in Somalia. Further, I discuss how the limited communication affects their need to create social, kin-like relationships in Cape Town.

After the civil war broke out in Somalia in 1991, there was an influx of Somali migrants into South Africa in the mid-1990s (IRIN, 2008)³. Johannesburg and Cape Town were the cities of choice, as they have the most Somali migrants (Jinnah, 2010). In Johannesburg, Somali migrants generally are localised to one area while in Cape Town they are spread across the city (Jinnah, 2010). Jinnah (2010) argues that there were three waves of migration to South Africa from Somalia. The first was in the mid-1990s, specifically in 1994 when South Africa became a democratic country and was seen as a place of opportunity for many countries in Africa (Jinnah, 2010). The second wave took place between 1995 and 2000 and the third when Ethiopia invaded Somalia in 2006 (Jinnah, 2010). Jinnah states that “there are no accurate figures on the number of Somalis in South Africa although estimates range from 27 000 to 40 000. In 2006, at the start of the third wave, a total of 3 024 asylum seekers from Somalia applied for asylum in South Africa” (2010: 91).

³ SOMALIA-SOUTH AFRICA: Foreign competitors not welcome. Accessed at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20090322051922/http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/c04594c3bbf18998e74afc14c3993a94.htm>

Migration from Somalia to South Africa is not without peril, as accommodation and a secure livelihood are uncertain. My research participants informed me that it is in their culture to assist another and to provide when you have what someone does not. Azhar, Abdi and Mohammed were each taken in by a Somali who had already established a home and a livelihood in Cape Town. The young Somali men stayed with their caregivers, who provided them with housing and assisted in them securing some form of work in Cape Town, until they were stable enough to go on their own. I was told by my research participants that this is the cycle that exists within the Somali migrant network: you help new migrants the way that you have been helped. They do not always know each other prior to migration but once in the city help will always be provided as though they are family.

My research participants' experiences highlight the importance of accessing a social network in a new country. Social networks and social capital play a critical role in a migrants integration into a new country. Social networks and social capital are particularly important in my research as I show how the young Somali men not only accessed Somali national networks, but also accessed a South African social network as a way to maintain close, emotional relationships.

Social Networks and Social Capital

Social networks and social capital only exist in relation to one another. Specific social capital is accessed through accessing a particular kind of social network. A number of theorists have defined social capital in different of ways. Three main social capital theorists include Putnam Bourdieu and Coleman.

Bourdieu defines social capital as "the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1999:119 quoted in Field, 2008:17). Bourdieu's definition highlights inequality in society and the way in which class divisions are continuously perpetuated. Bourdieu's understanding of social capital is based on the idea that social elites wanted to remain exclusive. Thus cultural capital was used as a way to measure if an individual possessed the desired traits of an elite social network. By possessing a particular kind of cultural capital, an individual would then be able to access a particular kind of social network, and its social capital. This access and the use thereof could lead to social mobility.

Bourdieu argues that education plays a crucial role in an individual's access to social capital that is valued, specifically by society's elite. Coleman agrees with Bourdieu in the sense that social capital and education work together. Coleman suggests that a family's social capital will ensure a student's progress. Coleman then defines social capital as

"the norms, the social networks, and the relationships between adults and children that are of value for the child's growing up. Social capital exists within the family, but also outside the family, in the community" (Coleman (1990:334) in Field (2008:27).

Coleman (1988:S118) argues that it is in the interests of an individual to "bring social capital into being". He suggests that social actors have to be active participants in a social network in order to access social capital. Coleman (1988) states that race and class do not play a role in accessing social capital, instead it lies in the choices of the individual to enter a particular social network and gain social capital.

Owen (2011) discusses a gap in Coleman's understanding of social networks and social capital. Owen states that Coleman "loses sight of the many ways in which relationships are created without forethought or the strategic measurement of benefits" (2014:34). She argues that there are two ways in which relationships are formed by social actors (Owen, 2011). In the first instance, relationships are strategically created as a way to access a particular social network (Owen, 2011). In the second instance, relationships can be created unintentionally, where an individual is unaware of the social capital and social network that they could access through a particular relationship (Owen, 2011).

Putnam defined social capital as "features of social life - networks, norms and trust - that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives" (Putnam, 1996:156 in Field, 2008:35). In 1990, Putnam suggested that the lack of 'civicness' in the United States was due to citizens' declining stock of social capital (Field, 2008). Instead of looking at the individual only, Putnam looks more broadly by focusing on the collective.

Owen argues that "a social actor's participation in a network does not give him access to social capital" necessarily (2014: 35). Rather a social actor has to be an *active* member of a particular social network, as a passive member of a social network will not have guaranteed access to the social capital that exists in the network (Owen, 2011).

Social networks and social capital are of particular importance in migration studies. These two concepts highlight how forming relationships are critical for migrants' survival in a new country. Field (2008) sums up the importance of these two concepts in two words:

‘relationships matter’. In my research, I pay specific attention to the relationships that exist between South Africans and Somali migrants in an informal economic market. I argue in this thesis that the relationship created between these two groups are beneficial to both. Social networks and social capital are underscored by forms of exchange that occur between individuals. Thus, all active social actors involved in the social network benefit from it. It could be assumed that only the Somali migrants benefit from their expanded social network as they are integrated into Cape Town. However, I argue that the expanded social network is based on reciprocity, and both groups of traders benefit. Chidester, Dexter and James (2003) state that social capital is an indicator of social cohesion.

Social Cohesion

Social cohesion is discussed as ‘solidarity’ or ‘togetherness’ and involves high levels of trust (Demireva, 2015). South Africa has embraced the idea of social cohesion through the principle of ‘*ubuntu*⁴’ - which signifies mutual, reciprocal recognition of humanity (Chidester et al., 2003). Chidester et al. define social capital as “social networks informed by trust that enable people to participate in reciprocal exchanges, mutual support and collective action to achieve shared goals” (2003: 323). Chidester et al. (2003) argue that social capital – as an indicator of social cohesion – is the key to democracy and development.

Chidester et al. (2003) discuss four different levels of social capital which contribute to social cohesion in South Africa. These include: labour, government, business and community (Chidester et al., 2003). Out of the four spheres discussed by Chidester et al. (2003), the one that speaks most to my research data is that of community. Chidester et al. state that

“a community is a kind of social kinship. In a local community, social capital as a kind of ‘fictive kinship’ is accumulated in and through social networks, informed by trust, sympathy and mutual obligation, which enable people to act together in advancing common interests” (2003: 330).

Chidester et al. (2003) discuss how these local community networks of social capital is representative of a kinship model of a family.

While Chidester et al.’s (2003) discussion on community, social kinship and social capital resonated with my work, their discussion missed something crucial in my work – the presence of migrants in South Africa. Chidester et al. (2003) refer only to *local* networks and they do not discuss a local, community based network that is inclusive of migrants and locals.

⁴ “I am because you are”

Demireva (2015) argues that most research analyses diversity in social cohesion (e.g. race, class, gender) as peculiar to differences in South Africa, excluding national differences. Research has indicated how migrants may influence social cohesion in a country, but very little attention has been paid to the way in which migrants actively contribute to a socially cohesive society. In my thesis, I argue that my Somali research participants and South African research participants have created a community, social kinship network that contributes to social cohesion on a micro level.

In conclusion, transnationalism refers to the way in which migrants are 'free' of national boundaries even as they carry with them characteristics of their home country into the receiving country. Migrants maintain links to their place of origin (home), while they actively pursue nationally homogenous and heterogeneous social networks that offer levels of integration into the receiving country. Through the active pursuit of these networks, African transmigrants and South African residents are creating socially cohesive communities that agitate against an easy suggestion that social cohesion in South Africa is forged merely by South Africans (Owen, 2011, 2015 and 2016). As my research demonstrates, social cohesion is not only possible, but a viable social outcome, of relationships created, and maintained between Somali transmigrants and South African residents.

Chapter 2

Pre Migration to South Africa - Somalia



Image 1: Somalia located in Africa.

Source: <http://www.lahistoriaconmapas.com/atlas/africa+map/somalia-africa-map.htm>



Image 2: of Somalia.

Source: <http://keywordsuggest.org/gallery/111294.html>

This ethnographic thesis focuses primarily on relationships built and sustained among a diverse range of people at an informal market in Clarehill, Cape Town. In order to fully understand the relationships and the complexities that exist within sustaining them, it is important that the socio-political and historical context of each national grouping is understood from the beginning.

Historical overview of Somalia

Pre-colonial Somalia (before 1839)

Somali⁵ people had a strong sense of cultural and linguistic identity although they did not have a single political unit (Lewis, 2008). Somalia was recognised as a nation and not a state even though they possessed statehood cultural prerequisites (Lewis, 2008). It originally was, and continues to be, constituted of six major clan families (Lewis, 2008). These include: the Darod, The Isaaq, the Dir and the Hawiye, the Rehanwein, and the Digil (Lewis, 2008). Clan families are linked through common ancestry and are further “interrelated through complex networks or social relationships, which extend over clan territories marked within the national territory” (Lewis, 2008: 25).

These six major clan divisions never combined nor did they remain as separate, autonomous political systems within the Somali political system (Lewis, 2008). Because these clan groups were large, widely spread out and lacking the necessary organisation, they were not able to form a structured political unit (Lewis, 2008). Unity was a further challenge as the clans were divided into a host of subsidiary clans and clan divisions as they were frequently dispersed and scattered as a result of their nomadism (Lewis, 2008).

Clan groups, traced through the male line, are patrilineal and patriarchal (Lewis, 2008). Therefore, the basic structure of group division and political identity was formed through family genealogies (Lewis, 2008). Divisions of groups were in addition determined by “interests, as perceived, at different points in time, e.g. competition over grazing or water, or commercial control in towns” (Lewis, 2008: 28). These homogenous partitions were an imperial partition of the Somali national culture (Lewis, 2008). Senior and adult men were looked to as leaders of the various clan groups as there were no appointed chiefs or presidents in the political sense (Lewis, 2008). Somalia during this period (5th century BC) was seen as a

⁵ Throughout the thesis, I use ‘Somali’ and ‘Somalians’ interchangeably as there is no difference in meaning

democratic society as they did not have chief headed groups as found widely in the rest of Africa (Lewis, 2008).

Clan groups indicate a familial connection among the members in the group. Blood related or not, every member of a clan group is considered to be family. The familial structure of the clan group functions on obligations and expectations of being supportive and protective of one another. The emphasis placed on the strong value of shared respect and reciprocal support ensured that the various nomadic groups could function efficiently without the need for a centralised power. Centralised political structures were only introduced during the colonial period when colonisers imposed western ideas of centralised ruling on the natives of Somalia.

Colonial Somalia (1839-1897)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the two super powers competing for the Somali region were Britain and France (Lewis, 2008). The main focus for both parties was to gain control of the Nile. The British were drawn to the Aden and “sought to prevent or minimise French influence on the adjacent Somali coast” (Lewis, 2008: 28). At this point the Italians were allies of the British and used them to counter the desires of the French. The French had a relatively similar relationship with the Russians (Lewis, 2008). This particular area was of interest for all parties as it allowed access to trade routes to India. Somalia’s location allowed the British, French and Italians to set up rest stops as they journeyed from Europe to India (Lewis, 2008). In order for the British to have safeguarded the supply of Somali mutton for trading, they “signed ‘protection’ treaties with a number of northern Somali clans” (Lewis, 2008: 28). The French and the Italians followed suit (Lewis, 2008).

During this period, the French, Russians and Italians were also involved in the Anglo-Egyptian revolt. As a result, all three parties provided weaponry to Ethiopia as both Russia and Italy were competing to make Ethiopia a client state (Lewis, 2008). Providing Ethiopia with weaponry turned out to be to the detriment of Italy as they used these weapons to “rout an Italian army based in the expanding Italian colony of Eritrea” (Lewis, 2008: 28) at the battle of Adowa in 1896. In 1884, Menelik (the Emperor of Ethiopia at the time) seized the citadel of Harar and then continued to engage the policy of imperial expansion and aggrandisement in Somalia (Lewis, 2008).

Ethiopia had established themselves as a fellow superpower competitor alongside France, Italy, Russia and Britain. It was during this time that Russia withdrew from the area leaving only arms and military advisors behind (Lewis, 2008). Menelik’s strong, dominating army power,

seeking to impose Ethiopian dominion over Somali peoples, forced Italy, France and Britain to head into negotiations with him.

Through negotiations between France, Italy, Britain and Ethiopia, it was decided that the Somali nation would be divided into five parts. Lewis states that these parts were divided as follows:

“Djibouti which, with the construction of the Franco-Ethiopian railway to Addis Ababa, became Ethiopia’s main port, was under French rule and included ethnically related Afar⁶ tribesmen. Next came the British Somaliland Protectorate which had Hargeisa as its main town, and its neighbour, the Italian Somalia with Mogadishu as its capital. Other Somalis eventually came under the British flag in northern Kenya. Finally, the fifth division consisted of [a] large area known after its main residents as the Ogaden, and the Somali territory around Dawa (Dire Dabbe in Somali. This was the Ethiopian portion” (Lewis, 2008: 29).

Somalia, at this point, had already become an Islamic nation. Thus, partitioning the nation and allowing Christian colonisers to claim various sections evoked a violent reaction from the Ogaden religious leader Sayyid Muhammed Abdille Hassan (Lewis, 2008). Hassan and his guerrillas set out to drive out the ‘infidels’ – Christian colonisers – from Somali territory in order to regain Somali independence (Lewis, 2008). This ‘holy war’ lasted until 1920 and collapsed after the death of Hassan, leaving colonial powers even more invested than before (Lewis, 2008).

The Italians expanded their commercial crops and as they expanded they selected local leaders who were recognised by the Italians as ‘chiefs’ (Lewis, 2008). These ‘chiefs’ worked with Italian authorities and perceived as cooperative, they were awarded with colonial medals and minor titles (Lewis, 2008). The Italians took more controlling rule with the natives of the area than the British. During this period, fascism began to develop momentum in Italy and was thus “implemented locally by strongly differentiating the ‘natives’ from their ‘natural rulers,’ the Italian colonisers” (Lewis, 2008: 30). Unlike the Italian fascist area of Somalia where there were a large number of Italian settlers, Britain’s section had no European settlers and remained predominantly Somali territory (Lewis, 2008).

As the Italian colony became stronger, attempts were also being made to strengthen and expand education as well as to develop a script which would allow Somali to become a written language (Lewis, 2008). However, the British Protectorate violently opposed the idea (Lewis, 2008). Even though Christian missionary work was banned, people were still sensitive and

⁶ Ethnic group in the Horn of Africa

suspicious to possible activity and thus it was only in 1938 when the first government school was opened; a school for girls was only introduced in the 1950s (Lewis, 2008). Western education in Somaliland was generally provided on a small scale and was only available for a select, elite group of pupils (Lewis, 2008). Later, the Italians instituted a wider level of education with a more diverse curriculum (Lewis, 2008). Also, mission activity usually associated with medical clinics and orphan care “was not totally excluded: there were indeed soon enough Christian Somalis to attend regular masses with the Italian settlers, and eventually a Catholic cathedral” (Lewis, 2008: 31).

The continuous Christian missionary activity by the Italians caused friction over the frontier between them and the Ethiopians as their acts went against the ban that had been implemented. Imprecisely defined, the frontier between the territories of Ethiopia and Italy was cause for concern, eventually leading to friction between the two countries. This friction became the unexpected pretext for World War II due to the confrontation in 1934 between both sides' soldiers (Lewis, 2008).

In the early years of World War II, Italy drove Britain out of their Protectorate and set up their ‘Italian African Empire’ which did not last long (Lewis, 2008). Somalis were recruited both into the British and the Italian armies. During this time, a strong relationship was built between the Somalis and the British as the British were seen as liberators when they defeated the Italians in 1941 (Lewis, 2008). Once the Italians were defeated, all of Somaliland fell under British military administration with the exception of Djibouti which was occupied by the French (Lewis, 2008).

The ‘Big Four Power’ (Britain, France, USA and USSR) Allies negotiated future plans for Somaliland. The British proposed to form a united Somali state which would fall under UN Trusteeship as well as British Administration. However, this proposal was rejected and instead Somalia was partitioned yet again (Lewis, 2008). In 1985 the British Protectorate was reinstated and the Italians, who still had a colony in Somalia, returned it under UN Trusteeship (Lewis, 2008). Even though there were protests against it, Ethiopia regained their control over the Ogaden and adjacent territories (Lewis, 2008).

The British Military’s paternalistic nature led them to advocate for and encourage Somali national parties. From 1941-1950 these parties were now “vigorously active: indeed the Somali Youth League, the first major nationalist organ, was created in Mogadishu in its original form with British Military Administration encouragement” (Lewis, 2008: 32). On the 26th June 1960

British Somaliland became independent and by 1 July 1960 Italian Somalia became independent and joined Somaliland to form the Somali Republic (also referred to as Somalia) (Lewis, 2008).

An Independent Somalia

Somalia was under the control of a united British and Italian government who met and elected Adan Abdulle Osman (Hawiye clan) as a provisional president of the state. Later Muhammed Egal was elected as president (Lewis, 2008). Because of the diverse variety of clan groups, composing a cabinet was complicated and took time. The Prime Minister at the time, Dr Abdirashid Ali Shermarke (Darod clan), a political science student at an Italian institution, announced his fourteen cabinet colleagues (Lewis, 2008). Those who formed the cabinet represented all the major clan groups and all the parties of both the north and south of Somalia.

Essentially a European-style, centralised state framework was implemented in Somalia. However, “no serious thought had been given to considering how appropriate these would prove in the local setting, or above all in conjunction with the highly decentralised nature of traditional Somali political institutions” (Lewis, 2008: 34). The traditional context of Somalia was not considered when the state became centralised as it was assumed that this Eurocentric mode of governance would be successful in any context. Traditional Somali ideologies of politics contrasted greatly with that of the European colonialists’ ideas of centralised state ruling.

Besides the contrast in ideologies of the European superpowers, there was also a gap that existed between British and Italian colonial traditions which was a “major preoccupation during the first few years of independence” (Lewis, 2008: 34). This gap included language barriers, ways of administration, accounting, legislature and bureaucratic procedure (Lewis, 2008). The difference in traditions led to considerable friction between British and Italian trained personnel (Lewis, 2008). Trouble continued on 20 June 1961 as “a referendum was held to approve the provisional constitution under which the two ex-colonial territories had united at independence” (Lewis, 2008: 35). When it came to vote on the constitution, votes were split as in the north the constitution was rejected and the south it was strongly supported (Lewis, 2008). This meant that even though the republic had been active for over a year, more than half of the northerners were not in favour of this union. While Somali citizens expressed discomfort and resentment towards the united republic, “by the mid-60s a considerable degree

of effective integration had been achieved” (Lewis, 2008: 35) as there was a general acceptance of the Somali Republic as “an established fact” (Lewis, 2008: 35).

The goal of the national leaders was to eradicate clan groups as a way to unite Somalia under one national identity (Lewis, 2008). Strategies such as referring to ‘clans’ as ‘ex clans’ was used as a way to attempt to move past and out of kinship clan divisions (Lewis, 2008). Simply by referring to them to as ‘ex clans,’ kinship clan groups became associated with Somalia’s past rather than its present during that time. Because national leaders were constituted of members from all of the various clan groups, who each had their own traditions, creating a united Somalian front proved to be challenging and impossible (Lewis, 2008). This also “made it very difficult for the bureaucracy to function effectively” (Lewis, 2008: 35). A ‘clash of cultures’ had been created, as Somali leaders and European leaders had very different understandings of, and preferences for, how a state should function. These disjointed perceptions created constant friction between all parties.

In 1969 a military *coup* resulted in the assassination of President Egal (Lewis, 200). This *coup* was effected as it was argued that Egal’s government was filled with “corruption, nepotism and inefficiency” (Lewis, 2008: 38). However, this was all manipulated by General Siyad Barre, Commander of the Army and Head of State and President of the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC), as he was power hungry and eager to take the lead in Somalia (Lewis, 2008). The aim of the SRC was to “restore Somali virtues with a concerted onslaught, under energetic leadership on the real enemies of progress: poverty, disease and ignorance” (Lewis, 2008: 38). Barre implemented a number of various changes as a way to succeed in the SRC’s aim. These included:

“Civilian district and provincial governors were replaced by military personnel who were installed as chairmen of local revolutionary councils modelled on that in Mogadishu. Unemployed urban tribal drop-outs were recruited for a whole series of public work projects. The death sentence was reintroduced to replace blood compensation paid traditionally in inter-clan feuds. This was part of a wider strategy aimed at abolishing traditional clan divisions and so strengthening the ‘nation’” (Lewis, 2008: 38).

Barre came into power during the time of the Cold War aligning himself with the Soviets to form a powerful trinity with Lenin and Marx (Gundel, 2002). The three were constantly associated with each other as they all had the same ideas about ruling a state: a Marxist dictatorship. The Marxist dictatorship functioned on the idea of a superior elite and a nation which stood in opposition to the Somalian culture of local clan loyalties (Lewis, 2008). While

Barre stated that he aimed to eliminate corruption and clannism, his regime instead “led to a subtle and manipulative exercise in corruption increasingly based on clan politics” (Gundel, 2002:257). Ultimately Barre’s regime mirrored the vision of the Pan-Somalia that would come together as a united nation. As the British and Italians did, Barre sought out various strategies to eradicate the clan groups of Somalia at the time. His strategy included replacing the traditional ‘uncle’ and ‘cousin’ terms used when greeting with the term *jalle* which literally means ‘comrade’ (Lewis, 2008).

In 1977, Barre sent the Somali army to attack Ethiopia in order to conquer the Ogaden region which was still under Ethiopian rule (Gundel, 2002). Barre felt that he would finally be able to create his vision of a Great Somalia as his army was larger and stronger than the Ethiopian army and had received Soviet aid. However, Barre was unaware that Ethiopia appealed to the Soviets because it was developing into a Marxist-Leninist state and thus was supported by the Soviets during its war with Somalia (Gundel, 2002). The Somali army was defeated in this war and “this conflict provoked the first massive refugee movement of Ogaden refugees from Ethiopia ... to Somalia” (Gundel, 2002: 357).

The Somali military defeat in Ethiopia was the springboard for an economic, political and social downward spiral in Somalia to the point where they were in need of external aid (Gundel, 2002). The newly formed Republic soon became corrupted by business elites as they “competed for the spoils that came from preferential access to the state” (Gundel, 2002: 257). Continued corruption and competition for gaining as much monopoly from the state led to both an economic and political crisis which ended up in a state collapse in 1990 (Gundel, 2002). Internal governmental legislation coupled with natural disasters that destroyed crops used for both subsistence and commercial farming resulted in the total collapse of the Republic of Somalia in 1991; a collapse which has not been overturned since (Gundel, 2002). In 1991 and into 1992 “southern and central Somalia were ravaged by inter-clan warfare, banditry, and widespread famine, which claimed the lives of between 240 000 and 280 000 Somalis” (Gundel, 2002:257).

During 1993 and 1995, the UN implemented a Somali peace enforcement operation (UNOSOM) ending the famine (Gundel, 2002). Even though famine had ended, there were still a number of internally displaced refugees (Gundel, 2002). In March 1995, UNOSOM left Somalia as they had become entangled in the conflict. The departure of UNOSOM left Somalia “divided, without a central government, and with an economic infrastructure mostly in ruins”

(Gundel, 2002: 258). Socially, Somalia was fragmented which added to further conflict as clan groups turned on one another. Traditionally Somali people functioned easily without a central government. However, with western influence, the people became dependent on a central government and were also drawn to fascist, Marxist and capitalist ideas of power and prestige, especially in a country that was now poor and with very few resources. Therefore clan groups, that had previously co-existed in peace, were now turning on one another in order to claim roles of power and so access to limited resources. According to Gundel, “localised polities emerged, drawing on differing combinations of traditional, clan-based authorities, Islamic courts and local business people” (2002: 258).

Constant conflicts, lack of resources, and continuous economic and political instability are factors that have led to many Somalis returning to the heart of their nomadic culture: migration. Many young Somalis leave to find work to support older members of their family that are unable to travel or sustain themselves within Somalia (Gundel, 2002). Somali refugees are recorded to be scattered all over the world with some moving internally in Africa and others to Europe, Australia and North America. Most Somali refugees flee towards their neighbouring countries. However, over the past decade, a large number of Somali migrants have migrated even further, crossing South Africa’s border seeking asylum and opportunities to create a sustainable livelihood.

Chapter 3

Post-Migration – Living in South Africa

In the first conversation I had with one of my key research participants Azhar described South Africa as ‘the capital of Africa.’ He said to me that in Somalia, South Africa is perceived as a country with many opportunities for migrants. Considering that Somalia’s complex political history continues to have ramifications in the present, a number of Somalis undertake ‘forced’ migration in order to create a life for themselves. The choice of South Africa as a destination is often noted as a result of its “... position of relative economic prosperity and stability on the continent, it has become an appealing destination for refugees since its transition to democracy in 1994” (Buyer, 2008:228).

South Africa has a long history of internal migration from rural to urban areas and from other countries like Lesotho and Mozambique. Countries in Southern Africa, such as South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe, have become prime opportunistic countries for Senegalese, Congolese and Somali migrants in the last 15 years (Crush, 2001 and Mafukidze, 2006). Migrants arrive in South Africa with the idea that they are coming to a ‘new South Africa’, one that is democratic and has transcended its segregated past. However, while South Africa has become a democratic country, its racialized and segregationist history still impacts the socio-political climate of South Africa.

Colonial South Africa

Europeans first came to South Africa when they settled at the southernmost tip of Africa as part of establishing a rest stop for merchant ships and seafarers between Europe and India. When the Europeans arrived they arrived armed with western weaponry that would prove to be to their advantage (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989). The native inhabitants of South Africa, the Khoekhoe and San, resented the invasion of the Europeans on their land and responded by attacking the settlers (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989). These attacks were mostly thwarted, as Europeans dominated over the Khoekhoe with their western weapons and diseases. Through military defeats Europeans slowly began to move through South Africa taking over Khoekhoe land (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989). As Europeans claimed and pushed native inhabitants off the land, the indigenous inhabitants were enslaved as labourers (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989).

Wilson and Ramphele state that “this process went on for several generations and culminated in a long century of war” (1989:191).

As Europeans settled at the Cape, the need for manual labour increased. Thus, slaves were brought into South Africa from various parts of Africa and South-East Asia (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989). During the 1700s South Africa was host to “more slaves than burghers in the Western Cape” (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989). In this period in South African history, there was a diverse range of people that inhabited the land. However, while the people were diverse, European rule, particularly British and Dutch rule, enforced a Eurocentric way of living. Slaves categorised as phenotypically inferior were further constructed as being ‘backward’ and ‘uncivilised’ (Sandell, 1997). Their mental and emotional capacities were thus questioned, further endorsing their subjugation and colonisation.

Within the first decade of the Europeans’ arrival, they “raised the first of a long line of apartheid barriers by planting a hedge around the settlement, within which the original inhabitants were not allowed to stay” (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989 190). It was at this point that ‘division’ and ‘segregation’ became critical aspects of South Africa’s history. Europeans were associated with superiority as they came in with armed forces that were powerful enough to dominate over the ‘inferior’ natives of the land (Sandell, 1997). History discusses the segregation between ‘natives’ and Europeans. However, while Europeans socially distinguished themselves from slaves and ‘natives’, thus othering slaves and indigenous people, these ‘others’ lived with and worked for them (Wilson and Ramphele, 1989). A particular feature of this co-habitation was the reproduction of a ‘mixed race’, the offspring of white Europeans and their slaves and/or the indigenous people of South Africa (Owen, 2016).

The history between European settlers and the native inhabitants of South Africa is long and complex. With the expansion of European settlers’ occupation of land, more resources were required (Newton-King, 1999). There was a need for more land and more cattle. The settlers moved in on Khoekhoe areas and claimed their land and cattle. Newton-King states that “violent methods [were] used against Khoekhoe in seizing their cattle and compelling them to stay in [Europeans’] service” (1999:39). The Khoekhoe were unable to resist and so lost their land and cattle. As a predominantly pastoral people, and as a way to ensure survival, the Khoekhoe became employees of the settlers so that they would still have access to the land and the cattle (Newton-King, 1999). However as the settler population increased, resulting in an increased need for resources “the status of the Khoekhoe declined gradually from that of clients

with the freedom to refuse their labour to that of unfree servants subject to the labour repressive practices of an increasingly powerful and self-confident master class” (Newton-King, 1999: 40).

The European domination of South African land forged new ways of doing and being for the original inhabitants of the land. Additionally, colonialism dehumanized those who had been colonised and subsequently stripped them of their culture and identity (Kebede, 2001). The role of the coloniser was to align the colonised as closely as possible to European culture and beliefs, as the European way of life was constructed as the ‘right’ way of living, enforcing a process of relearning for the colonised (Kebede, 2001). This process of relearning and integration into the European culture “resulted in the inculcation, deep into the soul of each colonized person, of a devastating inferiority complex” (Kebede, 2001:540). This inferiority complex created a dependent underclass who having lost a sense of their agency were unable to sustain themselves independently of their overlords (Kebede, 2001).

Fanon argues that colonialism destroyed natives’ cultural legacy through racial superiority (Kebede, 2001). This European racial superiority constructed indigenous people as “native [and] uncivilised” (Kebede, 2001: 540), which then further supported racist European ideologies of self and other. These ideologies of self and other thus “help[ed] to define the enemy in terms which permitted the use of savage force against them and legitimate[ed] the construction of a colonial order upon informal slavery” (Newton-King, 1999:2).

Newton-King further states that slavery in the arable regions of the Cape “was harsh and brutal in the extreme, [and that] it had given rise to a deeply divided society in which distinctions of class and colour largely coincided” (1999:41). Thus through a complex history of brutalisation, dispossession, and settlement, superiority was associated with whiteness and inferiority associated with otherness, or blackness. As time progressed, white supremacy became stronger. By 1948, white power was preserved through legalised and legislated segregation – apartheid.

Apartheid South Africa

Apartheid built on the foundation of colonialism, reassured and further confirmed the actions of the colonial overlords. Sandell states that

“When the National Party came into power in 1948 , blacks were already so accustomed to having their lives regulated by the numerically insignificant white minority, that a firm foundation of segregation existed upon which to develop the ideology of apartheid and build its structures” (1997: 98).

White supremacy was emphasised through various legislation implemented by the apartheid government. These include: the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949 which prevented people of different races to marry each other, section 10 of the Immorality Act which made it illegal for people of different races to engage in sexual intercourse, the Separate Amenities Act of 1953 that implanted that there will be no racial interaction in public spaces and the Group Areas act of 1950. The Group Areas Act (1950) resulted in racial groups being divided into different areas within the country. Each town and city had designated areas for specific racial groups. People secluded and forced to remain in their designated areas, limited the interaction between the ‘races’.

By ensuring racial segregation socially, emotionally and legislatively, the apartheid government created a social and economic hierarchy that benefitted one racial group over another. Wilson and Ramphela (1989) claim that the systematic influence on the industrial labour movement is a part of South African history that still has consequences in contemporary South Africa. This movement refers to the labour division between racial groups which had been manipulated in such a way that it would continuously benefit white people. Their “fundamental grievance was found by a special commission to be ‘the colour bar’ which blocks practically all opportunities for promotion” (Wilson and Ramphela, 1989: 194). Black⁷ people had been denied access to progress career wise at the foundation level of education. Not only was their access to education limited, but the available resources, and the standard to which they could aspire was severely limited in comparison to white people. While white people were given the opportunity to complete twelve years of schooling, black people were only allowed to progress to a certain standard in secondary education (Wilson and Ramphela, 1989). Thus, inappropriately trained and unskilled, black people were unable to fill positions that were highly skilled, nor were they given access to the financial ‘success’ enjoyed by white people (Wilson and Ramphela, 1989).

Race Relations in South Africa

Over two decades after South Africa’s first democratic election many African South African citizens still live a reality mired in the pernicious consequences of colonialism and apartheid – land dispossession, exclusion from the formal economy and impoverishment. Owen (2016)

⁷ I am using this term in reference to African, coloured and Indian

argues that the racial and class tensions created during colonisation, and further perpetuated and entrenched during apartheid continues to exist in contemporary South Africa.

Student Fees Must Fall protests at various South African universities in 2015 and 2016 and the case of Penny Sparrow, a woman who made a racist remark on a social media platform in 2016, are two examples of the way in which South Africa's colonialist and apartheid history is still woven into the country's contemporary social context. University students across the country boycotted classes, went head on against the police and fought for tertiary education to be free and decolonised. The Fees Must Fall movement illustrated the racial tensions that still exist in South Africa. Black students voiced feelings of outrage in the higher education sector, as it was argued that universities continue to benefit the white, financially powerful, minority that still reap the benefits of white privilege as they did during colonialism and apartheid.

These particular events that underscore the latent and manifest repercussions of colonisation and apartheid confirms the tenacity of systemic and systematic othering. As Owen states colonisation, segregation and apartheid were "intimate forms of creating and encountering the other" (2016: 366). 'Othering' is thus an integral part of South Africa's history and the contemporary moment. South Africa's strong sense of diversity and colonial history exists in Somalia's history as discussed in the previous chapter. Somalia has a larger amount of diverse clans that co-existed peacefully with one another until they were forced by colonial powers to unite under western terms. Both South Africa and Somalia faced years of violence and enforced social hierarchies by colonial countries. In the same way that colonisation, segregation and apartheid were intimate forms of encountering the other, Owen (2016) argues that the violent xenophobic attacks aimed at foreign nationals in South Africa is a similar form of intimate confrontation with 'the other.'

The racial pigmentocracy placed white people on the top, coloured people below them and African⁸ people at the bottom. During apartheid, in order to maintain white supremacy, coloured people were led to believe that they have more power than African people as they were closer to white people. Owen (2016) argues that the apartheid Coloured Labour Preference Policy ensured that legislatively, coloured people were employed before Africans. By granting coloured people more opportunities than African people and less opportunities

⁸ I am using this term in reference to apartheid racial categorisation that delineated racial groups as White, Coloured, Indian and African.

than white people, the apartheid government created a buffer between ‘the whites’ and ‘the Africans’.

During apartheid, coloured people experienced a certain freedom in Cape Town that Africans were not allowed as they were able to move freely through different spaces without a pass, unlike Africans (Owen, 2016). Owen states that “given the nature of racial socialization, coloureds were encouraged to think and believe they were superior to the African under class” (2016:367). The apartheid government, through the instilled beliefs of the racial hierarchy, caused friction between Africans and coloureds as coloured people were led to believe they were more civilised than African people (Owen, 2016). Still, residential areas like District Six, prior to its demolition provided multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-religious residential, and thus intimate, spaces in Cape Town that antagonised the apartheid order.

Coloured South Africans

Erasmus perceives coloured identity as

“cultural identities comprising detailed bodies of knowledge, specific cultural practices, memories, rituals and modes of being. Coloured identities were formed in the colonial encounter between colonists (Dutch and British), slaves from South and East India and from East Africa, and conquered indigenous peoples, the Khoi and San” (2001: 21).

Coloureds are identified as people of mixed race in South Africa and “are descendants of sexual liaisons between colonialists, slaves and the indigenous Khoisan” (Hendricks, 2005:118). The term coloured is contested in contemporary South Africa as the term was created to refer to ‘no people,’ people who lack heritage and identity (Adhikari, 2005). The underlying assumption then is that “there is something fundamentally wrong with this identity and that some ideological transformation of the bearers will resolve the problems” (Hendricks, 2005:118).

According to Adhikari (2005) coloured identity is the product of various stereotypes and attributes given by past oppressors. Adhikari (2005) notes that culture is dynamic and constantly changing. However, he claims that coloured identity has remained considerably stable and unchanging. Adhikari is struck by “how stable [coloured] identity [was] throughout the era of white domination and how superficial the influences of earlier radical politics and Black Consciousness were” (2005:xiii). Erasmus suggests that

“coloured people have creatively produced their own identities in the context of their relationships to both whites and Africans, as well as their relationships within different coloured communities. These relationships are marked by continuity and change”(2005:23).

Coloured identity is not merely a mix of white, European heritages and black, African heritages but instead a creolisation of a number of different cultures that “include elements of Dutch, British, Malaysian, Khoi and other forms of African culture” (Erasmus, 2005:21). Owen states that “coloured identification was not merely an external imposition but also an identity actively constructed by those who identified as coloured”(2016: 368). Because of colonialism and apartheid, ‘whiteness’ is associated with power and prestige. Being white was, and for some still is, desired and coloured people tried to assimilate as closely as possible to their white, European heritage in order to gain a high social ranking in South Africa’s racial hierarchy (Adhikari, 2005). As quoted in Erasmus (2005), in the late 1990s, political activist and academic, Neville Alexander, “denied the reality of coloured identity arguing that it was white-imposed, reactionary and indicative of new forms of racism; an apartheid relic best left behind us in the post-apartheid era” (Erasmus, 2005:20).

During apartheid, coloured people were perceived by African people as having more privileges and better access to resources than them (Adhikari, 2005). Post-apartheid, African people feel that they were the most disadvantaged during apartheid and thus should be the ones to receive the most compensation for their humiliation, the theft of their land, and their socio-political and economic exclusion in South Africa during segregation and apartheid. Neocosomos (2006) suggests that because African South Africans are fighting for what they feel to be rightfully theirs – economic and political freedoms – they are xenophobic towards foreigners. In other words xenophobia is about access to, and receipt of, economic and political resources that have been long out of the reach of African South Africans’ hands.

Xenophobia in South Africa

In 1994, South Africa’s democracy was meant to lead to equal opportunity for all who live in South Africa, regardless of race. However, the issues emanating from South Africa’s colonial and apartheid past are still prevalent in contemporary South Africa. A large number of black people continue to live in poverty without access to various resources or sources of income. Thus, while South Africa’s apartheid system was abolished over over twenty years ago, its presence still lingers on both in the minds of people and through the socio-economic status of the most vulnerable amongst us – the black majority.

The socio-political context of South Africa is particularly important as the backdrop for this research, as it has a long history of racial segregation and racial prejudice. Stemming from colonialism and apartheid, South Africans have been normalised to the idea of a ‘separate

other' based on race and class (Sichone, 2008). South Africans are therefore considered as "hostile hosts" due to the "colonial legacies [that] still linger on in the institutionalised spatial and mental divides" in South Africa (Sichone, 2008:6).

Necosmos suggests that "government departments, parliamentarians, the police...and the law itself have all been reinforcing a one-way message since the 1990s: we are being invaded by illegal immigrants who are a threat to national stability" (2008:588). He claims that this message is seen through the way in which immigrants are treated and received by law officials. Immigrants are searched, raided and forcibly moved by various members of law enforcement. On several occasions communities are encouraged by police to "uproot or round up illegal immigrants, leading to systematic xenophobic violence" (Necosmos, 2008: 588). These acts reinforce the idea that immigrants do not belong in South Africa and should be treated as pariahs. The Human Rights Watch concluded that

"in general, South Africa's public culture has become increasingly xenophobic, and politicians often make unsubstantiated and inflammatory statements that the 'deluge' of migrants is responsible for the current crime wave, rising unemployment and even the spread of diseases" (Human Rights Watch, 1998:4).

Harris' work (2003) discusses a 'culture of violence' that exists in South Africa. This 'culture of violence' can be defined as "being a situation where the use of violence has become normative instead of deviant and is viewed as an acceptable response in conflict resolution" (Simpson, 1993:12). Harris suggests that this 'culture of violence' is "upheld as the primary 'solution' to daily problems and challenges, necessitat[ing] the introduction of individual identity and group norms, as well as structural and material factors, into an understanding of violence during political transition" (Harris, 2003:1). Harris' (2003) work illustrates how violence has been normalised in South Africa historically throughout colonisation, segregation and apartheid. Necosmos' (2008) work indicates the way in which the 'culture of violence' has been legitimised by the state particularly with regard to xenophobic violence.

Harris (2002) suggests three hypotheses as a way to explain why there has been a perceived increase in xenophobic attacks at the hands of particularly African South Africans. These are: the scapegoat hypothesis, the isolation theory and the biocultural theory.

The Scapegoat Theory

During South Africa's transition into democracy, there were expectations that limited resources, increasing levels of poverty and the continued unequal distribution of wealth would

be issues that would be dealt with and that all South Africans' socio-economic position would be improved (Harris, 2002). The scapegoat theory is linked to these expectations. With a history of deprivation, Harris (2002) argues that that black South Africans feel they would have to compete with migrants for resources, which are already scarce. The focus on African South Africans' xenophobia has been a result of the xenophobic violence that has been mostly experienced in African townships (Valji, 2003; Fisher, 2007). In townships, competition is greater due to the very limited resources available. The Somali migrants I worked with chose not to reside in a township due to their understanding that xenophobia and xenophobic violence are rife in African townships. The migrants I worked with also spent most of their time with coloured South Africans who it has been argued were more privileged than Africans, particularly in the western Cape. I elaborate on coloured privilege further in chapter five.

The Isolation Theory

The isolation theory centres on the idea that during apartheid, South Africans were not only isolated from each other but also from foreigners (Harris, 2002). Harris (2002) suggests that this isolation resulted in South Africans being intolerant of the 'unknown' which has led to a heightened sense of anxiety when having to be in the presence of the 'other' (Harris, 2002). Barbali (2009) states that there is a flaw in this hypothesis as it "assumes that South Africans did not have contact with people of different races or ethnicities until 1994 creating the idea of absolute enclaving by colonial and apartheid governments" (2009:21). During colonialism in South Africa, slaves were brought in from a number of different countries in order to help build the Cape Colony. Also, South Africa has a long history of Basotho and Mozambican labour migration to the gold mines of South Africa (Solomon,). Thus, while apartheid did promote power ideologies of difference, it cannot be argued that during apartheid, South Africa only encountered complete segregation.

The Bio-Cultural Hypothesis

The bio-cultural hypothesis posits that there are distinctive phenotypic differences that indicate who is foreign (Harris, 2002). Through skin colour, accents, dress code and facial features, migrants are easily visible. Colonial ideologies of pigmentocracy added to the negative connotations associated with a darker skin colour and thus darker skin is associated with criminality and poverty (Valji, 2003). The young Somali migrants I worked with dress in western styled attire. However they have distinctive physical features that indicate that they are not South African. Thus, they are easily recognisable as foreigners which in relation to

Harris's (2002) bio-Cultural hypothesis, marks them easily as a xenophobic target – recall the attempt to steal Azhar's cellphone.

These hypotheses provide a sense of how perceptions of xenophobia have been created and are perpetuated in South Africa. A key medium used in contributing to a xenophobic narrative in South Africa is the media.

Xenophobia in the Media

Newspapers, magazines, television, the internet and social media are the most easily accessible sources of information. Through the media, particular perceptions are perpetuated and constructed.

Danso and McDonald state that

“a journalist's language conveys messages through the complex associations and implications of its metaphors and unstated assumptions. If a journalist's language violates the experiential reality of a minority or identifiable group within a society, it creates a conflict between public reality and the personal experiences of those who come to be identified as deviant. The effects of news reporting are therefore of particular importance in assessing the ideological consequences of public reaction to foreign migration in South Africa. The press translates the dominant ideology into public opinion and by doing so helps structure public perception and legitimizes the actions of state institutions. ... It is both in their potential role in creating moral panics and inciting anti-foreigner sentiments, and in their ability to reproduce ideologies and shape popular perceptions, that the print media play an important role in issues of smuggling, drugs and clandestine migration in South Africa” (2001:131).

Danso and McDonald (2001) highlight the influence the media has in creating perceptions of social reality. Through the words and images they choose to present as fact, they create and perpetuate particular ideas of public and state perception. In the case of xenophobia in South Africa, the media has “uncritically reproduced xenophobic language and statements, time and time again. The media have certainly been complicit in encouraging xenophobic attitudes among the population” (Crush, McDonald, Williams, Lefko-Everett, Dorey, Taylor, and la Sablonniere, 2008:8). Smith (2011) argues that the majority of media coverage is anti-migration as they describe migrants as ‘illegal immigrants,’ ‘criminals,’ ‘aliens,’ and ‘job stealers.’

Despite South Africa being constructed to be a violent country – both in relation to xenophobia and its apartheid history – in the media and historically, it was still seen by my research participants as a country that stood as a beacon of hope. The Somali men I worked with spoke about South Africa, specifically Cape Town, as being the solution to most of their problems.

How can a country with such a violent history and reputation, perpetuated and reinforced by the media, be seen as a beacon of hope? In relation to what the Somali men faced in their own country with Civil war and terrorism, it can be argued that South Africa's violence, as perceived by Somalis, would appear to be the lesser of two evils. There is less perceived danger in South Africa in comparison to the constant state of war and constant military and terrorist presence in Somalia.

In conclusion, Somali and other continental African migrants have entered a country with a history of severe segregation and legislated apartheid that has emphasised phenotypical differences. During South Africa's colonial period, the black natives of the land were dominated by white European settlers who were armed with western weaponry more powerful than the tools the native inhabitants possessed. During the colonial period European mores were lauded as the correct way to live, and whiteness was associated with superiority, civility, power and prestige while blackness was associated with inferiority, incivility and low status. The idea of white supremacy that surfaced during colonialism was further entrenched during segregation and apartheid.

Apartheid ensured that white supremacy would remain as the apartheid government enforced legislation that would only benefit the white minority. This legislation was created in such a way that the races would be kept separate from each other and ensure that white people would have access to all the resources that would entrench their position as the socio-economic elite. Coloured people were placed in the middle and were led to believe that because they were closer to white people than African people, they would be granted privileges African people would not be able to access. Coloured people's position was constructed as being 'better' than African people but still 'below' white people. They thus occupied a space between the two and were given the impression by the apartheid government that they had more power and status than African people.

South Africa's history of racial division and segregation is discussed as a foundational factor that has driven xenophobic attitudes and behaviours in society. There are a number of different factors that have contributed to xenophobic attitudes being dominant in South Africa. One of the largest platforms for creating the xenophobic narrative is the media. The media perpetuates an anti-migrant perception through how they choose to report on incidents of violence, drug trafficking, human trafficking, prostitution, gang violence and other crimes in South Africa.

The perception of South Africa being a largely xenophobic country is of particular importance to my research, as it provides a counter-narrative to the one I observed in my fieldsite. In counterpoint to this hegemonic xenophobic narrative is the existence of convivial relationships between coloured South Africans and Somali migrants.

Chapter 4

Fieldwork and Research Reflections

"... most social anthropologists hold that a human being is the most accurate instrument with which to study other humans" (Eriksen, 2004:49).

The most important research instrument used in ethnographic fieldwork is the researcher. The data recorded, the perceptions and interpretations of this data and the writing of the ethnography cannot be removed from the researcher. The experience of a particular space and the moments, interactions and 'events' that occurred in that space are all experienced through the body and subjectivity of the researcher. Thus it is important for this ethnography and the analysis of my research data that my fieldwork and research processes are discussed in relation to my social context and enculturation.

Initial Introductions

Initiating Interest

During my Honours year, I interviewed a vegetable trader as part of my research paper. While interviewing him, I was intrigued by the space where his stall was situated. The Roelof street market is situated adjacent to a taxi rank and opposite a train station. The area is surrounded by various shops as well as a shopping mall and thus is host to constant movement. The people that frequent the area, as well as those who work at the market, are incredibly diverse. They differ in age, nationality, gender, race and ethnicity. I was drawn to this diversity because South Africa has a history of segregation; segregation that is still evident in the way that people interact with each other, places frequented, areas South Africans live in and the stereotypes about 'the other' that persist. Yet, here was a market where diversity seemed to move together in harmony. I was especially drawn to the Somali traders that were situated on either end of the market.

From my initial introduction into the space it seemed as though there were two separate informal economic groups: South African vegetable traders and Somali traders. South Africans have been bombarded over the years with messages from the media stating that foreigners were not welcomed by South Africans and that they needed to leave. These perceptions were evident in newspaper articles. An example of a headline is "Silent war on Somalis in Port

Elizabeth”⁹(Clark, 2016). With this in mind I wondered how these two 'separate' informal economic groups functioned in a fairly small space where movement is the norm rather than the exception.

As I approach the market, I see Aunty Gail sitting on two crates and a pillow as she packs tomatoes into bags of five. Her helper, Daniel, hurries around unpacking fruit and vegetables onto boxes to display their variety to potential customers. I reach her stall and she continues with her work.

“Hello Aunty Gail!” I say as I reach her.

She looks up briefly to see where the greeting comes from and then looks back down to the work she’s doing. A dark blue bandanna, tied at the back of her head, covers the front part of her head. Only a small portion of her short dark brown hair is visible at the nape of her head. She sports a matching grey tracksuit pants and zip up top, zipped right up to her neck. Her black apron is tied around her waist and hangs from her waist to her knees. As she moves, the coins inside her apron’s pockets jingle.

“*Hello my kind, lang laas vir jou gesien*” (Hello my child, haven’t seen you in a while), she says to me without looking up.

It is now December and I haven’t seen Aunty Gail since June when I was doing my Honours fieldwork.

“Yes Aunty Gail, it’s been a while. I’ve been in Grahamstown at varsity. Aunty Gail will see a lot of me now again. I’m going to be doing research for varsity here again.”

“*Jou ouma het vir my gese ja*” (your grandmother told me yes). “Do you want to learn more about us vegetable sellers here in the market?”

“Yes Aunty Gail. But this time I also want to learn about the Somali guys who have stalls here. Does Aunty Gail know who would be good to talk to?”

She stops what she’s doing and rubs her head with the back of her hand. She scans the market briefly and then continues packing the tomatoes. I wait for her to answer. After a few minutes she says, once again without looking up, “Mohammed and Azhar here by this stall next to me are alright. I think they would be good to talk to. *Hulle het ook klomp vriende* (They also have a lot of friends).” As she speaks she gestures with her head towards the stall on her left.

⁹ <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/silent-war-on-somalis-in-port-elizabeth-20161025>

I look over to the stall and see two young men who look close to my age at first glance – early to mid-twenties. The one, shorter in height with milk chocolate coloured skin and light brown almond eyes, sits on top of a Coca Cola cooler; his feet drum against the cooler and his head bops to the rhythm of it. His eyes are focused on the cellphone that rests in his right hand while his other hand is tucked away inside of his red hoodie pocket. His head is hidden beneath a straight peak black cap which sits underneath the hood part of his red hoodie. The other young man is both taller and darker. The bottom half of his face is hidden behind a scruffy beard. His black, thick, curly hair looks uncombed. His pitch black eyes are bright and highlighted by the long thick eyelashes that frame them. He sits on a crate behind the counter of the stall. His phone too rests in his hand as he zones in on what he sees on the screen. The two young men do not talk to each other but are instead each focused on their phones. They both seem unaware of each other's presence or the presence of everyone else in the market and taxi rank.

I take a seat on a crate beside Aunty Gail as I observe the young Somali men beside me. I am suddenly nervous. The initial introduction in fieldwork is always the worst part for me. Unsure of what my opening line will be, I sit, observe and wait until I have figured out my next move. As though she could sense my nervousness, Aunty Gail turns to me and says, "they won't bite". I giggle and with that I get up and make my way towards the two young men only a few steps away.



Aunty Gail at her stall

Both Mohammed and Azhar speak very basic English. Thus, our initial introduction felt awkward as I struggled to convey the purpose of my presence in the market. They could not fathom why a young woman would want to spend every day in a market merely to learn about their lives. Azhar, the one who bopped his head to the music he was listening to, was a lot more

enthusiastic about the possibility of my presence at the market for the next couple of months. Mohammed, after our initial introduction, was untrusting of me. Clearly he was not as comfortable with my presence in the market as comfortable as Azhar was. While Azhar accepted and agreed almost immediately to participating in my research Mohammed responded with a number of questions. He asked to see and inspect my student card. He turned it over and over, asking what every detail on my student card meant. Satisfied, he assented to my presence, and over the next few months he slowly gave me access to his lifeworld.

On the first day, I sat between Aunty Gail's stall and Mohammed and Azhar's. We chatted while I observed the space. It appeared different to when I was there for my Honour's fieldwork. During my Honours year, I had observed separation and division between South Africans and Somalis. However, with further observation it appeared that my initial perception may have been very wrong. I watched the various traders flow in and out of each other's stalls and eventually realised that what was once an old, familiar space was indeed an unfamiliar and intriguing space.



Azhar and Mohammed

An Old/New Space

My grandmother has lived 200m away from Roelof street market for the past 15 years. She is a regular customer of the vegetable traders in the market. When I was younger, I would accompany her to the market to do her daily shopping. I remember standing quietly by her side while she chatted away and carefully chose her goods. She would introduce me to each stall owner and I would shyly smile back while moving closer to her. As I got older, my trips with her decreased and before I knew it, it had been years since I had been to the market. Because the market is situated in one of Cape Town's hubs, I often drive or walk past it. However over the years it was a space that had lost its meaning to me. Thus when I began fieldwork, I had to reacquaint myself with the space; a space that held memories that had begun to fade.

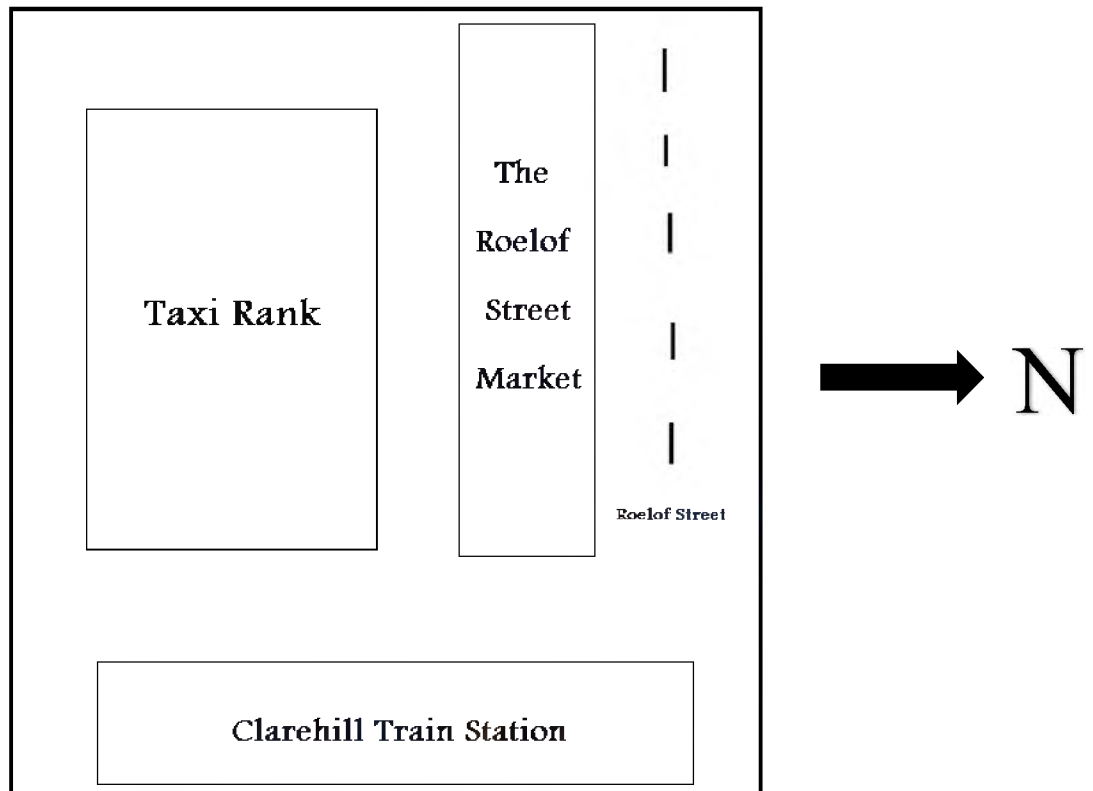
While I stopped going to the market, my grandmother, until recently, went every day. Over the years, my grandmother and the vegetable traders formed a close joking relationship in which they teased each other, shared food together and shared reminiscences. My grandmother is not only well known by the vegetable traders but also by the other traders in the market, taxi drivers and other customers that frequent the market. It was only during my fieldwork period that I was informed that my grandmother's history in the market extends beyond her move to the area and even before I was born. When my grandmother married my grandfather, they lived with his parents, my great grandparents, in Clairehill only a few kilometres from the market. My grandfather's younger brother, my late great uncle, was a vegetable trader in the market for many years; the very one I was doing fieldwork in. His stall was right beside Boeta Taliep's, one of my research participants. The two were friends and knew each other professionally and personally. They grew up together and then worked side by side for many years. Boeta Taliep's stall remains in the same spot it has been in since the market began while my great uncle had moved his stall to another market over 20 years ago.



Boeta Taliep at his stall

My great uncle passed away towards the end of 2014 and Boeta Taliep attended his funeral. Boeta Taliep speaks incredibly fondly of my great uncle and when he found out I was one of his relatives, Boeta Taliep welcomed me warmly into the market space. During my time in the field, the vegetable traders who had worked with my great uncle referred to me as either '*Neville se broer se kleinkind*' (Neville's brother's grandchild) or '*Edna's se kleinkind*' (Edna's grandchild). Thus, while I had to become reacquainted with the space and while it felt new to me, the market space was rooted in my history, even as it was a historical landmark in Cape Town and its surrounds.

Introducing the Roelof Street Market in Clairehill



Clairehill station and taxi rank in Cape Town are host to informal economic traders. The informal economic traders are South African, Somali and Zimbabwean. While the area is fairly small in size, the people who frequent the area are largely diverse and interact with one another on a daily basis. This particular area in Clairehill, known to those who have worked there for many years as the Roelof street market, has served as a trading area for over 50 years. The geographic space of Clairehill taxi rank and station has been transformed immensely over time. This change in form has necessitated a change in the way the space is perceived.

During a pilot study I completed towards the end of 2014 (as part of my Honours' year), one of the vegetable traders who had been trading in that exact space for 52 years explained the history of the Roelof Street market to me. According to 75 year old Boeta Taliep, the market was more than just a space to sell fruit and vegetables or goods. It was a social space, a place where people of different races would gather and socialise.

Before the Group Areas Act in 1969 demarcated Clairehill as a whites only area, it was a densely populated, dynamic community of over 19 000 people (Swanson, 2001). Clairehill “was a culturally mixed area comprising coloured, black, white and Indian residents but the majority was coloured” (Swanson, 2011: 100). Swanson describes Clairehill during this period

as an area that had “over a long period of time forged a strong sense of identity and community spirit that cut across religious, racial and class divides” (2001:100). She explains that Clairehill Main Road, the road that Roelof Street stems from, began developing as a commercial centre that over time attracted more and more people into the area (Swanson, 2001).

After the Group Areas Act (1969) was enforced, coloured¹⁰ people were forcefully removed from their homes in Clairehill even as they continued to work in the area as traders. In 2016 some of these original traders remain as informal traders in the same area. In recent years the market has transformed from a uniquely South African market, to one that includes many migrants from other countries in Africa. What used to be a community based market for predominantly coloured traders, is now a dynamic market that is a working space for a number of Somali and Zimbabwean transnational migrants that form part of the informal trade economy of the area.

Fieldwork

Finding the Other

In November 2014, I was awarded a grant to do my Masters research. The suggestion given to me was to do work that involved a study of xenophobia. I immediately thought of the small but diverse market I had just done some brief fieldwork in for my honours thesis. With the instruction given and the South African media’s image of South Africa as a strongly xenophobic nation, I set out in December 2014 to begin my masters fieldwork on xenophobia in that very market. After my first stint of fieldwork, I returned and had my first meeting with my supervisor. My opening line was “but I didn’t find xenophobia”. I felt as though I had not completed my task properly. She then looked at me with a frown on her face and said “but why would you think that’s what you would find?” I looked at her as her words sunk in. I realised then that I had created a ‘research problem’ based on what had been said to me without allowing my fieldsite and research participants to speak for themselves.

Resonance

I conducted fieldwork intermittently for roughly six months between December 2014 and January 2016. Because I did a large amount of research with Somali transmigrants whose first language is not my mother tongue I relied largely on participant observation. Thus, while I was unable to understand a large part of their conversations with one another, I paid attention to their body language and facial expressions (Wikan, 2012). At the beginning of the fieldwork

¹⁰ I acknowledge that this is a contested term. I am using it as it was denoted during apartheid.

process, the language barrier between myself and the Somali research participants limited the amount of data I was able to get. Their body language provided me with a sense of the dynamic of the conversation – whether it was a casual chat, a serious discussion or an argument – but I was excluded from understanding the verbal detail of various conversations.

However, as my presence in the market became known and comfortable, Azhar would translate some of the conversations for me without me asking. Also, if I was around they would change from speaking Somali to speaking English. However, I found that most of my data came from the moments when we were quiet with one another; where we were comfortably present in each other's space. As Wikan (2012) notes it is important to experience the silence with one's research participants. Wikan (2012) argues that words, when taken literally, lack life and lived presence. Words are only ever symbols that point to meaning and in order to understand the nuances of language, and more specifically communication, we as the researchers need to go 'beyond the words' (Wikan, 2012). Thus, while my inability to speak Somali was a limitation it was also at the same time an aid to my research as it assisted in experiencing a degree of resonance with my research participants. Wikan states that

“[r]esonance [demands] something of both parties to communication, both reader and author: an effort at feeling-thought; a willingness to *engage* with another world, life, or idea; an ability to use one's experience ... to try to grasp, or convey, meanings that do not reside in words, “facts,” nor text but are evoked in the meeting of one experiencing subject with another or a text” (2012:57, author's emphasis).

In the above quote, Wikan (2012) alludes to the idea that resonance between people exists through a commonality of experiences. For all the traders their common ground was that they understand the life of working in the Roelof street market. For the traders, 90% of their lives are spent working there. Therefore, if I wanted to fully comprehend their relationship and the way they resonate with one another, it was imperative that I was present in the market, daily, without having to say anything or ask too many questions. Through *being present* I was able to gain a degree of access to that commonality. I am not bold enough to say that I accessed it in its entirety. However, through being present for six months every day whole day, I was able to experience it (live it) on a smaller scale. For my particular research on Somali transnational migrants and their relationships with South African traders resonance and going 'beyond the words' was of particular importance as it was centred on understanding relationships. Relationships are not easily described in words but instead are displayed through actions which is what I paid close attention to through participant observation.

I shared in meals, working at the stalls, travelling from one space to another and being witness to music production. Most of my time was spent in the market as the focus of my research was observing the relationship between Somali migrant traders and South Africans. South Africans were inclusive of traders, taxi drivers, customers and commuters that used both the taxis and the train.

Primary Research Participants – forging bonds

During my time in the field, I encountered around 20 male and female Somali transmigrants. Some were married couples with children, others were single and some were biological kin. Some family members were immediate but most were distant. Mohammed and Azhar referred to each other as cousins but after further discussion I was told that they were from the same clan which meant they were family but really distant family. While I was exposed to a variety of Somali migrant experiences in South Africa, I honed in on Mohammed's and Azhar's experiences as they worked in the market I had decided to situate my research in.

While Mohammed and Azhar were my primary Somali research participants, I also spent a great deal of time with Abdi. Abdi is slightly older than Mohammed and Azhar. His stall is also situated in Clairehill although it is situated around the corner from Roelof street, behind a local supermarket. Because of the amount of time I spent at the Roelof street market and the surrounding areas in Clairehill, I was able to form a close, comfortable bond with Mohammed, Azhar and Abdi.

In addition to the Somali migrants, I also created strong links with South African traders and taxi drivers who were some of my key research participants. The South Africans I worked with were: Aunty Gail, a vegetable trader in her late 50s, Boeta Taliep, a 72 year old vegetable trader, Uncle Naheem, a taxi driver in his mid-50s and Sonny, a trader in his 70s. Overall, I worked with over 20 South Africans. However, these four individuals were my core South African research participants. My research centred on their relationships with both Mohammed and Azhar. I do not believe this ethnography is a depiction of all relationships between Somali migrants and South Africans in the informal sector. However, while it is a micro ethnography, I feel that this intimation provides an indication of the kind of convivial and cohesive relationships that exist in a South African space despite the dominant socio-political narrative that dictates that they should not.



Uncle Naheem standing at Uncle Faizel's stall

Anthropology at Home

My time in the field was particularly interesting as I was positioned as both an insider and outsider. I grew up in Cape Town and refer to it as home. More specifically, I have lived in Clairehill and attended both primary school and high school in the area. My fieldsite was thus not a new space to me. It was familiar as the areas I walked through held memories of family outings, walking home from school and socialising with friends. While my residential familiarity with Clairehill makes me an insider, I was also an outsider. I may have been familiar with Cape Town and Clairehill, but I was an outsider in the Roelof Street market as I did not have an understanding of the social dynamics of the market. My feelings are echoed by Hume and Mulcock 's comment,

" ... I was moving between the strange and the familiar on a daily basis. Unlike those ethnographers who say farewell to their own cultural settings to temporarily immerse themselves in other ways of being, I was trying to maintain my balance across two, not always distinct but, frequently competing cultural domains" (2004:xv).

Essentially at the beginning of fieldwork I felt like a native outsider. Being a 'native' in the space surfaced particular kinds of tensions when being in the field. While being in the field, family members and friends would walk past and engage with me. In moments like these I straddled the roles of being Kelly the researcher as well as Kelly the friend or relative.

Upon reflection it became clear that Kelly the researcher and Kelly the friend/relative were not two separate entities. While I was a researcher in that space, my position as a 'native' stems from my enculturation and socio-historical context. It is impossible to remove myself from my

embodiment. It is through my positionality that my perception during fieldwork was constructed. I could not separate myself from the reality that I was researching in my home space. As anthropology has historically functioned on the idea of studying 'the other,' I was concerned that my familiarity with the space would hinder my ability to do research. However, Ntarangwi argues that "... representations of [one's] self as vulnerable and inadequate in the conducting of fieldwork do not in any way weaken the products of the fieldwork: the ethnographies" (2010:2).

Ntarangwi (2010) further suggests that as a researcher, one should always be aware of his/her own subjectivity as it affects the process of data collection and analysis. He argues that our peculiar subjectivities add rather than take away from our research process (Ntarangwi, 2010). Through our subjectivity we are able to develop a broader understanding of our research interactions and observations as it leads to further questioning about why certain feelings arise in different situations (Ntarangwi, 2010). I am a 24 year old, South African, coloured female. All of those social categories have been constructed by me and others in a particular way that has formed the basis of how I experienced my time in the field. Ntarangwi (2010) argues that consciously acknowledging and being aware of how these social categories come in to play in the field leads to further questioning of what is being experienced. It was, and still is, important that I remain reflective and reflexive as to what and why I saw what I saw, heard and experienced certain situations in a particular way. My positionality not only influenced the way in which I perceived the space but it also affected the way in which I was perceived and received in the space.

Eriksen (2004) argues that while we may express our identity in a particular way, it is not to say that it will be received by others in that way. Each person has been socialised in a specific way and this socialisation influences the way in which they perceive and understand other people. Thus, I had no control over how I was being perceived in the market. Immediate impressions of me were made on the fact that I was a young female in a male dominated space. The market is host to a diverse group of people and therefore it meant that each person had a different understanding of what is expected of a young coloured, unmarried, woman. During my time in the field I was confronted with the difficulty of being a female in the field, especially a masculine space.

A Young Woman in the Field

One of the Xhosa taxi drivers walked towards Mohammed and Azhar's stall. His black jeans were baggy and hung on his body while his navy blue golf t-shirt clung tightly to his full round body which he disguised underneath a puffy beige jacket. As he reached the stall his eyes darted from me to Azhar who was standing next to me showing me a video on his phone, and then back to me. He stood as he watched us. Without taking his eyes off of us, he handed some coins to Mohammed who was standing behind the counter and muttered something in Xhosa to him. Mohammed reached under the counter and handed him a loose cigarette. The man pulled a lighter from his pocket, lit his cigarette and blew out a stream of grey smoke, all the while eyeing Azhar and I. Finally he spoke.

"This your girlfriend?" he asked Azhar while gesturing with his hand holding the cigarette to both myself and Azhar.

Azhar looked up, laughed slightly and replied, "No. This is my friend."

The awkward smile on my face faded as I felt the man's eyes trail my body from the tip of my sneakers all the way up my body until he looked me dead in the eye. I crossed my arms over my chest and shifted my weight from one foot to the other. I felt like every inch of my body was under this man's scrutiny.

He dragged on his cigarette and as he exhaled the smoke he said, "how much?"

I looked at Azhar then at the man, confused. Was he talking to me? I looked at Mohammed assuming he was asking the price of one of the goods at the stall. When I didn't reply he spoke again.

"No, how much?" This time as he asked he lazily lifted his cigarette holding hand and pointed towards me.

"Excuse me?" I said, now slightly annoyed as I started to realise what he meant.

He laughed with his head flung back then looked back at me. "How many cows for you? A girl like you must be worth a lot. I'm in need of a wife and you look like you could give me what I need".

My initial thought was that he was joking but the serious look on his face and the matter-of-fact tone he used when he spoke told me otherwise. I laughed without humour as a way to try and ease what was now starting to feel like a tense moment.

"Sorry, not for sale my friend" I replied, trying to sound light and to disguise the discomfort I felt.

He made a smirking sound, shook his head and said, “not for sale but look at you wasting your time here with these Somalians”.

Before I could respond, he turned around and returned to his taxi, got in and drove away.

The above encounter was not the only one of its kind during my time in the field. In the market I was overtly informed of my gender, and the perception thereof. The market and taxi rank are male dominated and the men find various ways to emphasise their masculinity; one of it being the way in which some of them would claim their dominance over a woman. Because I was a young unknown, yet present, woman much of the need to emphasise masculinity was directed towards me. Each day I experienced sexual innuendos and felt my body being undressed by men’s eyes. Owen (2005) states that there is a large focus on protecting research participants but very little on the safety of the researcher. Researchers enter a field site in most cases on their own with no sense of the kind of environment they are entering. In recognising my own need for safety I limited my research to the market space only. The traders were in the market until it was dark and I felt unsafe as a single woman travelling with my research participants to their home spaces. I never felt unsafe with my research participants. But my lack of personal transport, would have meant that I’d be forced to take public transport after dark. I could not expect my research participants, after a long day’s work, to escort me back home.

Besides being propositioned and looked at I was constantly questioned about ‘who I belonged to.’ I spent most of my days with Azhar and Mohammed and their Somali friends. Because I was seen mostly with both Azhar and Mohammed, some of the men who worked in and around the market kept trying to figure out whose girlfriend I was. No matter how many times we would say we were friends, that was not enough. It was assumed that because a young woman spent so much time with young men it could not merely be platonic. In this way, I felt as though my presence made some people who frequented the space quite uncomfortable as they could not position me in their schemas. My own experience gave me insight into the gender dynamics of the space. The fact that my presence could only be understood in relation to a man in the space, whether that was Mohammed or Azhar, led me to think about, and attempt to understand, how women were perceived in that particular male dominated space. I discuss these gender dynamics and expressions of masculinity further in the chapters to follow.

In conclusion, the research process cannot be excluded from the written product as it is the root of the overall presentation of the thesis. My subjectivity, my experience and the methods and techniques I employed during fieldwork led to what is written and why I have analysed the data and presented it in a particular way. While I was technically doing anthropology at home, the space was still to a large extent foreign to me. As a young woman, I felt that I had to be even more aware of my safety, especially in a male-dominated space where I had been propositioned a number of times. Therefore, my research and the ethnography as a whole is limited to observations and data gathering in the market space only. This could be seen as a limitation of the research. However I prefer to perceive it as an opportunity that encouraged immersion in the Roelof street market – the fieldsite that I was particularly interested in as it was a dynamic, multi-cultural and multi-national space that was peculiarly South African, and yet not. Understanding the market as a space, and a conduit for convivial relationships between South African and Somali traders, thus became the focus of my research as I located the Somali transnational migrants in a place that seemed to ‘hold’ them, outside of the home country.

Chapter 5

Conceptual Framework

In order to unpack, and engage with, the concept of social cohesion in the Roelof Street market, I have used three concepts as a way to understand the relationships that exist in what I later refer to as a community. These three concepts include: conviviality, social spaces and habitus. I found that these three concepts tie together and emphasise the close fictive kin-like relationships, or social kinship in terms of Chidester, Dexter and James' work (2003), that have been created and exist in the market.

Conviviality

Brudvig states that “conviviality rests on the nuances inscribed and imbibed in everyday relations – the micro trends of sociality” (2013:13). Furthermore, she states that

“the study about conviviality involves a study of society and its interrelations with sociality, diversity and social tensions and notions of space, place citizenship and belonging. It is an investigation into styles of relating, of sociability and how communality emerges from a negotiation of the constructive and destructive. Conviviality may emerge from a resolution of frictions which when turned into meaningful relationships, may actually facilitate mutual interests and mutual trust” (2013: 11).

Conviviality is a result of both negative and positive interactions which may include humour, generosity, coercion and anger (Brudvig, 2013). A convivial society is comprised of “amiable, intimate, sets of relationships which carry, as well, a notion of peace and equality” (Overing and Passes, 2000:14). In searching for a way to understand what I had observed in the Roelof street market, I felt that conviviality would be the best way to describe it. I observed a micro community that functioned on deep relationships that were complex. The relationships in the market were responsive to the kind of space that was created in the market. Brudvig states that “conviviality is ... related to the experience of [a] space which is linked to sensory feelings and reactions that occur within a common place” (2013:11).

Habitus is the cognitive and embodied experience of the place. Through the embodiment of the space, my research participants were able to experience the space, while differently in some senses, but also collectively. Conviviality “involves dispositions, habits, spaces and practices, which are in turn always mediated by influences near and remote” (Wise and Velayutham, 2013:408). Wise and Velayutham state that the term ‘convivial’ effectively signals “at ease

relations of coexistence and accommodation” (2013:407). In relation to the discussions of South Africa being a largely xenophobic country, signs of conviviality in a space where there are both Somalis and South Africans working side by side, is of particular interest. In this regard, the Roelof street market as a convivial space appears as extraordinary against the backdrop of a dominant xenophobic narrative. Wise and Velayutham then further state that

“the creative and intuitive capacity among ordinary people who manage tensions, not because [they] feel the problems of racism are over, but because we have to start taking note of the fact that there were spontaneous ways in which many of these problems (problems we are now told are features of a clash of civilisations) melted away in the face of ... human sameness” (2013:407).

The above quote highlights the importance of this particular research. While there has been a focus in the literature on the ways in which multicultural communities clash in the presence of their differences, not much attention has been paid to how these diverse communities can coexist peacefully, cohesively and convivially. Conviviality “can be understood as an atmosphere and an affect [as]it is intimately related to a sense of becoming” (Wise and Velayutham, 2013:407). Noble argues that “we need to examine the actual practices through which attributes are habituated to account for the dispositional nature of openness to others” (2009:49). Thus, just as much as social scientists (and South Africans) focus on what creates tension and fission in the South African socialscape, we focus on what brings people together.

In this thesis, I pay particular attention to why and how the people in Roelof street market have created a convivial space. As this thesis involves migrants, there is a need to discuss integration and a level of familiarity that is achieved in an unfamiliar space. The convivial nature of the Roelof street market has contributed to a sense of *belonging* for both the Somali traders and the South Africans in the space that transcends ethnicity and nationality.

Social Spaces

The Roelof street market formed a critical aspect of how I understood my time in the field. The market encompassed my research participants spatially and emotionally. They spent long days in close proximity to each other and as a result there was an embedded understanding of rules of engagement that existed in the market. These unspoken rules of engagement are what facilitated the formation of a close community within the market.

Lefebvre (1991) focuses on how social spaces are created in societies. He argues that space extends beyond being a physical entity as it is where time and social interactions meet

(Lefebvre, 1991). Lefebvre (1991) also suggests that a social space is a social product. In essence, space is “fundamentally bound up with social reality” (Schmid, 2008:28). An important aspect of space is that it exists within a specific context and is inclusive of a specific time period (Lefebvre, 1991). As time moves on, people change and the space changes with it.

Human beings are not separate from space as they are the ones who inscribe particular kinds of meaning on it. The space affects the person and the person in turn affects the space. The space is firstly material order which is used as a vehicle in conveying meaning (Schmid, 2008). A space constructed through structures such as buildings, monuments and art, to name a few, is created in a particular time which carries with and conveys particular meanings. This material order evokes different kinds of feelings for different people. Lefebvre (1991) notes the subjectivity of each individual and so denotes how meaning ascribed to a particular space differs from individual to individual. That said space can embody many subjectivities that collectively create a seamless understanding of, and appreciation for, a very dynamic space.

Lefebvre discusses three dimensions of the product of space:

1. *Perceived Space*: an element to space that can be grasped through the senses (Schmid, 2008). Perception forms an important component of social practices (Schmid, 2008). Perception includes everything related to the senses – “not only seeing but hearing, smelling, touching, tasting. This sensuously perceptible aspect of space directly relates to the materiality of ‘elements’ that constitute ‘space’” (Schmid, 2008: 39).
2. *Conceived Space*: Perception cannot be created without a thought that preceded it (Schmid, 2008). Space thus brings together the initial presumptions of it and combines it with the perception of it in order to produce a particular kind of knowledge about the space (Schmid, 2008).
3. *Lived Space*: The production of space is inclusive of the lived experience of the space (Schmid, 2008). This production is created through the everyday practices of human life (Schmid, 2008). This particular experience of the space cannot always be analysed or theoretically understood as there are aspects that cannot be discussed but only expressed (Schmid, 2008).

In the Roelof street market, there is a diverse group of people each with their own subjectivity. Some of the traders have been there for over 50 years and have experienced how the space has changed over time. However, the older traders hold on to what the market used to mean to them and perpetuate it in the contemporary context of the market. While the market has undergone

physical changes and different people have come and gone, the meaning they have inscribed on it is what they hold on to. I argue in this thesis that the meaning of this particular space is what holds the older coloured traders during a time where they feel a sense of dislocation. I elaborate on this point in chapter four. In chapter four I also discuss how the Somali traders whilst fairly new to the market, also experience the Roelof street market as an emotional and spiritual 'container' during a time of geographic and physical dislocation.

The market space is not only a space that holds and centres the traders but it is also a space that has facilitated and enhanced their interactions across social . While each individual may experience the space differently, I argue that these differences are not absolute, and that a collective understanding of the space has been inscribed upon it both psychologically and physically. It is through this common understanding of social interaction and expectations of one another that a sense of conviviality has been created. Schmid states that "space is to be understood in an active sense as an intricate web of relationships that is continuously produced and reproduced" (2008:41).

Lefebvre (1991) also discusses the ways in which human beings' day to day rhythm of life contributes to creating a particular kind of social space. He states that "everywhere there is an interaction between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy, there is a rhythm" (Lefebvre, 2004: xv). This rhythm is created through every day interactions and exchanges, both emotional and tangible (Lefebvre, 2004). During my time in the field, these kinds of interactions and exchanges were evident and will be further unpacked in the following chapters. There is a particular kind of rhythm that exists in the market and the people who work in the market have developed a daily routine. In essence, there is a clear indication of a rhythm of daily life in the market that is easily accessible to those who immerse themselves in it. This rhythm is what contributes to creating a convivial space at the Roelof street market; and it is this conviviality and rhythm of daily life that can be linked to Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus.

Habitus

The sense of self created both through internal and external processes is located within a hinterland of "unreflexive habit – neither conscious nor unconscious – that is the generative site of practices that Bourdieu calls the 'habitus'" (Jenkins, 1994: 203).

Bourdieu's concept of habitus functions in relation to a concept he calls the 'field' (Bourdieu, 1977). Field refers to obligatory boundaries of experiential context that always exists (Bourdieu, 1977), and so the field imposes on all agents who enter it (Bourdieu, 1977). Habitus

is socialised norms or tendencies that guide an individual's behaviour and thinking. In reference to the Roelof Street market, habitus is important to understand as it illustrates the ways in which 'rules' of engagement become ways of being. Habitus is "the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions or trained capacities and structured propensities to think feel and act in determinant ways which guide them" (Wacqaunt, 2005:316). Habitus is created through a social rather than individual process leading to patterns that are enduring and transferrable from one context to another, but that also shift in relation to specific contexts and over time (Navarro, 2006). Navarro argues that habitus "is not fixed or permanent and can be changed under unexpected situations or over a long historical period" (2006:6). Bourdieu states that habitus is

"neither a result of free will, nor determined by structures, but created by a kind of interplay between the two over time: dispositions that are shaped by past events and structures, and that shape current practices and structures and also, importantly, that condition our very possession of these (1984:170).

He claims that habitus is created and reproduced unconsciously and "without any deliberate pursuit of coherence, without any conscious concentration" (Bourdieu, 1984:170). Casey argues that Bourdieu's habitus is "a figure of the between: above all between nature and culture, but also between consciousness and the body, self and other mechanism and teleology, determinism and freed, and even between memory and imagination" (2001:409). He suggests that it can be used as a middle term between self and place and "in particular lived space and geographical self" (Casey, 2001:409).

Casey states that "although Bourdieu does not invoke place specifically, it is everywhere present in his discussion of habitus" (2001:410). This is because:

"a given habitus is always enacted in a particular place and incorporates the regularities inherent in previous such places A particular place gives to habitus a familiar arena for its enactment and the lack of explicit awareness of that place as such, its very familiarity, only enhances its efficacy as a scene in which it is activated" (Casey, 2001:410).

Adams (2006) argues that fundamentally, habitus is an embodied phenomenon. Csordas (1990) suggests that through the embodiment paradigm for anthropology, the body becomes a subject of culture. The body thus becomes the existential ground of culture (Csordas, 1990). Csordas (1990) claims that individuals cannot be anything without re-emerging from how their bodies

and minds are unified. He suggests that individuals express themselves through their body and through their mental expression (Csordas, 1990). Embodiment is created through the collapse of the duality of mind and body (Csordas, 1990). Thus, the mind and the body become one and experience the world as a whole. Adams (2006) claims that cultural commonalities of class are inscribed onto the body that are then reproduced personally by the individual in the field which is a result of already existing social conditions.

Habitus is an unconscious formation that has various characteristics that are enacted unthinkingly (Adams, 2006). The sense of ease created in individuals surroundings “develops as an unconscious competence: the habitus becomes a *modus operandi* of which he or she is not the producer and has no conscious mastery” (Bourdieu, 1977). Habitus does not simply reproduce from social structure. Rather agency and autonomy “are embodied in the concept of habitus, but they are qualified by the caveat of accumulated history, both personal and collective which imprint themselves as pre-reflexive action-orientations” (Adams, 2006:515).

Brudvig argues that habitus is “the product of a history of social interactions” (2013: 12). The Roelof Street market is a space that has a particular history and this embodied history becomes part of a habitus that structures the daily lives of the people who possess this particular kind of habitus (Nyamnjoh, 2002). A collective habitus is thus the result of being aware of the other members in a space, the social and cultural norms and the underlying rules of engagement that bring the group together (Hiller and Rooksby, 2005).

In conclusion, the three concepts of conviviality, social spaces, and habitus form the foundation of the argument of this thesis. The Roelof street market is a convivial space that is a direct result of the historical and contemporary lived experiences thereof, and the meanings ascribed to these experiences. Each of the people, including my research participants, working, living, engaging in, and experiencing the space contribute to its overall experience. This overall experience, when apprehended, points to a social network that has a particular ‘set’ of norms, values and ways of doing and being that reflect the individual habitus of each agent or participant; in this way those in the Roelof street market, through their active participation in the market, embody and express a collective habitus that ‘transcends’ race, class, ethnicity and nationality.

Chapter 6

Disconnection and Dislocation

The young Somali migrants and the older South African traders come from two different socio-political and economic contexts. However, while there are obvious differences between the two groups, there is a central similarity that plays an important role in understanding their relationship; both groups have experienced a sense of displacement and have had to negotiate their social positions in an unfamiliar space. For the Somali migrants, they entered a new country with a different socio-cultural context that was built on a history very different to their own. And for the South African traders they have had to renegotiate a familiar social and emotional space that was reimagined, and thus very different to the one they nostalgically remember, at the dawn of a 'new' South Africa.

Disconnection through Migration

Rousseau, Rufgari, Baglishya and Mesham argue that “refugees often have to flee their homelands in a hurry, leaving some or all of their loved ones behind [and] once in the host country... refugees’ separation problem is rarely rapidly resolved” (2004: 1095). Mohammed, Azhar and Abdi all speak of themselves as refugees who had to flee their unstable home country, Somalia. Because their departure was involuntary and rushed, they are unable to process the act of leaving home to start a new life in an unknown country indefinitely.

During my first few weeks in the field, as I adjusted to the rhythm of the market and my research participants, including the Somali transmigrants, adjusted to my presence there, I heard the Somali transmigrants’ stories of their passage to Cape Town. Through their varied and various narratives, I was transported into their lives, and their experiences of Somalia.

Mohammed

I sit on the crate behind the counter of Mohammed and Azhar’s stall. The sun has just about risen. It is 7am. Mohammed stands leaning against the pole in front of the counter. His one hand is in the pocket of his green camouflage pants and his other hand holds his cellphone lazily as he reads something on it. His red hoodie is pulled over his head. The sun hits his eyes and brings out the touches of light brown that looks black in the shade. He takes his hand out of his pocket and rubs his thick beard that covers half his face. His hand moves from his face to his hair as he attempts to comb his thick, black curly hair with his fingers. He looks up at me as though he could feel my eyes on him. He walks

towards me and sits down on the crate beside me. He carries on scrolling and then hands me his phone.

“Look now. My country. This why me I’m here. It not safe.”

I look down at the cellphone and see a photograph with men dressed in army uniforms with large guns in their hands. In the distance people are running, fleeing for their lives? Chaos surrounds the men in uniform. The article is in Somali so I am unable to understand the script.

“What’s happening here?” I ask Mohammed.

“The same thing that always happen in my country. Fighting. War. Always always in Somalia.” He shakes his head and I hand him his phone. He stares at the road in front of us. I wait.

Still staring at the road, he says, “me I am used to this. This guns and violence. This one day here in the road. I was standing on the corner there by McDonalds”. He points to the corner he is referring to. It is about 20 metres away from his stall, “These men they come rob there. They have guns. They take gun they point at me. I lift my hands. I look at them in the eye, I look at the gun. Me I am not scared. If they shoot me I die then I’m dead. In my country, every day you feel like you will die every day. Guns, these things are normal in my country. I don’t get scared of guns. It is nothing new”.

“Is that why you left Somalia? Because of the violence?” I ask softly,.

“There is no life for me to make in Somalia. There are no jobs, I can’t make money. Yes Somalia is very dangerous. My mother she tell me if I can leave I must do it. Every day she worry for my life.”

“And then you decided you would come to Cape Town?”

“Me I didn’t know I was going to Cape Town until the day I get off boat and the people in street tell me I am in Cape Town.”

“You came here on a boat?”

“Yes. This one day my friend he tell me there is a boat leaving Somalia. He tell me this our chance to leave this place and go to a better place. He tell me the boat is leaving that night and there is not a lot of space. I ran straight to my mother’s house. I tell her about the boat. I start packing my things.”

“Was that difficult? Saying goodbye to your family”

“Goodbye? No there no time to say goodbye. I take all my things and go quickly. I tell my mother I go. My father he was by his other wife that time. I hear about boat, I get things and I go. My mother tell me this is what I must do. The last thing she say to me is be safe. She say this while I’m running out the door”.

He pauses. His eyes glaze over as he thinks back to that moment. I wait. His face looks pained. His eyebrows scrunch together and his mouth is taut. He turns his phone over in his hand; over and over again. His thoughts are disturbed by a taxi driver coming to buy a loose cigarette. He helps the taxi driver then comes back to sit next to me. He continues talking as though he didn’t take a break.

"The boat here was life and death. I did not think I would ever get out of it". We were on that boat for long time. I think four nights but I not sure. Food, water there is nothing left. People they starve they jump off boat. I watch people die. I never thought I make it to wherever we go".

"So what happened when you finally reached here?"

"We get off boat and I start walking the streets. Hungry, tired, me I don't know where I go".

"Where in Cape Town did the boat stop? Was it a harbour or something?"

"I don't remember".

"So you were walking the streets and then?"

"Another man, he also Somali, he see me and he ask me if I need place to stay. That's what they do, the people from my country. Here in South Africa we see each other we don't ask any questions we just ask if people need help. So I tell him I just get here and have nowhere to go. This man he give me place to sleep then he find me job in shop. Through him and some other Somalis I hear Azhar is also here. My cousin. They help me find him. That's how me and him we get together. How we live together and now me and him we work this shop together".

Azhar

There is a childlike playfulness to Azhar. It dances from the edges of his mischievous grin to his light brown almond eyes that stands out against his milk chocolate skin. His short light brown hair is almost always hidden beneath a straight peak cap. He is never able to stand still. Even though he is older than Mohammed, he plays the role of a younger brother not only because of his free spirit and his lacksadaisal attitude regarding responsibility, but also because he is a head shorter than Mohammed as well. One cannot think of Azhar without associating him with music. He always has some kind of melody flowing through his body that is externalised through either the drumming of his fingers or the melodic tapping of his feet.

Azhar's journey to South Africa was not an easy one. It took him many days to get to Cape Town and even though it wasn't a pleasant experience, he says it was all worth it. Azhar shares a lot more openly than Mohammed. While it took me a few weeks to hear Mohammed's story, Azhar told me his within the first week I met him.

"What made you decide to leave Somalia and come to Cape Town?"

"Somalia it my country but Somalia is not where I feel happy".

"How come?"

"You see in my country they only want you to be one person. And me I am not that person. I cannot be me in my country. That is why I come to South Africa. They say South Africa is the capital of Africa".

"The capital of Africa?"

"Yes it the place where you make money .. My mother she tell me I must work till I have money to leave that place. You see our family they all know we can't stay in Somalia. They know we must leave so we make life for ourselves."

"So your family wanted you to leave?"

"Yes, they know this is only way for us."

"Was that difficult? Leaving your family and coming to Cape Town?"

"It was difficult getting money and getting from Somalia to here. But it not difficult leaving my family. This something I must do. My mother she know she don't know when she see me again; me I don't know if I ever see her again. But me I am a man, this is something I must do."

"Do you miss them?"

He pauses and scrunches his face up as he thinks. "Uh... yes I miss my mama and my father and my brothers. I speak to them sometimes on the phone but I am okay. Me I have my people here in Cape Town. People like me."

"People like you?"

"Yes people like me. They come from Somalia but they don't live like people in my country. Then also people like me who love music. Music make them happy like music make me happy."

"I see. How did you get to Cape Town?"

"Me I take the bus. I take bus to Mozambique first. Mozambique they don't like us Somalians", he laughs. "I get there, they see I'm Somalian, they beat me up. They put me in jail. They beat me more then they take my passport and everything. Then few days they let me go. Then I take bus from there to South Africa. Then I come to Cape Town".

"How did you manage to travel to South Africa if they took your passport?"

He laughs again. "You must understand something about us Somalians, we always make a plan".

Abdi

"Don't sit like this in the sun. You will feel sick", Abdi says to me as he picks up two crates and places them in a shady area. Most days some of the Shoprite workers take their smoke breaks, just next to his stall, on those crates. I walk over and sit next to him. I feel myself relax and settle in the shade.

"This is so much better, the sun was killing me," I tell him.

He smiles and goes still for a while and then says, "I love hot days like this one in South Africa. It makes me feel like I'm in my country. The hot sun, it feel like home. Me I hate winter in South Africa. It reminds me I am not home, the cold it is not my home."

This is the first time Abdi and I have spent time alone together. While he speaks, I listen and consider his build in relation to Mohammed and Azhar. He looks a little more mature than both Mohammed and Azhar. His thick, long, black beard covers half his face and reaches a few centimetres below his chin. His skin is the same as Mohammed's -- dark brown. His hair sits high above his head -- beautiful thick black curls with touches of silver grey that you don't really notice at first. His pitch black eyes are framed by long eyelashes. No matter the weather, Abdi is always in black pants, a long black trench coat and black combat boots. When he stops talking I ask if he misses Somalia.

"Every day", he replies almost immediately.

"What do you miss the most about Somalia?"

"I miss everything about it. It is my place where I belong to. Everyone they are speaking my language they are looking like me and dressing like me. But most most I miss is my family. Every day my heart it pains me to not see my mama and my father and my brothers and my sisters. You see even in Somalia my whole life is about my family. There no friends nothing, just my family."

"Do you have any family here in South Africa?"

"I have Mohammed. He is my family in South Africa. He is my brother. Azhar too. I am lucky because they live and work where I live and work. If not I will never see them. My work it takes up all my time. You see some people I know they live in Bellville. That is too far. I can't just go. Sometimes they come to Clarehill and see me but they also busy with their own shops. South Africa will never feel like home because my family they not here. My family they are my home."

"When last have you seen your family?"

"Four years ago."

"That's a long time. I can understand why your heart pains. Family is everything to me too, I don't think I would do well without them for four years. Will you be able to visit them sometime soon?"

He stares ahead of him and runs his hand over his face, he stops at his thick beard, pulls a strand and twirls it around his finger. Finally, he says, "I don't know. I think it will be long time before I see my family. There are just so many things. It is very difficult. I don't know."

"What made you decide to leave Somalia?"

"It is not choice. I must come here. Me I fear my life in Somalia. There were men with guns everywhere. There no jobs. This something I must do."

"And leave your family?"

"They know this what I must do. When my brothers old enough, they leave too to make life for them."

"That couldn't have been easy to do."

"It not easy. My mama, she hug me and she cry. Me I cry. When we hug it feel like I am never going to see her again. The way she say goodbye to me it feel like she

know she will never see me again. You see when we come here, we don't know when or if we ever go back to Somalia again. This is the sacrifice me must make."

My three Somali research participants share similar stories of departure. They and their families recognise the need to leave as a result of insecurity and violence in Somalia. Their movement is thus forced and involuntary. Yet, their stories also reveal economic insecurity. For Azhar, migration was a little easier as he felt alienated from other Somalis back home. For Mohammed and Abdi though migration was more difficult. Mohammed and Abdi had and still have an attachment to their families as it formed a central and crucial aspect of their day to day lives in Somalia. Abdi speaks specifically of the finality of his departure. His categorisation as a refugee, and his administrative experience thereof in South Africa, curtails his movement elsewhere, and a potential visit to his home.

While all three knew that migration was inevitable the actual day of departure was unknown. The sudden physical exit was so quick that it did not give them much time to sever the emotional and mental ties to their intimates and their home country. Thus, while they have physically left, they are still emotionally linked to Somalia. This emotional tie is more evident with Mohammed and Abdi as for Azhar he feels a deeper emotional connection to South Africa than to Somalia. For Mohammed and Abdi, leaving Somalia was economically and politically inspired. However, additionally for Azhar, his decision was based on the need for personal liberation and fulfilment.

Trauma in Migration

While I note that my research participants' *decided* to migrate, that decision was made based on a limited set of choices. Migration for refugees is discussed as a particularly traumatic experience as it is both hasty and involuntary and the process of resettling in a new country is challenging due to the many migration laws that are particular to each country (Rosseau, Mekki-Berrada and Moreau, 2001). Further, even if migration is understood as being in the best interest of both the family and the individual leaving, there is still a sense of abandoning one's family in a time of need (Rousseau et al., 2004).

Upon arrival in the host country, as refugees are removed from the initial drive for migration, refugees suffer psychological trauma. Not only do they have to find a way to adjust to a new, unfamiliar space, they also have to deal with being apart from their families and away from home. Scambler, Bond and Bowling argue that "regardless of how the concept of quality of life is defined, research has consistently demonstrated the importance of social and family relationships in the definition of 'good quality of life'" (2000:407). Many refugees have little

to no contact with their family in their home country. Mohammed, Azhar and Abdi speak to their families either once a month or once every two months. They also receive short phone calls. Azhar, Abdi and Mohammed have expressed a sense of disconnection to the people at home. For Abdi and Mohammed, whose sense of home is foundational, this disconnection is particularly challenging as they have to find ways to recreate that foundation in an unfamiliar space. While they have connections with other Somalians in Cape Town, the amount of time they spend at work restricts their fraternisation with other Somalis. Thus, their experience in Cape Town restricts the potential for other forms of communication and friendship. For Azhar, his actively sought connections with people in Cape Town who share his passion for music eases his social integration, as he finds comfort in expressing his creative aspects of self without cultural restriction.

Not only do refugees have to deal with “the combined burden of adaptation to this new environment while working through the family turmoil created by the experience of separation” (Rousseau et al., 2001: 41), but they are deeply anguished by their awareness that they have left their families in an unsafe environment. Mohammed, having shared the photograph on his cellphone with me, spoke often of the imminent presence of death in Somalia due to the ongoing war and the endemic presence of soldiers patrolling with weapons. It is thus clear that even as migration brings physical relief from the dangers of a country at war, young Somali men are traumatised by their memories of those they have left behind and the uncertainty that envelops them.

“When last have you spoken to your mother?” I ask Mohammed.

He scrunches his face while he thinks. “Hmm.. I don’t remember. Long time. Weeks maybe over a month ago.”

“Do you miss her?”

“All the time. My mama, she my best person. When I’m home, me and my mama we speak all the time, every night. You see it just me and her and my brother in the house. My father he have many wives.”

“Do you plan to go visit in Somalia at some point?”

“No. I can’t do that. It take a lot of money and if I go I don’t know if I come back. It not a good idea.”

“Do you think your family will ever come to South Africa?”

“No,” he replies without hesitation. “My brother yes when he is older then maybe he come here. But my mother, never. You see the old people they will not leave their country. That is their home. She tell me she live her whole life in Somalia and

that is where she must die. And she is old woman, she cannot work and me I cannot take care of her. She need to stay in Somalia.”

“So your mother, she is taken care of in Somalia?”

“Yes, it is my father’s duty to take care of my mother. He must make sure she will have everything she need. But me I worry about my mother, my brother, my father every day.”

“You worry about them? Why is that?”

“My country, it is a dangerous place. Something could happen to them at any time. And me I will never know. Who will tell me? That’s why I get happy whenever my mother she call me because then I know she ok.”

“That can’t be easy for you especially as you hardly speak to her. You must be so worried every day.”

“Every day yes but I can’t think about it every day. Me I must focus on what I must do here. All I can do is ask Allah to be with them. We cannot be scared of death, if it is Allah’s time we cannot argue.”

How could migrants mitigate against these psychologically traumatic consequences of transmigration? Jerusalem, Hahn and Schwarzer state that “in times of crisis, social bonds can dissolve, which ... make [the] stressful reestablishment of networks necessary” (1994:229). Post migration, it is critical that migrants establish social networks not only for their livelihood, but also for their psychosocial functioning and health (Jerusalem et al., 1994). Jerusalem et al. further argue that,

“migrants lose their home environment – sometimes under dangerous circumstances – and are no longer sheltered by protective factors such as family, jobs and housing. This delineates a situation of cumulative stress. Leaving behind one’s friends and family can sometimes be a relief or a challenge, but in most cases it is a loss. Although the anticipated benefits in the new community may out-weigh social losses, another support system has to be created from scratch nevertheless” (1994:230).

It is thus critical for a migrant’s well-being to create a support system in the host country. However, “not everyone is successful in social bonding after network disruption [and] those who remain unemployed ... are at a disadvantage compared to those who can meet people on the job” (Jerusalem et al., 1994: 231). For the young Somali men I worked with their job was particularly important in creating a transnational support system. They already had a Somali social network but creating networks that included South Africans was an important way of integrating into the new space. Also, by expanding beyond the Somali network, they were able to establish a sense of belonging in a space which they spent most of their time occupying. The

traders of the Roelof Street market spend their time working from sunrise to sunset, Monday to Saturday and at times work on Sundays as well. Thus while the market is a source of immediate income and sustenance – their livelihood – it is the centre of their sociality. This reality is true for both the Somali traders and the South African traders and taxi drivers.

Disconnection and Disorientation

Most of the South Africans who work at the Roelof Street market and Clarehill taxi rank are much older than the Somali men. These two groups, older South Africans and younger Somalis, have very different historical trajectories and socio-cultural contexts. Despite these dissimilarities both groups create a sense of belonging in the market and surrounding areas. The older South Africans faced a similar kind of disconnection with their families that the Somali men faced with theirs. The older South African traders have children who are married and living on their own with their nuclear families. As the immediacy of parenting has disintegrated they are compelled to seek broader social belonging and companionship outside of their homes. Further, the market is a familiar and comfortable space at a time where the transition from an apartheid South Africa to a democratic South Africa has left them feeling disorientated.

Uncle Faizel, Outjie, Sonny and Boeta Taliep gather at Uncle Faizel's vegetable stall situated next to Boeta Taliep's stall. All his fruit are still loose in separate boxes as he hasn't unpacked and set up his stall just yet. People alight from the train and buy apples, bananas, oranges and naartjies as they pass by. Boeta Taliep sits on a crate with a cardboard box on top of it with his legs crossed and his arms folded. He seems unaffected by the heavy rain that falls on either side of the stall. Uncle Faizel stands next to him with his hands in his pockets, as he leans against one of the brick pillars nearby. A *keffiyeh*¹¹ rests proudly on his head; Outjie sees to the customers and provides bags where necessary. All of them seem unaffected by the cold miserable weather. It is 14 degrees.

"My girl, what are you doing around walking in the rain?" Boeta Taliep asks me, as he surveys my huddled demeanour. I laugh and explain, "If you are here, then I'm here". Outjie takes a crate, places it next to Boeta Taliep, and instructs me to sit. I sit down. Outjie then brings over a banana and naartjie and tells me to eat. He implies that by eating the fruit, I would somehow get warmer. I smile, thank him

¹¹ A skullcap worn as a marker of Islamic piety

and begin peeling the naartjie. While I eat, the three men discuss once more the state of the country and Jacob Zuma who they really don't like. Every time I sit with these men, they have the same conversation but in different ways.

The older men in the market feel that their lives were much better during apartheid, both financially and socially. "You know this government, they don't take proper care of us coloureds. Now it's like we are forgotten," Boeta Taliep says as he lights his cigarette.

"Yes, back in the day business was good and we actually had a place in this country," Uncle Faizel says, agreeing with Boeta Taliep.

"A place, uncle? What do you mean by that?" I ask.

"The blacks control everything in this country now. Can you believe that? Blacks. They so backward and *dom* (dumb), how the hell can we trust them to run a whole country? You see, back then we had so many more opportunities than we do now. Nowadays, the blacks get everything and we have to struggle to get anything. This market is all we have left and even this market we are struggling in."

"How so uncle?"

"My girl, this rain is not good for business," Uncle Faizel explains. "Our usual shoppers who are like your older ladies and that don't come to the market in this weather. The only business we get today are the people who buy something to eat on their way to work and then this afternoon when workers make their way home and need last minute things. But even then it's not so many because they are all rushing to get out of the rain and get home."

"You see," Boeta Taliep interrupts, "the people don't need to buy here by us anymore. They're putting up so many Shoprites and Pick n Pays in the townships. The people don't have to come all the way out to Clarehill anymore to buy their groceries, not like in the old days. In winter especially we live hand to mouth. In the past selling fruit and veg was a way to make a good living. Nowadays, ha. You can just about provide your family with food for the day. Also the fruit and veg itself don't taste the same. Before, vegetable sellers had the best of the best. Now our stuff is the same as you would get in Pick n Pay".

Coloured Privilege

The Roelof Street market and Clarehill are more than just spaces of trade, commerce and economic exchange; these spaces are their home, their locale of belonging. Even though the

Clarehill space has changed over the years, the traders' deep connection to it has not. South Africa as a whole has undergone a number of changes and there have been shifts in government and power. During the transition from apartheid to democracy, a transition South Africa is still arguably experiencing, South Africans in general have had to shift from an apartheid government to a democratic government. This shift included more opportunities for black South Africans, liberty and a change in the overall social dynamics of the country. However, the social and emotional effects of colonisation and apartheid could not be dealt with overnight. The political, social and economic consequences were and are still faced by the democratic government and South African citizens. Thus, while there has been a shift in government policies, the socio-psychological and economic shifts have not been easy as the past is still intertwined with the present.

For the older coloured traders of Roelof Street market, there is a feeling that the democratic transition has not been to their benefit at all. During the particular conversation above the agreement by Boeta Taliep and uncle Faizel that life was better for them during apartheid underscored an incomplete transition to a new social order. I was introduced to apartheid during secondary school, and then later at university my knowledge thereof was extended. Boeta Taliep's and Faizel's words seemed to contradict the narratives I had encountered during formal education. For them, apartheid was a time where they felt the most in control of their lives, empowered by their access to opportunities.

During apartheid, coloured people were positioned in the pigmentocracy below white people and above black Africans. While they suffered forced removals, were impacted by the Group Areas Act and suffered the consequences of job reservation for whites, Erasmus and Pieterse (1999) argue that coloured privilege was evident during apartheid. Coloured people were in a better position than African people

“with regard to certain categories of work, the provision of higher levels of access to education and health services, the unemployment benefits that emanated from being part of the recognised/ ‘legal labour force; and the extension of a range of welfare services such as disability grants, (higher) state pensions, [and] maintenance grants, amongst others” (Erasmus and Pieterse, 1999:173).

When the first democratic election took place in 1994 most of the coloured people in the Western Cape voted for the National Party (Erasmus and Pieterse, 1999) rather than any political parties that represented the ‘liberation of black people.’ Coloured people were

constantly reminded that they were 'better than African people' but also 'less than white people.' Thus, when the time came to place their vote, the majority favoured the white political party as it was to be understood that white people were more capable of running the country than African people. Coloured people were not willing to allow an African man to rule as they were of the belief that they were better than and more capable than an African person. This lens of superiority is still a reality for many coloured people in contemporary Cape Town. Adhikari states that

[t]he majority [of coloured people], particularly within the working classes, has continued to adhere to a racialised conception of Colouredness with strong affinities to whiteness and a defensive racism toward Africans which draws heavily on apartheid values (2009:170).

Boeta Taliep and Uncle Faizel lived the reality of apartheid. They grew up in a time where they were led to believe that they are superior to African people and inferior to white people. Coloured people believed that the position they held in apartheid South Africa was one of value. However, in contemporary South Africa that feeling of being valued, for mostly working class coloured people, has been lost.

“Although the racial order of the white supremacist era has been undermined by control of the government passing to an African-dominated political party, the rise of a substantive African middle class and the discrediting of racial ideologies, the values of the old order still permeate popular perceptions and social patterns in post-apartheid South Africa” (Adhikari, 2006:144).

The above quote engages with the way in which apartheid ideologies continue to exist in contemporary South Africa. This is evident with the older group of men I sat with that day at the market as they still hold to the idea that they as coloured people are 'better' than Africans. Yet, in contemporary South Africa, the government is an 'African-dominated political party' and the people who they believed to be inferior to them are now at the political helm of the country. Their dismay at the turn of political events is a direct result of what they perceive as a decrease in their quality of life. This particular sentiment is evident when Uncle Faizel expresses that “The blacks control everything in this country now. Can you believe that? Blacks. They so backward and *dom* (dumb), how the hell can we trust them to run a whole country? ...Nowadays, the blacks get everything and we have to struggle to get anything.”

Fanon (2007) discusses the notion of colonization of the mind. He claims that colonization of the mind results in the oppressed having a strong desire to emulate the values of their oppressor (Fanon, 2007). From the discussions that took place among the men in the market, it was evident that colonial ideologies of race and class persisted in the minds of the coloured traders of Roelof Street market. Adhikari (2006) notes how coloured people occupy a space of in-between-ness where they feel they were not white enough in the past and now in contemporary society they are not black enough. Adhikari's (2006) work relates to Boeta Taliep and Uncle Faizel's sentiment of being 'forgotten' about. They are unable to actively negotiate their social position in the broader South African context. However, even as they experience alienation politically and economically, they maintain a strong affinity to and sense of belonging in the Roelof Street market in Clarehill. In a number of conversations with the older traders, they have referred to the market as their home.

I have not seen Sonny in the market for the past 2 days. It felt strange without his almost always angry face and constant teasing. I look at Aunty Gail sitting atop a pillow on her two crates while she sorts through sweet potatoes so she can put them into bags. She zips up her fleece jacket. It is another cold, wet day in Cape Town.

"I'm coming now," I say to Mohammed and Azhar. None of them look up as they both stare down at their cellphones. I walk to the stall next to the train station and purchase two cups of tea; I walk back and hand one to Aunty Gail and take a seat on the crate next to her.

"*Dankie, my kind* (Thank you, my child)" she says without looking up. She wipes her hands on her apron and takes a sip of the tea. She lets out a long breath and stares ahead of her. "Shoo, I needed that," she says without looking at me. I start sipping my tea as well. The warm liquid brings some comfort to the unbearable cold that takes up residence in one's bones.

"I haven't seen Sonny around in a long time," I say.

Aunty Gail takes another sip, puts her cup down beside her and continues sorting through her sweet potatoes.

"Ja, *ek het vir hom gister gebel* (Yes, I called him yesterday). His wife is not doing very well."

"Shame aunty, is she ill?"

"Yes, she *mos* has cancer. She's been alright but now these past few days he said she wasn't looking too well so he decided to stay home with her."

"I see. Shame man, that's sad to hear. Do they have children, aunty?"

"Ja. They have a son and a daughter. But they both are very busy 'cause they have their own families and that. Their daughter lives in Joburg so it's only their son here and he works a lot."

"So it's just the two of them in the house?"

"Yes. They get their pension to keep them going."

"And then the money Sonny makes here selling biscuits must help with having a little extra?"

She laughs. "My girl, he barely makes anything with selling biscuits. That's not why he comes here every day, not for the money."

"Then why come here every day?"

"Because he's been coming here for the past 50 years. This is his other home".

Nostalgia and a Sense of Home

The older traders would often discuss what Clarehill *used to be*. The market in particular was more than a trading space. It was a social space where family and friends would gather to socialise, drink and play games. While the space and its dynamics have changed over the years due to its transition to a more markedly economic space, the older traders of the market hold on to their memories and still experience it in the same way, despite all the changes. Nostalgia is a sentimental longing for the past; a wishful feeling that what once was will be once more. Bissell states that nostalgia is "frequently portrayed as a reaction or response to a more general force – capitalist restructuring, for example, or the onslaught of modernity" (2005:216).

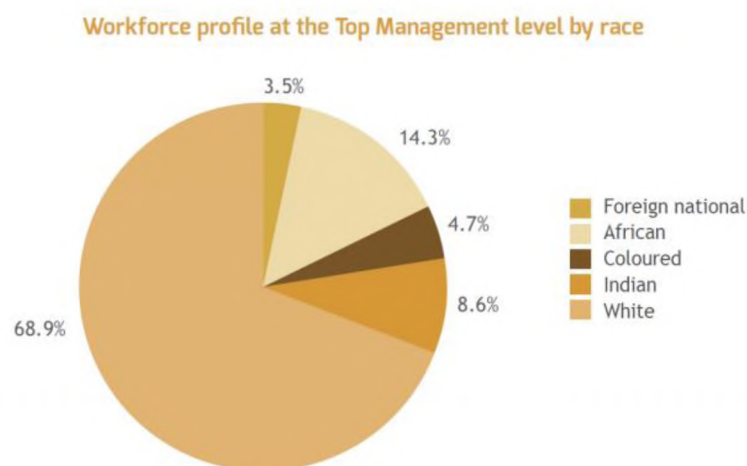
"On one 'level', there is no longer any place for *anyone* to stand and nostalgia takes on the generalised function to provide some kind (any kind) of cultural form. In positing a 'once was' to a 'now' it creates a frame for meaning, a means for dramatizing aspects of an increasingly fluid and unnamed social life" (Stewart, 1988: 227).

Modernity brings with it a loss of culture as various societies go through rapid political, social and economic changes. In a world of change, nostalgia rises to importance as "the phantasmal,

parodic rehabilitation of all lost frames of reference” (Foster, 1985: 90). Nostalgia exists as either a schizophrenic exhilaration “of a pure present that reads images for their own sake” (Jameson, 1983:214), or “it is a pained, watchful desire to frame the cultural present in relation to an ‘other’ world – to make of the present a cultural object that can be seen, appropriated, refused, disrupted or ‘made something of’” (Stewart, 1988:228). Clarehill exists as a memory for Boeta Taliep, Uncle Faizel, Sonny and some of the other traders. The Clarehill they remember does not exist any longer. Their memory of Clarehill is experiential and this experience of Clarehill is the ‘other’ world they compare the present to.

Boeta Taliep, Uncle Faizel and some of the others were socialised at a time where they felt valued and appreciated. During apartheid, as previously discussed, particular policies such as the Coloured Labour Preference policy in the Western Cape ensured the employment of coloured people, rather than African people (Owen, 2016). As a consequence, coloureds were better resourced and thus more financially stable than Africans.

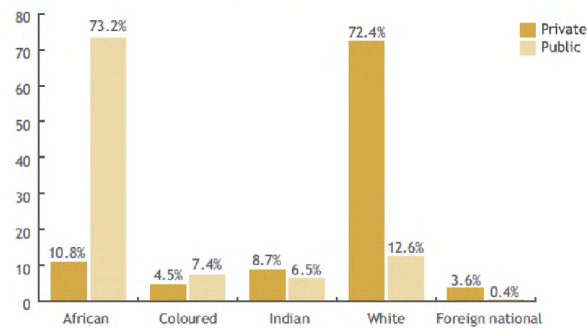
In contemporary South Africa, Africans are ‘preferred’ rather than coloured people due to the Employment Equity policy that ensures that previously disadvantaged South Africans will be granted hiring preference. An analysis done by *Business Tech*¹² in an online article in April 2016 illustrates that more Africans are employed in managerial positions than coloured people.



Source: <https://businesstech.co.za/news/business/121632/these-4-graphs-will-change-your-thinking-on-employment-in-sa/>

¹² <https://businesstech.co.za/news/business/121632/these-4-graphs-will-change-your-thinking-on-employment-in-sa/>

Workforce profile at the Top Management level for public and private sector by race



Source: <https://businesstech.co.za/news/business/121632/these-4-graphs-will-change-your-thinking-on-employment-in-sa/>

The two graphs above show how coloured people statistically fall below Africans in the number of people hired in top managerial positions. Superficially these statistics demonstrate a preference for African South Africans, particularly in managerial positions. Arguably these statistics support the coloured traders' perception that the social, economic and political position of coloured people in South Africa has shifted from one of preference to one of neglect.

This neglect or ostracisation is unfamiliar to the coloured traders. Their identity, secured in preferential treatment, encouraged a sense of value and worth in apartheid South Africa. Yet their understanding does not reflect the truth of dispossession and racialisation; of their othering. Their privilege, based on race, can thus be questioned. Still, the nostalgic longing for a 'better life', for certainty, speaks to a perceived loss in coloured privilege – their privilege. That Clarehill was and still is home is thus tied to the creation of a self during apartheid, and the perceived loss of that self in the present moment.

Boeta Taliep sits in the sun on a crate with his back against one of the pillars that holds up the steel covering of the taxi rank. His red cap sits low on his head, shielding his face from the sun. He sits with one leg crossed over the other and a newspaper rests on his leg. He holds up one corner of it while he reads the articles. Even though I'm standing on the other side at Azhar and Mohammed's stall, I know he's reading *The Voice*. He buys one every morning when he arrives at the market. While everyone appears in a hurry, his presence is calm and relaxed. He looks at peace, as though he is unaware of the movement around him. His calmness seems alien to me in relation to the almost panic like motion of the people at the taxi rank. To me he appears as he would if he had to be sitting in his lounge reading his paper. Almost as though he feels my eyes on him, he turns the page and looks up. His eyes catch mine and he nods his head and gives a slight wave. I smile and wave back, get up from where I'm sitting and walk towards him.

“Boeta Taliep, I’m surprised to see you here on a Monday. I thought Boeta doesn’t come to the market on a Monday?” I say as I take a seat on a crate next to Boeta Taliep at his stall.

“*Ja man*,” (yes man) “you know a person gets so bored at home. This is where most my friends are so I decided to come.”

I nod as I understand what he means. There were countless times I sat among Boeta Taliep and some of the other older traders and listened to them debate for hours about what they had read in the paper. Their favourite topic of conversation was the ANC¹³ and anything related to the government. Other times they would share stories or reminisce on the old days. “Boeta Taliep and the other guys here know each other long now,” I respond.

He exhales audibly. “I know these guys for most of my life,” he replies. “You should have seen what this market was like back in the day. The people would come here every Saturday then they sit and drink and play cards and dominoes. Those were the times.” As he speaks he looks into the distance and a faint smile plays on his face. I sit quietly beside him and give him space to relive what seems to be the best times of his life.

Easthope defines home as “a socio-spatial entity, a psycho-spatial entity and an emotional ‘warehouse’” (2004: 134). Saunders and Williams suggest that

“home is a crucial ‘locale’ because it is where basic social relations and institutions are constituted and reproduced, particularly because the ‘household’ (the mode of social organisation distinctive to the home) represents the core domestic unit of contemporary society” (1988:82).

Porteous argues that “the home provides humans with all the satisfactions that territory provides to many species of animal, namely identity, security and the stimulation of its occupants” (1976:383). Giuliani (1991) points to the significance of one's attachment to the home as “the psychological state of well-being experienced by the subject as the result of the mere presence, vicinity or accessibility of the [home and] the state of distress set up by the absence, remoteness or inaccessibility of the [home]” (1991:134). Easthope suggests that “in understanding a person’s connection with their home, we go some way towards understanding

¹³ African National Congress (A South African political party)

their social relations, their psychology and their emotions and we can begin to understand their ‘lived experiences’”(2004:135).

Easthope also claims that

“while homes may be located, it is not the location that is ‘home.’ Instead homes can be understood as ‘places’ that hold considerable social, psychological and emotive meaning for individuals and for groups” (2004:135).

Bachelard finds that the home is “a key element in the development of people’s sense of themselves as belonging to a place” (1999:72). The older coloured traders found their sense of home and belonging in Clarehill. Clarehill was a place where friends would gather at the market to play cards, to socialise, to laugh and to share good memories. As much as Clarehill has changed, much of the sociality continues to exist in the market. Some of the traders’ previous customers are still their customers now, like my grandmother for example. Yet, the traders’ forced removal from their residential homes in Claremont, uprooted them.

Jackson (2003) argues that former residents of those areas designated as whites only spaces through the legislation and implementation of the Group Areas Act (1950), express a nostalgic longing for those spaces. In their previous incarnations these areas “facilitated particular forms of social and civic activity as well as particular forms of identity” (Jackson, 2003:62). Jackson suggests that District Six in Cape Town “still offers a multivocal set of symbols through which former residents negotiate the relationship between the sense of belonging it once provided them and the racial boundaries that continue to define them” (2003:62). That sense of belonging felt by past residents of District Six is experienced by the coloured traders. The coloured traders experience what has been coined reterritorialization. Reterritorialization “can be understood as the process of rendering a space meaningful or intelligible by those who physically and symbolically attach significance to it” (Jackson, 2003: 65). Jackson (2003) argues that because coloured people did not have any tangible heritage, rituals or traditions to associate themselves with, they developed a strong connection to the space they lived in. The physical displacement of particular citizens through the implementation of the Group Areas Act (1950) led to a sense of alienation from self and the broader community, a detachment from a space where coloured people had constructed key elements of their identity (Jackson, 2003). As the City of Cape Town continues to develop its built environment, and residential areas change their racial, ethnic, and national composition, history and the memories attached with it seep further and further into the background, surfacing nostalgic projection (Jackson, 2003).

“Uncle Faizel, have you also been working here long like Boeta Taliep?” I ask.

He laughs. “Working here? My girl I was born here. Just like Boeta Taliep and your grandfather’s family, I grew up in Clarehill. Remember, this was a coloured area before the whities made us leave. After school I would come to this very spot and sell fruit and veg. I was six years old when I first started. You see the government could kick us out of our houses but they couldn’t stop us from working here. We found a way to stay in our area. This is our home. Even though Clarehill has changed so much, it will always be our home.”

While the coloured traders were not able to live in Clarehill anymore, they remained in the area as traders. With a history of dislocation and displacement, this space became a critical means of grounding the traders as South Africa becomes unfamiliar geographical and psychological territory over time.

In conclusion, while there are differences between the Somali traders and the South African traders, there are also similarities. The dominant similarity is the need for a physical and psychological space where they belong; where they are known and valued. The young Somali men were compelled to leave their country of origin abruptly. This rupture with home was emotionally devastating as they did not have the advantage of secured time to grieve their losses and orientate themselves to the host country; upon arrival they had to 'hustle' for accommodation and a livelihood.

Mohammed and Abdi have a particularly close relationship with their nuclear families. Their family forms a critical part of how they orientate themselves and understand their position in the world. Their separation from them, thus leaves them unstable in South Africa as their contact with them is limited. Relations with other Somalis in Cape Town, while grounding, are erratic at best, as all Somalis work long hours to secure themselves. This leaves very little time for fraternising, and the creation of strong national connections to home.

That said, Azhar's case is dissimilar to Mohammed's and Abdi's. As he already felt disassociated from other Somalis back home, his residence in South Africa provided him with the opportunity to express himself freely, without the social strictures and social pressures he felt to conform in Somalia. While he also misses his family, his social network in Cape Town provides him with the sociality he needs. Azhar is an anomaly in the Somali transmigrant community as he actively chooses to situate himself in a nationally diversified social network. The other Somali migrants that I worked with seek to create relationships with other Somalis

as a way to establish an emotional space of belonging. For Azhar, because he never felt a sense of belonging in Somalia, he chooses to remove himself from homogenous Somali networks to a large extent.

For Azhar, Abdi and Mohammed the Roelof Street market has become an important space. As they spend the majority of their time in the market, it is more than a space of commerce; it has also become their social space. Their experiences reflect the experience of the South African traders too, and this is where they ‘first meet’, and make sense of each other. It is critical that refugees establish a support system in the receiving country. In most cases, this support system is established in the space where they work. The Somali traders thus enter a convivial space that has been created as such over time by the coloured South African traders. Through ‘luck’ the Somalis find a ‘home’ that has been constituted across lines of time and national friction; and in the contemporary moment, together with South African traders, they sustain the Roelof street market as a place of belonging, their home away from home.

Chapter 7

Rucksack Religion

Religion is particularly important during migration, and during integration into the receiving country. Owen's (2011 and 2016) research, for example, demonstrates how religion provides transmigrants with the opportunity to create bonding and bridging capital. While Owen's (2011 and 2016) research detailed the lives of Christian transmigrants, my research speaks to the strong bonds created between Somalis and South Africans through Islam.

I never fully realised the cohesive power of religion until I entered the field for the first time in December 2014. In the Roelof Street Market, the majority of the traders and taxi drivers I worked with are Muslim. Islam and the practise thereof was a dominant theme during my time in the field especially as one of my fieldwork periods was during the month of Ramadaan¹⁴. Besides the celebration of Ramadaan, Islam was also expressed through the attire of the men in the market, and the conversations between people who work in the market and those who frequent the market. In order to understand the relationships that exist within the Roelof street market, it is crucial to pay attention to the role that religion, and particularly Islam, plays in helping migrants integrate into a space.

Religion and Migration

In the field of migration, religion and its import is oft ignored (Yang and Ebaugh, 2001). Yet according to Yang and Ebaugh (2001) religious institutions are the most critical resources for migrants when seeking a familiar space that will allow them to express their home identity in a foreign, unfamiliar space.

Religion, Levitt (2003:848) argues "create[s] international connections that engender universal identities". Therefore, while the world continues to change and migrants are compelled to acclimatise to a new, foreign space, religion creates a sense of unchanging stability that extends beyond borders. Because religion is practised through similar forms of worship that is not dependent on space, migrants are able to become part of a community that resembles that which they were part of in their home country (Levitt, 2003). Levitt argues that it is debated whether "religion functions as a discrete homogenizing force in its own right or if it is an arena within

¹⁴ the ninth month of the Muslim year, during which strict fasting is observed from dawn to sunset

which individuals assert particularistic, localised identities in the face of globalization” (2003: 848).

For the young Somali men in the Roelof Street market, religion plays a crucial role in the way relationships were initially created and are maintained. It is through religion, specifically Islam that Mohammed, Azhar and Abdi have created and felt a sense of belonging in the Roelof Street Market. Therefore through their religious cultural capital – the practise of Islam and its tenets, including the recitation of the Quran in Arabic – they are included in a social network that gives them access to the social capital that exists therein.

United in and through Islam

‘Rucksack’ Cultural Capital

Instead of the usual tracksuit pants and hoody, Mohammed sports a black pants, white shirt and a dark blue jacket. The sun bounces off his shiny black shoes. I walk towards him smiling, taking in how different he looks today.

“And then? That we look so smart today?” I say to him teasingly.

He looks at me confused. I point to his clothes and say, “you look so dressed up with your smart clothes. Is it a special occasion?”

He laughs as he realises I’m referring to his outfit. “No, no. It’s Friday. Holy day for us. I must go to mosque. I must look nice.”

“So you dress up every Friday?”

“I must yes. I need to go soon to mosque. It is nearly time. But now I must wait for this guy. He is always late.”

Mohammed explains that he and Azhar take it in turns to go to the mosque that is about a five minute walk from their stall. Mohammed looks frantically at his phone checking the time every few minutes. His eyes dart from his phone to the end of the road that Azhar would walk down. Each time he looks at his phone he gets a little more frustrated.

I’ve been so focused on Mohammed’s frustration, I don’t hear Uncle Naheem approach the stall and sit down on the crate behind the counter. He watches Mohammed standing in front of the counter. He looks down at his watch and then folds his hands together. He starts shaking his legs, frantically bouncing them up

and down. He looks anxious. Both he and Mohammed are quiet but I can feel they are both waiting for something, most likely Azhar's arrival.

Uncle Naheem lets out a long sigh then says, "No man, where is this guy? I need to go and come back. "

"You can go without me. I don't know where this guy is," Mohammed replies.

"No, no. I will wait for you," Uncle Naheem says firmly and they return to silence as they wait for Azhar. Mohammed walks towards the end of the road to see if Azhar is anywhere in sight.

I lean against the Coco Cola cooler next to the back of the stall near where Uncle Naheem sits. Uncle Naheem looks down at his watch and breathes audibly.

To take his mind off his frustration of waiting I ask, "does uncle and Mohammed always go to mosque together?"

My voice surprises him as he was lost in his thoughts. He pauses as my question seems to float in his mind.

"Yes, yes. Every week. We walk together and we pray together."

As he answers Mohammed returns to the stall. "This guy, he is coming now then we go," he reports.

Uncle Naheem nods as relief settles over his body. He glances at his watch one more time and then turns to me.

"This guy here, this is my brother," he says, nodding towards Mohammed. "In mosque he stands right beside me when we pray. In the eyes of Allah we are all his children. These Somalians, they know and can recite the Quran better than most of us here because they are taught from such a young age." He then turns around and grabs a packet of *Stylos* chips for himself. He offers me a packet as well. I laugh at the fact that he is offering me something which is actually not his to offer. I smile and tell him no thank you.

"Boeta, are you taking things again? You will make me broke," says Mohammed from behind the stall.

"Nee man! We mos brothers, what's yours is mine. That's how it works," responds Uncle Naheem.

Mohammed laughs. "Brothers? How can we be brothers? Look how old you are! Me, I'm young. You more like my grandfather."

Azhar arrives at the stall out of breath. He takes off his peak cap and wipes the sweat off his forehead. He is wearing his usual jeans and hoody. He is not formally dressed like Mohammed.

"Sorry, taxi took long." He says to no one in particular.

"*Ja, dis altyd iets met jou op 'n Vrydag. Altyd laat,*" (Yes, it's always something with you on a Friday. Always late.) Uncle Naheem says to him as he gets up from the crate behind the counter. He hits Mohammed on the back and says to him, "come my boy, let's go. There Abdi is already waiting for us."

I watch as the two men walk towards the subway where Abdi stands and waits. As they weave their way through people Uncle Naheem's hand does not leave Mohammed's back as they walk and talk.

The next day

"Uncle Naheem, yesterday you told me how well the Somalians know the Quran and how they are taught reciting it at a very young age. Does that not happen here in Cape Town with young Muslims?" I ask Uncle Naheem while he sits on the crate against the pole between Aunty Gail and Mohammed and Azhar's stall. He nods while I speak, peels a banana and takes a bite before answering.

"You know, my girl. These Muslim *laaities*¹⁵ they go to *Madrassa*¹⁶ where they learn about Islam and recite the Quran from a very young age. The problem is that that only happens a few times a week and it's not the only place they go to, to learn. They have to attend normal school as well because you know that's how things work in this country".

"Does uncle think that creates issues for Muslim children? Only attending *Madrassa* a few times a week and then also attending normal school?"

He thinks about my question, takes another bite of his banana, chews and swallows. "In many ways yes. Because the thing is they get exposed to things from

¹⁵ Young people, children

¹⁶ Islamic religious educational institution often attached to a mosque.

children who aren't Muslim and we as parents can't always prevent them from being influenced".

"Things such as?"

"You know the *laaities* of today man. Drinking and drugs and that rubbish they listen to. Also the clothing these young girls wear. That is just not the Muslim way".

"I understand".

"Unfortunately, we live in a country where the *laaities* need to attend school outside of *Madrassa*. They need that to get work and earn a living here. Now you see with these guys," he nods his heads towards Mohammed and Abdi who are packing chips into boxes, "they come from a country where Islam is all they need. They come from a country where Arabic is one of the primary languages. There is no better way to understand Islam than through the language it was created in. They know the Quran backwards and forwards and live by it. They are not influenced by other *goedtes*¹⁷ that could lead them away from Allah. That is all I've ever wanted for my kids, to be firm in their faith and to live by the words of the Quran".

"Does uncle think that living in South Africa has had an effect on your kids' faith?"

"My kids are very good Muslims. I have worked very hard to instil the values of Islam into them and to make sure they understand the importance of our way of life. My kids are grown now and have started their own families and my only hope is that they instil in their kids what I have in them. But I must say, it wasn't always easy. We live in an area where it isn't only Muslims".

I nod my head while he speaks. We both watch Abdi and Mohammed as they pack the boxes. My attention is brought back to Uncle Naheem at the sound of his voice.

"These boys are very good Muslims. I have a lot of respect for them".

Erel (2010) argues that every migrant enters a new country with a 'rucksack' approach to gaining access to social networks and social capital. He suggests that migrants bring with them "a package of cultural resources that may or may not fit with the 'culture' of the country of residence" (Erel, 2010:645). Whether they are aware of it or not is unclear, but in the Roelof Street Market, the young Somali men have brought with them a 'rucksack' that fits with some aspects of the South African Islamic culture. A part of this rucksack is their Islam, or socio-religious capital. Raised in an Islamic country, Abdi,

¹⁷ Things

Mohammed and Azhar have been enculturated in a way that earns them respect in certain Islamic spaces of Cape Town.

The importance of Islam to Mohammed and Abdi is evident in their dedication to attending mosque every Friday. Both Mohammed and Abdi have indicated that their purpose in South Africa is to create a good life for themselves which leads to their prioritisation of work. The fact that they are willing to break away from their stall, which I have never seen them do besides to collect stock, indicates that their faith is just as important in creating a 'good life' as creating a viable livelihood is. Their prioritisation and intrinsic knowledge of Islam is respected by Uncle Naheem and is evident in the way he praises their knowledge of Arabic and the Quran in the ethnographic vignettes above. The young Somali men have been immersed into the Islamic way of life since childhood, encouraged to know the Quran through active learning, recitation and immersion. The young Somali transmigrants thus embody the tenets of Islam. This embodiment relates to Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus, as Islam has a particular way of being and doing that is understood by other Muslims in the Roelof Street Market.

The vignette above shows the level of comfort between Uncle Naheem and Mohammed. Uncle Naheem takes from Mohammed's stock without paying and through Mohammed's response it is clear that this is a normal and accepted act. Later in the vignette, Uncle Naheem refers to Mohammed as his brother and how they stand side by side in the mosque and pray. Through Islam, these two men have formed a brotherhood or fraternity which is evident in their jocular, yet respectful, engagement with each other.

Bowen states that "Islamic religious practice promotes the sense of a worldwide community ... among ordinary Muslims" (2004:882). Thus, the values instilled through Islam is understood globally. Bowen further argues that "Islam has an intrinsic universality ... and also more so universalistic dimensions" (2004:882). Uncle Naheem's response to Mohammed illustrates how the religious norms the young Somali men were enculturated into on a national level through a national culture of Islam, has a particular understanding and resonance among Muslims in the Roelof Street Market. For example, as illustrated in the vignettes, the men dress more formally on a Friday as it is the day they go to mosque. Also there is a unified prioritisation of attending mosque on a Friday. While this vignette focuses on Mohammed, Abdi and Uncle Naheem, the other Muslim men in the market I have worked with take time away from their stalls or taxis in order to attend the mosque in Clarehill. They take it in turns so that there is always someone to watch the stall. This understanding of the importance of the

mosque, as a container of one of the most important ritual acts in Islam, is not only understood by Muslims but also those who are not Muslim. Those who are not Muslim offer to watch stalls or guard taxis while the men go to mosque. On a Friday afternoon there is an eerie stillness to the market that indicates how many workers in the market attend mosque.

The Somali men's habitus is an expression of Islamic norms. These norms include the young men's ability to speak Arabic, recite the Quran, their adherence to the values and morals of Islam as well as a strong dedication to Islam. These religious norms are recognised beyond borders through the universality of Islam. They are also able to relate with the Muslim men and women of Roelof Street market through an embedded understanding of mutual respect and relatability learned through the teachings of Islam.

Geertz claims that

“sacred symbols function to synthesize a people's ethos – the tone, the character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood – and their world view – the picture that they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order” (1973:62).

Through Islam and the norms attached thereto the young Somali men and the older Muslim South African men have been able to establish common ground – a connection. While I have described the relationship between Uncle Naheem and the young Somali men, this connection created through Islam is not limited to them only. Boeta Taliep, Uncle Faizel, Uncle Naheem and the Somali men spend some afternoons unpacking and discussing the Quran. The older men are intrigued by the knowledge of Islam possessed by the Somali men. Also, during the month of Ramadaan, these men would break their fast together in the market. Their relationships speak to a common religious worldview that draws them to one another.

Bangstad (2004) argues that for Muslims in Cape Town, great emphasis and value is placed on the ability to recite or to *batcha*. There is a high level of respect given to individuals who have great religious knowledge and to those who have memorised the entire Quran (Bangstad, 2004). Not only do the young Somali men possess this knowledge, but they are also fluent in Arabic which is considered the language that speaks to the universal message of Islam (Bowen, 2004). Their 'rucksack' is thus filled with religious and cultural capital that eases their entry into, and their livelihoods, in the Roelof street market.

Wuthnow (2002) discusses the way in which religious social networks allow migrants to be associated with influential individuals who could assist them in creating opportunities in the host country. He further states that while it can create a bridge for migrants into higher-status circles, it could also limit them into only associating with members of their own kind, thus creating a closed network (Wuthnow, 2002). Within these social networks, migrants are able to access either bridging or bonding capital, or in my particular fieldsite, both.

Bonding capital refers to “interpersonal solidarity that is often present among people who associate in small groups, local communities and other settings over extended periods of time” (Wuthnow, 2002:670). Bonding capital provides “emotional support, camaraderie [and] a kind of personal empowerment” (Wuthnow, 2002:670). While bonding capital occurs more easily among homogenous groups, bridging capital creates a link between heterogeneous groups creating stronger links in the larger society (Wuthnow, 2002; Frank and Yasumoto, 1998; Paxton, 1999). Putnam (2001) states that bridging capital allows individuals to access knowledge that exists beyond their usual social circle so that they are able to learn about different values and lifestyles. In comparison to bonding capital, bridging capital is less intimate and

“is perhaps more difficult to generate and sustain because it requires that people look beyond their immediate social circles and depends on institutions capable of nurturing cooperation among heterogeneous groups “ (Wuthnow, 2002: 670).

In relation to the Roelof street market, both Somali and South African traders, crossed national and ethnic boundaries. This bridging occurred as Islam – the ideology and practise thereof – formed such a crucial part of how both groups construct their identity. Cooperation between these nationally heterogeneous groups thus became inevitable. Therefore, while initially it was bridging capital that brought these two groups together, over time the Somali migrants of Roelof Street market have bonded with South Africans, creating a heterogeneous social network. They have come to understand aspects of each others' lives as they have become more familiar with different life ways and as the discussion and practise of Islam has led to a shared feeling of camaraderie and emotional support. While they are heterogeneous on the basis of age, nationality, race and ethnicity, they are homogenous on the basis of their religion, Islam. Both groups have constructed their identities on the values expressed through the Quran. These values are evident in the descriptions above and when Uncle Naheem speaks about the importance of ‘the Muslim way’. The ‘Muslim way’ includes no consumption of alcohol or

illicit drugs, no sex before marriage, reciting the Quran and most importantly prioritising Islam and Allah. Uncle Naheem, the Somali men and the other older Muslim South Africans often discuss what it means to be a Muslim and how this way of being is sometimes challenging in South Africa. These challenges are highlighted by Uncle Naheem who indicated that he worries about young Muslims who attend school with many people who are not Muslim. His concern indicates how important 'the Muslim way' is to him. This concern is shared by the other older Muslim men. It is for this reason that they value the purity of Islam as expressed by the Somali men.

Wuthnow (2002) argues that religious involvement is associated with status bridging capital. Status bridging social capital "refers specifically to networks that span vertical arrangements of power, influence, wealth, and prestige" (Wuthnow, 2002:670). Scholars argue that the capital accessed through religious involvement and institutions is primarily used as a means to better one's livelihood, social status and class (Wuthnow, 2002; Lamont, 1992; Brehm and Rahn, 1997; Putnam, 2000).

Wuthnow's (2002) comments point to the emphasis placed on migrants' religion to transcend hierarchies of class and race through bridging and bonding capital. However, in terms of my research, I found that religion, while creating bonds, plays a much more emotional role in the lives of the Somali migrants in the Roelof Street Market. Through Islam, they accessed a geographic and an emotional space in an unfamiliar setting as they created strong, amiable relationships with the South Africans in the market. It is through Islam that they were able to connect on a personal level and together with South African traders create familiarity and a sense of familial ties.

Connecting Emotionally

Azhar and I return to the market after a window shopping expedition and find Mohammed and Uncle Naheem sitting side by side, each on a crate behind the counter of the stall. As we reach the stall, Azhar darts off to go and speak to one of the taxi drivers. I sit down next to Aunty Gail who is packing potatoes into bags of 5. Without saying anything, I pick up a bag and start helping her. She glances at me briefly and continues.

While helping Aunty Gail I overhear Uncle Naheem and Mohammed's conversation.

"Mohammed, my boy, are you going to come spend Eid with me and my family again this year?"

"Yes, yes. Your daughter going to be there?" asks Mohammed while smiling cheekily.

Uncle Naheem laughs heartedly. "Yes, Shaafiqa will be there. You and this daughter of mine."

"Ah, she is pretty. She need good husband."

Uncle Naheem laughs again. "And you are going to be that good husband for her?"

"Yes of course. Me I will take good care of her."

"*Jy Somali*," (you Somali), I'm sure you would. He pats Mohammed on the back and then gets up to make his way back to his taxi. Before he leaves he looks at me and says smiling, "This one *smaaks* my daughter *dik*" (This one likes my daughter a lot). I smile and he returns to his taxi shouting, "Kenilworth Centre, Access Park, Hanover Park!"

I get up and walk over to where Mohammed is sitting. A take the seat on the crate that Uncle Naheem has just vacated.

"Do you like to spend Eid with Uncle Naheem and his family?"

"Yes, it is very nice. From my second year here in Cape Town I go to him and his family on Eid."

"How did you spend Eid before in Cape Town?"

"I go to Somali people in Bellville. All the Somali people they get together on Eid."

"But you would rather spend it now with Uncle Naheem?"

"Yes. It is much better ... You see Eid is a day for family. You sit with young people, old people, mothers, children, grandfathers, grandmothers. You talk about the Quran and you share different things. Somali people we do that here yes but it not the same. In my country, Eid is a big day. No one work, everyone we celebrate together. Here it like normal day. Sometimes not all Somali people can celebrate properly, they must work. They need money. It just don't feel like Eid. With Uncle Naheem it feel more like Eid. A day to celebrate. It feel special. Me I don't have family here and no family, no wife, no kids. One day I will have wife. Me I'm looking hard."

“What is Uncle Naheem’s family like?”

“They very very nice people. We spend the day at his brother’s house. Very nice big house. They always so nice to me. They used to me already.”

The emotional connection between Uncle Naheem and Mohammed is expressed through the way in which they tease and joke with one another. They share an easy familiarity, even jesting about the possibility of Mohammed marrying one of Uncle Naheem’s daughters. While I can only speculate as to the seriousness of this possibility, marriage is an intimate creation of a bond as one marries not only the individual but also the family. That this level of intimacy can be entertained emphasises the depth of the bond between Uncle Naheem and Mohammed.

Eid is an important day in the Islamic calendrical year, and since my childhood I have been aware that Eid and Ramadaan are practised with devotion in Cape Town with family. Eid marks the completion of the month of Ramadaan. Mohammed is included in Uncle Naheem’s family celebration which highlights the emotional and kin like relationship that exists between the two of them. Not only does Mohammed spend the day with Uncle Naheem, he also spends it with Uncle Naheem’s extended family in his brother’s house. His inclusion in a family gathering that includes people who are not part of the Roelof street market emphasises the strength of Islam in building relationships.

In the previous chapter, I discussed Mohammed’s experience of disconnection from his natal home. Being away from his family is emotionally traumatic for him as he longs for the familial connections that forms an important part of his life. In the vignette he indicates how on Eid he misses home more than usual as Eid is experientially different, amongst other Somalis in Cape Town, in comparison to the familial setting in Somalia. Eid with Uncle Naheem and the rest of his family thus provides Mohammed with a kinlike anchor in Cape Town. While the experience is not exactly the same as the celebrations back home, it resembles what he misses the most about home. Through Islam, Mohammed is able to access a sense of familiarity, a feeling of home in a foreign place that is largely unfamiliar to him.

For the Love of Music

In comparison to Mohammed and Abdi, religion has played a very different role in Azhar’s migratory experience. While Azhar, like Mohammed and Abdi, is an economic migrant, a further push to migrate was his need for personal freedom. Azhar is a rap artist who has a strong passion for producing music. In Somalia, his taste in music was not understood or condoned.

"I've always loved music," he says. "Even when I was younger, all I wanted to do is listen to Tupac, R. Kelly and Michael Jackson. I loved Michael Jackson, he was my favourite. But my father would take my phone and delete all the music from it. He say I shouldn't be listening to it because it not Somalian. It is bad for me. In Somalia I can't tell the people there I want to make music and rap. All they want me to do is get four wives and have children. I will have a wife one day, but now me I'm still young. I love my music."

"In Somalia, you wouldn't really hear this kind of music, like rap or hip hop or pop, playing like in a house or somewhere in the street or something?"

He laughs as though my question is ridiculous. "Never! These people, what you call them now, these guys who walk with big guns there in my country... terrorists, *ja* terrorists. So many times they stop me in street they take my phone they see the music they say it rubbish. They break my phone then they beat me up. This wrong they tell me".

While Mohammed and Abdi are staunch Muslims who live the 'Muslim way', Azhar lives to the beat of his own drum. Azhar attends mosque some Fridays and has the same knowledge of the Quran as Abdi and Mohammed. However he does not fast, he drinks alcohol sometimes and has a girlfriend who is not Muslim. As South Africa is a secular state, Azhar is not restricted by Shriah law, nor an orthodox Muslim life. In comparison to Somalia he thus feels a sense of liberation in South Africa. Most importantly there are no severe consequences for his behaviour in South Africa as there is in Somalia. While Mohammed and Abdi were drawn to Islamic spaces as a way to seek familiarity in a foreign space, Azhar chose to distance himself from these spaces.

Azhar sits on the broken chair against the pole and drums a beat on his legs while he taps his feet to the rhythm. I sit next to Aunty Gail and watch her sort out the sweet potatoes. I offered to help her but she says there is a specific way it needs to be done and she prefers to do it on her own.

"This one can never sit still", she says out loud to no one in particular. Even though she didn't say his name, I know she is talking about Azhar. It's like there is always a song or a beat playing in his head and his body moves to the rhythm of it naturally and easily. "It's like he's a human radio", she says while she continues to work. I look up as the sound of the drumming stops to see Azhar spin around to face us.

"Mama, are you talking about me?" he says as he brings his hands up to his chest. Auntie Gail doesn't answer him and continues working. Azhar laughs. "Human radio? Ha! What you mean now?" Auntie Gail still doesn't give a response. Azhar looks at me.

"I think because you are always moving to music that only you can hear. You either move your head or your arms or your feet. I don't think I've ever seen you sit still. Actually the only time you're still is when you're watching music videos. Wait, actually even then you move your head to the beat", I reply. I see in the corner of my eye that Auntie Gail is nodding in agreement.

"You talk nonsense!" He says to me, a smile spread across his face.

"It is! Just ask Mohammed, he will tell you."

"Mohammed?" Azhar looks to his cousin for someone to support him.

"Never is this one still. Never!" Mohammed replies without looking up from the packet of chips he's looking down at as he opens it. "Everything for you is just music music music. Nothing else. All your time and money all for music. Even when you are here at work your mind it is on music."

"But music it is my happiness. It is my life." Azhar says matter of factly as he shrugs his shoulders.

"Ha!" Mohammed fake laughs mockingly. "Your life? Where will music take you? Will it put bread on your table? Never."

"It is my passion, Mohammed. It is why I wake up in the morning."

"You should wake up in the morning to make sure you can feed yourself in the day."

"You wake up in the morning to make sure you eat? That make no sense."

"No, me I wake up to make sure I can eat so that one day I find my wife and make a family and then I will know how to take care of them. It is what my father did and what his father did. It is how we must live this life. We must get married and have children and take care of them".

Azhar scrunches his face and I can see he disagrees with Mohammed. I choose not to get involved by not offering my opinion because I am intrigued by how different their views on life are. Azhar turns to Auntie Gail and asks, "Mama, don't

you think in life we must do what makes us happy? Passion it is good for life mama.”

Aunty Gail stops what she’s doing and looks up at Azhar. I didn’t realise she had been listening to the conversation. “*My kind* (my child), you see there is a difference between want and need. In a perfect world we would all be able to do what we wanted to do. We would wake up and live our lives for our passion. But in this world we have to do what we need to do. We have to find a way to survive because no one else is going to take care of us. You see all this,” she gestures around her to her produce displayed on boxes, “Do you think this is why I’ve wanted to wake up every morning for all these years? Of course not. But back in the old days this is what I needed to do to make sure I didn’t end up living on the street and begging for food. By the grace of God I am still here and when I leave work I have a house to go to and I sleep with food in my stomach. That is what life is about.”

Azhar nods as Aunty Gail speaks. When she finishes, she gets up and fetches a bag of orange sweet potatoes to sort through. She told me once before that the orange ones are the ones the foreigners are fond of. I look at Azhar who is still thinking about what has just been said. He is leaning forward, his elbows resting on his knees and his hands entwined together. He bites his bottom lip thoughtfully and bounces his feet up and down. Finally he speaks up.

“Mama, I hear what you say, yes we must do what we need. But that don’t mean we can’t also do what we want. You see I am here making money this is my work then I go to my other work that I love. I make money with that too. But me I still need this also. But mama you will see one day I will make enough money because of my music.”

Mohammed makes a snorting sound at Azhar’s comment and says, “your music take you away from this job that make you money to eat every day. You always late and tired. In the Quran do you see anything about what you are doing every day? No. What you do is not how our people is supposed to live. You must find wives and have children and look after them. That is what we have been told to do. One day you will see.”

The above conversation illustrates Mohammed and Azhar’s very different perceptions of life. It also illustrates their individual agency. They have both been enculturated into similar societal and religious norms but have chosen to live their lives in very different ways. Mohammed’s

feelings towards Azhar's life choices and views on life indicates the way Azhar would have experienced living in Somalia where Islam is dominant. Horrie and Chippendale state that

“Islam could never become a purely private religion of personal conscience and ethics. Rather it is a complete way of life governing dress, economics, business, ethics, rates of taxation, justice and punishment, weights and measures, politics, war and peace, marriage and inheritance, family and domestic life, the care of animals and livestock, sexual relations within marriage, education, diet, cookery, social behaviour, forms of greeting and rules of hospitality. Even the way in which a glass of water is to be drunk is governed by Islamic religious law” (2007:3-4).

Within Islam, the rules are simple and uncompromising (Horrie and Chippendale, 2007). There is no room for individual adaptation of how to be a Muslim. There is only the way that is stipulated in the Quran and within the five pillars of Islam: the profession of faith, daily prayers, alms-giving, fasting during Ramadaan and Pilgrimage to Mecca (Horrie and Chippendale, 2007). A Muslim is expected to live by, and fulfil the dictates of these pillars.

Mohammed and Azhar have both found ways to express themselves in South Africa but have done so in different spaces. For Mohammed, the Islamic 'space' in the Roelof street market was the most comfortable for him, as it is a lifestyle with which he aligns himself. For Azhar, even though he understands this space as it resembles the cultural field he was enculturated into, it is within this very space that he feels he is stifled. This dissimilarity was evident when observing who the young men were closest to in the Roelof Street market.

Mohammed has a close, emotional connection with Uncle Naheem as they have a mutual understanding of living the Islamic way. Levitt states that “religion plays a critical role in identity construction, meaning making, and value formation. Migrants also use religion to create alternative allegiances and places of belonging” (2003:851). Because Azhar understands the expectation other Muslims would have of him, he distances himself from the older Muslim men, like Uncle Naheem, in the Roelof Street market. Azhar has formed closer relationships with people like Aunty Gail and Sonny, a 73 year old biscuits and sweets seller, who are both not Muslim. They understand what is expected of Muslims as they work closely with them. However, because they are not Muslim, they do not have certain religious and behavioural expectations of him.

During the month of Ramadaan, Azhar does not fast. Even though he is free to eat when he wants to, he polices his consumption as he refrains from eating in front of Mohammed and

Abdi or any of the South African Muslims in the market. When I asked him about it he told me that he does not want to cause any nonsense. Thus, even though he has chosen to live his life a particular way, he is still well aware of the religious pressures and expectations that come with being a young Muslim man. Eriksen (2004) argues that no matter how we construct, perceive and express our identity, we cannot assume that people will perceive us in the way we want to. Therefore, Azhar's habitus, imbued with Islamic restrictions, continues to impact the manner in which he conducts himself around other Muslims.

Azhar makes his music with another young Somali man by the name of Gassiem. Both are similar in the way they have chosen not to live the staunch Islamic way. They both have a passion for music. Gassiem has been in Cape Town a few more years than Azhar and had thus already established a social network of South Africans who share his passion. In Azhar's case, it was not his 'rucksack' religious package that assisted him in accessing a different social network. Instead, it was his love and passion for music as well as his talent. Through music, Azhar has been able to access Gassiem's social network that includes other African transmigrants and South Africans.

The presence and practise of Islam is different in South Africa in comparison to Somalia. In Somalia, Islam is embedded in the national identity and forms the foundation of how the country is governed. In Somalia, there is no escaping Islam. However, in South Africa, Islam exists within particular spaces; it is but one of the many religious identities that exist within South Africa's diverse society. Bangstad (2004) states that as a result of the Group Areas Act (1950) during apartheid, Muslims were placed with coloured people of different religions. He then argues that post-apartheid, Muslims began creating private Islamic spaces (Bangstad, 2004). For Mohammed, these Islamic spaces is where he feels he belongs. However, for Azhar, he found a sense of belonging beyond these spaces as there he is finally able to be who he is.

In conclusion, religion plays an important role in migrants integrating in a country. Through religion, migrants are able to express themselves as they would at home in an unfamiliar space. Religion allows migrants to access familiarity and rootedness in a new and foreign country. For my research participants, Islam was used as a means to access a social network and thus social capital.

Somalia is an Islamic country that functions on the values of the Quran. These values are instilled into Somalians as they are enculturated into an Islamic way of life. These religious norms form what is described as 'rucksack' cultural capital. The young Somali men were able

to use this 'rucksack' to form connections in the Roelof street market where the majority of the traders and taxi drivers are Muslim. The young Somali men are respected for their knowledge and investment in Islam and thus have been able to form close, emotional relationships with Muslim South Africans in the market.

These relationships are important as there is a need in the host country to create emotional connections given the disruption of these with those back home. Through Islam, a sense of brotherhood and kinship have been created as there is a mutual understanding of values and norms. Islam, has formed the foundation for the young Somali migrants to create and sustain relationships in Cape Town. These social networks provide a space where they are able to express themselves comfortably and also feel a sense of belonging. Even though Mohammed and Azhar have a similar migratory trajectory, they have very different experiences which speaks to their individual agencies. Mohammed is drawn to Islamic networks as Islam is a priority in his life. He structures his identity according to the values and expectations that exist within Islam. However, Azhar is not a staunch Muslim and because of his need to escape the restrictions of the 'Muslim way', he has accessed networks through his love for music. As anthropologists and migration specialists it is therefore imperative not to generalise our findings about religion to a broader national transmigrant population.

Chapter 8

Creating a Community: Fictive Kin and Joking Relationships

A micro community exists within the Roelof Street market as the relationships created there extend beyond that of an economic relationship. There is a close, kin like bond that exists between all the traders. Anthropologists have often referred to the relationship between Mohammed and Uncle Naheem as fictive kin. While some men and women are closer to each other than others, there is mutual understanding between, and respect for, all the traders and the taxi drivers. During my time in the field, my understanding of two separate and distinct nationalities, South African and Somali, slowly disappeared. The more time I spent in the field, the more I saw this micro community functioning as a whole rather than two separate groups merely coexisting. I do not deny the existence of internal and personal misunderstanding. However the tension that arises forms part of bringing the group closer together.

The market has become an important space for the Somali traders as well as the South Africans who work there. The traders and taxi drivers spend a large part of their lives at the taxi rank and market. Thus, the Roelof street market is more than a space for livelihood; it is a social space as well. It is a place of comfort and familiarity in a time where there is much discomfort and unfamiliarity felt by both the South Africans and Somalis. The young Somali men have had to try and integrate into an often alienating country, while they deal with the psychological trauma of hastily leaving their countries and families. The older South African coloured traders have experienced a history of displacement, and even now they have to re-negotiate their social position in a democratic South Africa. The market has thus provided a space of stability, a space where the people I worked with were able to ground themselves.

An important aspect in Sichone's (2003) discussion of social cohesion is community and social kinship. The Roelof Street market is an example of a cohesive, convivial, social and fictive kin like community consisting of South Africans and Somalis. It is important that I highlight that this community consists of South Africans and Somalis as the dominant xenophobic narrative in South Africa positions this occurrence as highly unlikely. In April 2008, South Africa faced an intense series of xenophobic attacks against immigrants across the country that resulted in 62 deaths, over 16 000 people displaced and more than 400 people arrested (Dunderdale, 2013). Before 2008, xenophobia was not an uncommon occurrence in South Africa. However, as

noted by Dunderdale, “the attacks [in 2008] brought an international spotlight and government attention to the problem” (2013:1) due to the severity and scale of the attacks. Nine years later and South Africa’s xenophobic nature remains unresolved.

Dunderdale (2013) notes that a number of reports have indicated continued xenophobic violence that include regular lootings of Somali stores and three Somali men as having been murdered in 2012 in Cape Town in a space of one week. She further notes that there were over 50 attacks in September 2012 alone and in 2013 a surge of xenophobic violent attacks were reported in the news (Dunderdale, 2012). The increase of xenophobic attacks in 2013, specifically toward Somali shop owners in Cape Town, resulted in over 200 Somali migrants marching on parliament to deliver a memorandum urging the government to come to their aid as a matter of urgency¹⁸. News 24s article *Somali Refugees Plea for Protection* quotes a Somali migrant as saying “we want to be treated like brothers and sisters of South Africa, not like enemies, not like foreigners.”¹ Somali refugees reportedly marched in favour of being included and accepted in Cape Town and against the way they have been treated prior to the march – as outsiders and enemies¹. In February 2017, Mchunu, for The New Age Online, reported that since January police reports have indicated that 11 Somali nationals have been killed with three Somali shopkeepers being gunned down on the same day¹⁹. News reports thus indicate that xenophobia fuels engagement with Somalis in contemporary South Africa. However, my time in the field illustrated something that defies this dominant xenophobic narrative – a community that is inclusive of Somali migrants.

Creating a Community

Gold states that community “evokes a group of people who have something in common and who are actively engaged with one another in a benign fashion” (2005:2). I am drawn to this definition provided by Gold as it highlights two aspects of what I had observed in the field – sharing something in common and active engagement with one another. In chapters six and seven I identify two aspects of social life that bring the people in Roelof Street market together: the shared feelings of disconnection and dislocation, and the practise of Islamic tenets.

¹⁸“ Somali refugees plea for protection” <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/Somali-refugees-plea-for-protection-20130607>

¹⁹ “Somali Nationals Live in Fear” <http://www.thenewage.co.za/somali-nationals-live-in-fear/>

Weber states that,

"Community" refers simply to "a sense of belonging together" Since the term is often very loosely applied either to a place or to a collection of people, it is necessary to insist that . . . community is defined by nothing more or less than this subjective state. The sense of belonging together typically combines both affective and cognitive components, both a feeling of solidarity and an understanding of shared identity" (1990:1).

In chapter six, I discussed the way in which both the South Africans and the Somalis I worked with used the Roelof Street market as a space of belonging. Weber's (1990) definition of community thus resonates with my research. There is a common sense understanding in terms of the 'social rules' of the market space. I describe the Roelof Street market as a convivial space – a space filled with humour, understanding, 'togetherness', and amity. The convivial nature of the market space is evident in the way the people who occupy the space tease and joke with one another.

Joking Relationships

"Mama, where is Sonny? This place it is too quiet", Azhar asks Aunty Gail while handing her a coke. She places money in his hand and giggles.

"Ja, it is actually quiet without him here. His wife isn't doing well so he has been at home with her. I think he said he's coming here later this morning. Shame, you miss him?"

"I do miss him. It strange not seeing his angry face here. Sonny's wife going to be ok?"

"I don't know. She has been ill for quite some time now."

Later that morning

"Morning, morning, Cape Town is calling", Sonny greets as he arrives at Mohammed's and Azhar's stall. Azhar, who had been playing on his phone, jumps to the sound of Sonny's voice; a smile spreads across his face and his eyes light up. "Ah, Sonny! You back!" he exclaims. Sonny looks at Azhar. The corner of his mouth twitches but he remains expressionless

Mohammed and I greet Sonny. He has two large red check canvas bags, one in each hand. He wears khaki formal slacks and a short sleeve blue check shirt. A round, cream brimmed hat rests comfortably on his head. I don't think I have ever seen Sonny without a hat on his head. He walks around the counter and places one of the large check bags under the table under the sweets at Mohammed's and Azhar's stall. He turns around and starts unpacking all the boxes in the other canvas bag.

"Hey Sonny! How many boxes is mine?" Azhar asks, a smile spread across his face. He enjoys joking with an almost always taciturn Sonny.

Sonny walks around the taxi rank everyday selling biscuits and sweets from a box which he carries. He does not have a stall but rather he is his own stall. Sonny never smiles, his face is always stern and serious, yet what he says is often teasing and jocular. He doesn't even crack a smile when telling his own joke. He is well known by all those who work in and around the market. As he meanders his way through the taxis selling his products, I always hear "Boeta Sonny! *Hoe gannet* (how are things)?" from various people. To which he would almost always reply "*nee, goed man* (things are good)", usually without looking up. He hardly ever asked how the other person was doing. Sonny is one of the original traders of the area as well as a previous resident of Clarehill, having grown up here. He considers it to be his home.

"How many boxes is yours? As many as you pay for", Sonny says disinterestedly and unconcerned with Azhar's question. He finishes unpacking all the boxes from the bag. He starts unpacking the biscuits, lining them up on the counter of Azhar and Mohammed's stall. He looks deep in thought. He makes sure there is one box that is completely empty; this is the one he will use to sell his biscuits. As he starts arranging his biscuits into one box, making sure he has enough of each flavour in the box, Azhar comes towards him. Azhar starts playing with the biscuits, moving the packets around and taking some out of the box that Sonny has just packed. He has a naughty smirk on his face. He knows he is irritating Sonny and it is clear that this is exactly his intention. Sonny pays little attention to him and without looking up simply just picks up Azhar's hand and throws it off his biscuits. Azhar's smile broadens; this seems to be exactly what he wants. Azhar continues to mess around with the biscuits and Sonny continues to throw his hand away. This has now become a game to Azhar. However, for Sonny this is not a game and he is clearly growing more and more irritated. I can see by the way his nostrils have

flared and his breathing has become louder and deeper. Each time he throws Azhar's hand off there is more force and aggression until finally Sonny looks up and shouts "Jy! I am going to *donner* (hit) you! Bloody shit!" Azhar immediately bursts out laughing. His body is bent over, his eyes closed and his hands clutches his stomach as he laughs. He seems to find this to be one of the funniest moments for him. Azhar seems childlike, amused by how far he was able to push an adult.

Azhar gathers himself and stands up straight; he tries to stop laughing but the chuckles continue to burst forth uncontrollably. "Mohammed! Mohammed!" he says finally. I turn to look at Mohammed. His phone rests lazily in his hand. Slowly he lifts his eyes from his phone and looks at Azhar. "What?" he says, sounding irritated that he is being interrupted. He seemed oblivious to what had just happened between Sonny and Azhar.

"This old man, this papa actually say he's going to *donner* me. Imagine, Mohammed!"

Mohammed looked from Azhar to Sonny then back to Azhar again. He seemed to be mentally playing out the image of Sonny giving Azhar a beating. Slowly a smile crept over his face. Despite his animated response to what he was thinking he remained quiet. While he was irritated before with Azhar's interruption, now he seemed happy to be included in the sparring between Azhar and Sonny.

"You? Sonny?" he stands up and points at Sonny, "*donner* him?" He drags his hand from Sonny and is now pointing at Azhar. He throws his head back and laughs. He looks at Sonny and shakes his head, his one hand shaking in front of him in sync with his head as he says, "Never!"

"Now I will *soema donner* the both of you! Bloody shits work on my bloody nerves. I may be older than you but that also means I'm a lot more wiser than the both of you. *Gits*, anyone is wiser than *julle twee* (the two of you) Somalians put together". He makes a sound that almost sounds like he is about to start laughing but then stops. While he speaks, both Azhar and Mohammed are smiling and stifling laughs. Azhar and Mohammed stand next to Sonny, as they assist him to reseal the boxes of biscuits he had opened. They then proceed to pack the boxes into the check canvas bag and put it next to the other one under their counter. Azhar neatens the biscuits in the box that is to be used for Sonny's sales. While he neatens it, Sonny grabs the box from his hand, makes a sound similar to the sound

you make when cleaning your teeth with your tongue and walks towards Uncle Faizel's stall.

Sonny sits down on a crate at Uncle Faizel's stall, sets down his box in front of him, takes a banana from the box beside him and begins to peel it. He is quiet for a moment while he listens to the group and then joins in the conversation about a recent article in the newspaper about a thief. While Sonny has joined the conversation, his energy does not meet the groups. He is a lot more passive than he usually is. He stops talking to eat his banana. While he eats, he stares out in front of him. He doesn't seem to be focused on the conversation anymore. He throws the banana peel away, slowly picks up his box and stands up. Without saying anything he leaves the stall and starts walking through the rows of taxis to sell his biscuits.

About 30 minutes later, Sonny returns to Mohammed and Azhar's stall. He places his box of biscuits that is still relatively full, showing that he had not made many sales, on the table and walks over to the broken chair between Aunty Gail and the guys' stall and sits down heavily. He rubs his hand over his face. Aunty Gail who is sitting on her two crates and a pillow, sorting through potatoes, looks up at Sonny for a few seconds then looks back down. I look at Azhar who is sitting on the cooler opposite Sonny. He stares at Sonny intently. He looks worried.

"Jy alright Sonny?" Aunty Gail says without looking up from what she's doing.

"Ja, *eks* alright. I haven't had much sleep lately man", Sonny replies, looking at no one in particular.

It is quiet for a moment after Sonny speaks. Then Azhar hops off the cooler and picks up Sonny's box of biscuits.

Sonny looks at Azhar and says calmy, "I am going to *donner* you."

This makes Azhar smile. "I go sell this. There lot of pretty ladies this time of the morning on the taxis. You see I will sell more than you". Azhar winks at Sonny and then disappears to the taxi rank before Sonny has a chance to say anything.

The above interaction, including the sparring, was a frequent observation in the field. Verbal sparring and jabbing formed part of most of the conversations among the people in the Roelof street market. I was intrigued by this dynamic as it reminded me of my family. In my household, we tease and joke with one another. This is understood as expressing affection and love for one another. Also for my family and I the teasing and joking is comfortable because we trust one

another. I could not help but compare my own family dynamic to the social dynamic in the market as the rules of engagement were so similar.

Mohammed and Azhar are the youngest in the Roelof street market. Considering that Sonny is old enough to be their grandfather, it is interesting that they would feel comfortable in speaking to him in the way that they do. They tease, laugh and poke fun at him. If I had not spent months in the market, I could have possibly interpreted this interaction as disrespectful and out of character for young Muslim men as in Islam young people are expected to show their elders respect. However, because I had been in the market for an extended period of time, I understood that teasing and joking was a large part of the experience of the Roelof street market.

Lefebvre (1991) asserts that social spaces are created through the meanings that have been inscribed on them. Boeta Taliep and Uncle Faizel often told me stories of how the market used to be a place of social gathering; a fun place where people came to enjoy each other's company. When observing the older generations' social dynamics, it was evident that teasing and joking forms part of their ways of being with one another. There is a feeling of amity and comfort when being in the presence of these kinds of relationships. The meaning inscribed on the space 50 years ago was a social and amiable one. This meaning is perpetuated by the traders in the market, and they have included the younger Somali traders in this social network – a community. Social tradition, such as the norm of teasing and joking, is “handed down from one generation to the next [and] for the tradition to be maintained it must have authority behind it. The authority is therefore normally recognized as possessed by members of the preceding generation” (Radcliffe-Brown, 1940:201).

Teasing and joking are part of the habitus that exists within the market. These behaviours underpin the norms and values of the market and have become an embodied experience of the space. The young Somali men have witnessed the ways in which the original traders of the market have engaged with one another. Their perception of the space is thus coloured by their experience of it, which leads to an understanding and perpetuation of a central social norm that creates and strengthens social relationships in the market. Through their actions, the Somali men express that they too have embodied the playful nature of the traders and more generally the market.

In time, I was also teased and pranked.

"Kelly, *kom proe hie* (taste this)," Aunty Gail says to me as she hands me a small, yellow vegetable that looks like a pepper. I take it from her and turn it over in my hands inspecting it.

"Is this a yellow pepper Aunty Gail?" I ask her.

"*Nee man* (no man)," she replies, "it is one of the sweetest fruits you'll ever taste. It's *lekker* (nice)." I look at her for a few seconds sceptically. It does not look like a fruit to me at all.

"Is Aunty Gail sure?"

"*Ja man, proe net die ding* (yes man, just taste it)," she says to me, a serious look on her face. Azhar stands beside me and watches me intently. He senses I am unsure of what will happen. Mohammed looks up from the chair he sits on between their stall and Aunty Gail's. They wait for me to take a bite.

"Me and Mohammed. We also taste it. It very nice. Remind me of a fruit in my country", Azhar says to me.

Assured by Azhar's comment, I nod and take a bite. The minute I bite it, heat explodes in my mouth. The heat is unbearable and I struggle to chew and swallow. I chew and swallow as fast as I possibly can. The heat travels from my mouth, down my throat and into my stomach as my eyes start to tear. I start to cough and race to the cooler at Mohammed and Azhar's stall and grab a bottle of water. I open it hastily and start gulping water to douse the fire in my mouth. I drink and drink but the heat does not subside.

Mohammed, Azhar and Aunty Gail all burst out laughing and continue to laugh while they watch me panic. I cannot speak as I am focused on easing the fire in my body.

"Ah! Mama! This is your favourite thing hey!" Mohammed says to Aunty Gail through fits of laughter.

"*Kyk hoe lyk die kind!* (Look how this child looks)" Aunty Gail says pointing at me and laughing.

Azhar bends over and holds his stomach while he laughs. He comes to me and pats me on the back. I look at Azhar, smile and through my coughs I say hoarsely to him, "you bloody shit". My response sends him into another fit of laughter.

Even though physically I was in complete discomfort because of the pepper I had eaten, emotionally I felt that this moment brought me closer to my research participants. I had witnessed the level of teasing and joking in the market at a distance, at times feeling isolated from the amicable relationships I observed. Yet in this seemingly arbitrary moment I was initiated 'properly' into the relationships of the market. In spite of the heat coursing through my body I smiled, relieved that I had been 'initiated'. Through direct experience I accessed a deeper understanding of the social space created in the market. I also understood why, even though Sonny was older, Mohammed and Azhar teased and joked with him.

Radcliffe-Brown defines a joking relationship as "a relation between two persons in which one is by custom permitted, and in some instances required to tease or make fun of the other, or in turn is required to take no offence" (1940:195). A joking relationship is interesting as it is a combination of both friendliness and antagonism (Radcliffe-Brown, 1940). Joking relationships exist within a specific social context and cannot be understood outside of that context (Radcliffe-Brown, 1940). Radcliffe Brown further states that "the relationship is one of permitted disrespect ... thus any complete theory of it must be part of, or consistent with, a theory of the place of respect in social relations and social life generally" (1940:196). Thus, it is only acceptable when it is mutually understood as the norm in a specific social setting.

Radcliffe-Brown (1940) discusses how teasing and joking were used in many clans and tribes to form alliances and to contribute to creating a stable system of social behavior. Researchers have indicated there is a positive function in teasing and joking in forming and maintaining relationships (Keltner, Young, Heerey, Oernig and Monarch, 1998). Teasing "allows individuals to enhance their bonds through the indirect expression of affection, shared laughter and the message that the act of teasing communicates, namely that the individuals are close enough to tease one another (Keltner et al., 1998).

Mohammed's and Azhar's awareness of how to anger and irritate Sonny demonstrates their in-depth knowledge of him. Keltner et al. state that "teasing allows individuals to learn about, negotiate, and assume social identities" (1998:1232). Teasing and joking are thus indicators of a comfortable, trusting and close relationship (Keltner et al., 1998).

The above interactions not only demonstrate the existence of a joking relationship, but it also demonstrates the depth of care that exists between South Africans and Somalis in the market. Sonny's absence was noted in the market by Azhar who questioned Auntie Gail about it. During his absence, Auntie Gail and Azhar offer Sonny emotional support by thinking of him, and upon

his return they recognise his anguish, and so offer acts of kindness as a means of alleviating his anxiety and concern for his wife.

Social Responsibility

Levinas (2001) argues that before people are subjects, socially categorised and socially constructed, they are at their core, social beings. He discusses how the need to connect with other people is innate to human beings. This connection is not dependent on or restricted by social categories. Thus, while society has certain constructs pertaining to how people should group themselves, Levinas (2001) suggests that this goes against the very essence of humanness. Levinas (2001) posits that there is an ingrained sense of social responsibility in humans that leads to them assisting and caring for others who are in need.

Gold (2005) discusses that implicit in a community is the moral obligations people have towards one another. There is a strong connection among the people who form the community to take care of, and fend for, one another (Gold, 2005). Levinas' (2001) notion of social responsibility is an important thread that ties a group of people together to form a community. The level of social responsibility evident in the Roelof Street market further underscored the existence of a community here.

Daily, as I observed those in the market, it was these very human traits that Levinas (2001) refers to that I was intrigued by. The random acts of kindness, supportive conversations and the incessant overall joking and teasing that existed in the market drew me in as something that is so ordinary appeared extraordinary. The extraordinary nature of my observations were deemed as such given that South Africa has been constructed in the local and international media as a largely xenophobic country.

South Africa has a long history of segregation which has influenced the creation of a xenophobic culture that has been depicted in the media. There has been a large focus in research and the media on how difficult the relationship between South Africans and foreigners are, and hardly any focus on how within this micro communities close relationships are formed between the two. In the Roelof Street market there is an embedded understanding of social responsibility towards each other, created and maintained by those who work side-by-side in the market.

This notion of social responsibility and care is evident in the interactions between Mohammed, Azhar, Sonny and Aunty Gail. While Mohammed and Azhar tease Sonny, they also assist him with his biscuits without him asking for it. It came 'naturally' to them to help him. Azhar's

response to Sonny's and Auntie Gail's conversation and his offer of assistance show his care and affection for Sonny.

In the same way that teasing and joking is an embodied experience of the market, care is as well. Caring for each other points to a mutual dependence between the Somali and South African traders.

A Xhosa woman, she looks like she's in her 40s, with short natural red dyed hair and spectacles approaches Azhar's stall. She rubs his arm in greeting and smiles at him. It is clear they are familiar with one another. She approaches with a teenage Xhosa boy who is carrying two bulging packets. The teenage boy puts the packets down behind the counter of Azhar's stall. "This is my son," she says proudly. Azhar leans forward and shakes his hand and smiles. "This your son? He is my son too." They all laugh and the teenage boy replies "Oh! Hi daddy," and they laugh once again. "I saw my daughter too the other day," Azhar says to the woman. "Oh really," she replies, "as their father I suggest you start providing for them". They laugh together, she rubs his arm once more and says her goodbyes as she makes her way to the main road.

I sit down in the sun between Auntie Gail's stall and Azhar's. The mood is relaxed. Azhar plays around on his phone as usual and Auntie Gail continues to order Desmond around while engaging with customers. Most of the customers that pass through Auntie Gail's stall greets her with a 'hello sister Auntie Gail' which she replies to with 'hello my darling' and a follow up question that asks about the husband and/or the children's welfare. She also asks her customers the supper went the night before if they stopped by her stall to buy food for supper. It is clear through how she interacts with her customers that she has a relationship with them. The conversations they hold illustrate a knowledge and familiarity of each others' lives. The customers vary in race, ethnicity and nationality: black, white, coloured, foreign, South African.

A taxi comes down the road, music blaring and a sign saying "Nyanga" in the windscreen. It stops in front of Azhar's stall. Azhar walks to the driver, opens the door and takes the driver's hand in a friendly greeting. They start chatting in Xhosa. From Azhar's hand gestures and animated expression I can see he is telling the driver a story. Azhar smiles while he speaks and the driver begins to laugh and cover his face with his hand. There are cars backed up behind the taxi, and yet the driver does not seem to care. After a few minutes their conversation comes to

an end and he drives off. Azhar walks over to Aunty Gail and buys three naartjies. He comes over to me and hands me one. We peel our naartjies in silence and begin to eat.

Throughout this day and others the embodied sense of care that exists in the market is evident. There is a level of care that is not only shared among the people who work in the market but also the customers that frequent the space. Aunty Gail's and Azhar's interaction with the customers indicate the kind of relationship that is created between people in the market – one of familiarity and genuine concern. The rhythm of the daily life in the market – the Somali men on their phones or chatting to the other traders or taxi drivers, Aunty Gail ordering her assistant Desmond around, plenty of laughter, engaging with customers and sharing stories and experiences – speaks of a cohesive and mutually constituted community. This community is fundamentally created through a system of fictive kinship among the people in the Roelof street market.

Fictive Kin

Fictive kin refers to “a relationship, based not on blood or marriage but rather on religious rituals or close friendship ties that replicates many of the rights and obligations usually associated with family ties” (Ebaugh and Curry, 2000:189). Ebaugh and Curry (2000) suggest that fictive kin systems are important for migrants who are dealing with a sense of dislocation from their families at home. The function of a fictive kin system is to provide individuals with a sense of kinship when they do not have any of their own. For example, if a couple is unable to have a child of their own they claim another child as their own or a godchild to fill the void of not being able to have children of their own.

Fictive kin “provid[e] material support, and they assur[e] socioemotional support” which is important for migrants as they often face “dislocation anomie, economic difficulties, cultural shock and value conflicts in the new society” (Ebaugh and Curry, 2000:199). In chapter five I discussed how the young Somali men long for their families that are so far away. Their communication with family members back home is minimal, and they rarely hear from them. There is a sense of longing for those kinds of close kin connections that they valued in Somalia and from which they had to suddenly remove themselves. In the same chapter, I indicated that because the older traders' children are grown up and have families of their own, that the traders have to renegotiate their role in their families. The roles they used to play are no longer needed and thus they spend more time in the market as it is a place that still gives them purpose.

In the previous chapter, I unpacked how Islam has allowed the young Somali men to access social networks and integrate into an unfamiliar space. I also discussed how Mohammed and Uncle Naheem have created a strong emotional connection through the mutual prioritisation of Islam in their lives. As noted by Ebaugh and Curry (2000), and as I have further demonstrated, religion is one of the key ways in which migrants are able to become part of a fictive kin system.

Fictive kin systems function through modes of exchange. These modes of exchange are both material and emotional (Ebaugh and Curry, 2000). Exchanges have to be mutual and expressed by everyone who is part of the kin system. In the Roelof street market there is a mutual understanding of care for one another. Care is an important aspect of the meaning that has been created in the space. In addition, there is an embodied understanding of joking and teasing relationships in the space. Extrapolating from Radcliffe-Brown's (1940) work on how joking and teasing is part of many societies' familial structures, I argue that the way in which the residents teasingly engage with one another highlights the kin like relationship that exists in the market space.

In conclusion, there is an embodied habitus of joking and teasing relationships that exists in the market. This meaning was mutually constituted at the initiation of the market, as it was both an economic and a social space. There are traders in the market who have been there since the day the market was created and continue to perpetuate this feeling of a social, playful space. The older generation are carriers of social tradition and thus the sense of social playfulness continues to exist as it is something that has been shared and passed down to the new members of the market.

Joking and teasing provide a positive social function as it allows people to express themselves comfortably with one another. It is an indication of the level of closeness and trust that exists among people. For the young Somali men, embodying the joking and teasing nature of the space assisted their integration into the market and finding a sense of belonging there. Joking and teasing thus provided a means to form an alliance between 'dissimilar' people.

Human beings possess a sense of social responsibility and humanity involves a natural need to care for another human being and to offer support and assistance without the need for it to be returned. This sense of social responsibility and level of care is evident in the overall feel of the market space. Care is not only limited to the people who work in the market but it is also extended to those who enter the market. The market has become a socially created space of care, concern and assistance.

The traders, taxi drivers and customers of Roelof street market have formed a fictive kin system of their own. There is a need for kin ties felt by both the Somali migrants and South Africans in the market space. This fictive kin system is evident through the emotional support they provide to one another, their comfort with one another expressed through joking and teasing and the level of care and concern that they show one another. In chapter one, I discussed social kinship that is created in communities, which Chidester et al. (2003) defined as being representative of a model kinship network. The network in the Roelof Street market is an indication of this kind of social kinship.

Conclusion

I noted at the beginning of this thesis that my intention was to critically engage with how and why relationships between South Africans and Somali migrants were created and continue to exist against the backdrop of a xenophobic South Africa. Initially when I commenced the write up of this thesis, I felt a level of discomfort. I struggled to find the importance of the work that I had been doing as my countless pages of data detailed the various ways my research participants expressed their bond with one another. To my mind there was nothing extraordinary about what I had witnessed. These were people doing human things, connecting and sharing with one another. It made me feel uncomfortable that I as a neophyte anthropologist had to pull apart these relationships and unpack why they exist. I felt that I would be taking away from the relationships I witnessed by interrogating why and how they were created and continue to exist.

Before writing I returned to my initial research proposal. In my research proposal, I discussed the dominant narrative of xenophobia in South Africa and how this has become the stereotypical perception of migrant-host relations in South Africa. In order to further understand what kind of image was being perpetuated in the media I turned to the internet and read a variety of articles expounding on the xenophobic nature of South Africans. I was confronted with just how normalised xenophobia is in South Africa. As a citizen of this country, I was aware of xenophobic attitudes, but it is only when I read further that I understood the depth of many continental African transmigrants' experience in South Africa.

May 2008 marked a time of heightened xenophobic attacks in South African history. Since, a xenophobic attitude and set of behaviours have become the dominant narrative in South Africa. Yet, while this may be the dominant narrative in news media, my time in the Roelof street market indicated that close relationships *do* exist between South Africans and African transmigrants; and that the stories of these kin-like relationships need to be told.

Chapters two and three contextualised my research participants. Both chapters provide a detailed account of the socio-historic context for Somalia and South Africa. Eriksen (2004) discusses how identities are socially constructed. They are created through our social contexts and past experiences. Thus, these contextualising chapters provided a delineation of how my research participants understand themselves and how they perceive the world. Both countries, Somalia and South Africa, have a violent colonial history where 'othering' became part of the

social context. The contemporary socio-political climate of both Somalia and South Africa is a result of its history; and yet the contemporary realities in both countries are not cast in stone. Stemming from this shared violent, ‘othering’, history, these two chapters highlight why it is both likely and unlikely that a relationship is formed between these two nationalities. Unlikely as separating oneself from ‘the other’ is embedded in South Africa’s social context and likely as there is a common understanding of internal national diversion and moving forward from a violent colonial history.

Somalia is discussed as a failed African state. During Somalia’s colonial period, there were five different stake holders who claimed sections of Somalia. Prior to colonisation, Somalia was an uncentralised state with a large number of clans that functioned within their own right. Colonial stakeholders attempted to create a united state. However, in trying to do so, a greater divide was created among the people of Somalia. This has had consequences for the state of contemporary Somalia. A large number of Somalis choose to leave due to the fear of being killed, lack of resources and limited financial opportunities.

South Africa is described by my research participant, Azhar, as the ‘capital of Africa.’ It is perceived as a place where there are sufficient resources and greater opportunities. Even though South Africa’s colonial and apartheid past has contributed to a largely divided country and colonial and apartheid ideologies continue to exist in contemporary South Africa and is evident in the xenophobic narrative that exists in the country, Azhar has faith in South Africa being a place of opportunity. This illustrates his perception and is perhaps a means to cope with the daily vicissitudes of existence in Cape Town.

In Chapter four, I provided an account of my fieldwork experience. The fieldwork experience was challenging as I was confronted with a number of limitations. One of the biggest limitations was the language barrier that existed between myself and the Somali migrants. While they spoke English to me, most of their conversations to one another were in Somali. During fieldwork I truly understood the importance of observation. I relied a lot of the time on observing body language and facial expressions in order to have some indication of what the conversation was about. Still, this observation was insufficient to fully immerse myself in their way of being. Despite this, or because of it, I was compelled to find ways to observe and listen *deeply* and *resonantly*. Communication is not merely verbal. As Wikan (2012) recounts resonance is mutually constructed between the researcher and the researched. And as I was

made aware, I was also being observed, and studied, by my research participants and those who frequented the market.

The fieldsite itself resonated with me personally. I had a family member who worked in the Roelof street market for many years and some of the traders who I worked with knew him and had made the link between myself and him. It was also a space I had frequented with my grandmother as a child. My family was therefore known and so I found myself in an interesting position of being there as both an anthropologist doing ‘work’ and as someone who was personally acquainted with the space. The insider-outsider dichotomy that often vexes researchers who do research in their backyards, was thus an all too present concern during my fieldwork.

In chapter five I provided a conceptual framework that grounds the rest of the. The concepts of conviviality, social space and habitus provided the foundation upon which to understand how amicable and caring relationships were created between dissimilar individuals – age, nationality, gender and ethnicity identified my research participants as socially dissimilar. The conceptual framework allowed for a further exploration of concepts such as social networks, social capital, belonging, religion, and joking relationships in the ethnographic chapters that followed.

Chapter six demonstrates a shared sense of dislocation felt by both the Somali migrants and the South Africans I worked with. For both the Somali transmigrants and the South Africans, family is important and was an important aspect of how they understood their identities. The Somali migrants had to leave their homes quickly and did not have time to prepare themselves emotionally for being separated from their families. Mohammed and Abdi in particular long for their family. They are haunted by the uncertainty surrounding a possible reunion with their families. Yet as was clear not all Somali transmigrants experience migration as a loss of family and self-dislocation. Azhar’s experience is slightly different; while he also misses his family, he is happy to be away from Somalia and feels the same level of comfort with his South African network that Abdi and Mohammed feel with their families in Somalia. Azhar's particular narrative upends a dominant theme in migration literature, especially in relation to the poor, economic migrant. Often researchers rely on supra-national and governmental institutions' categorisation of migrants to define the population that they are working with. However these categories, like that of economic migrant for instance, negates the nuances of the transmigrant's experience. If I had only paid attention to Azhar's unofficial status as an economic migrant I

would not have been interested in the totality of his being, which provided a different and nuanced narrative to that of Mohammed's and Abdi's.

The different nuances in the lives of my Somali research participants did not however limit their interactions with South African traders in the market, who were older family men and women. All of the South African traders have children who have moved on and started their own families. The role they used to play in their households are no longer needed and they have had to re-orientate their roles. In the Roelof street market, however, their social position has not been altered. The majority of the older traders I worked with have been working in the market for the past 50 years. The market has become an important space during times of emotional, familial and governmental transition and upheaval. Chapter five thus indicates the mutual need for companionship, acknowledgement and belonging displayed by both the Somalis and the South Africans.

All the South African traders I worked with self-identify as coloured. With South Africa's transition from an apartheid government to a democratic one, the coloured traders found that they did not have a place in the 'new' South Africa. They represent Adhikari's (2005) conceptualisation of a race in between as they were not white enough during apartheid and they are not black enough in contemporary South Africa. The market provides stability and familiarity in a time where their social context feels unfamiliar. It also serves the same function for the Somali migrants. The Somali migrants spend most of their time in the market. It is therefore a socio-economic container that provides them with social and emotional support as they pursue precarious livelihoods. The market thus doubles up as a cohesive economic and social space.

Leading on from chapter six, chapter seven shows how Islam was pivotal to the formation of connections between the Somali migrants and South Africans. As discussed the Somali transmigrants are enculturated into an Islamic way of being. Thus upon arrival in South Africa, as they fraternise with Muslim South Africans, they are granted a great deal of respect and admiration. I focused on Islam as the majority of the traders and taxi drivers in the market are Muslim. In this chapter I also demonstrated the individual agency of my research participants. Azhar and Mohammed have a similar trajectory but they chose to access differently constructed social networks. While Mohammed latched on to a Muslim social network in order to 'root' himself, Azhar extends his social networks beyond the market space that include people who

are not Muslim. While Azhar may not hold to the Muslim ways in the market, his relationship with Muslim traders is enhanced by his immersion in an Islamic way of life in Somalia.

In migration research, religion has been discussed as being one of the key ways in which migrants integrate in a new country. Religion has provided an access point for the young Somali migrants to enter the social network that exists in the market. Religion is used as a medium to access the social capital – in this case emotional support – as the young Somali men earned respect through their vast knowledge of and immersion in Islam. Religion created a sense of common ground as the Somali migrants and South Africans had a foundation upon which to build comfortable, open relationships with one another. Their level of comfort is evident in the way they tease and joke with one another.

Chapter eight interrogates the meaning of a teasing and joking relationship. This chapter is important in understanding the level of comfort that exists among the residents of the market. It also shows how the embodied understanding of care that exists in the market is shared by both the Somali migrants and the South Africans. This reciprocal relationship of care, support, comfort and playfulness lead me to argue that the Roelof street market is home to a fictive kin system – a community that exists across social categories of race, class, education, nationality, and gender.

A critical aspect of migration is the creation of social networks and the social capital derived therefrom. These two, often intangible aspects of social life facilitate transmigrants' integration into a new country. For the young Somali migrants, their work space – the Roelof Street market – is their most important social network as this is where the majority of their lives are spent. The social capital accessed in this network extends beyond economic growth and furthering their social status as it most importantly provides an emotional support system for both the Somali migrants and the South African traders. My research illustrates how the line between bridging capital and bonding capital can be blurred as my research participants' experiences with each other are examples of both.

Scholars of migration have focused mainly on conflict and violent clashes that have resulted because of migration, particularly in Africa and specifically in South Africa with the various cases of xenophobic violence. However, there has not been as much focus on multiculturalism and conviviality in a space that is inclusive of both migrants and locals. Social cohesion has been discussed in terms of *local* networks only and does not include the ways in which migrants are *part* of creating a socially cohesive community.

The existence of, and deployment of social capital, are indicators of social cohesion. The literature discusses social cohesion in terms of local networks. However, my research shows how social cohesion can exist as inclusive of migrants. There is a sense of *Ubuntu*, solidarity and togetherness that exists in the Roelof Street market as the social actors actively participate in being emotionally and socially part of each other's lives. With South Africa's history of segregation and the dominant narrative of xenophobia in the media, as discussed in chapter three, a socially cohesive kinship community that is inclusive of South Africans and Somali transmigrants stands out as extraordinary and as an anomaly. My research hones in on a small number of individuals so as to *comment* on the larger dynamics of South African society. While this detailed, micro-ethnographic research, cannot however be extrapolated to other provinces in South Africa, the reality of cohesion, amity, and mutual care and affection between Somali transmigrants and coloured South Africans offers an opportunity for researchers to rethink their xenophobic bias. My work interrogates the perpetuation of a xenophobic narrative in local and international media, as it questions the near total focus of social science researchers on the negative aspects of migrant-host relations in South Africa. My research demonstrates how coloured South Africans and Somali transmigrants create a cohesive community through intent and emotional investment. Their stories, although anomalous, offer possible ways in which to envision and configure relationships between South Africans and 'other' African continental transmigrants. Their stories might even offer clues regarding the possible ways in which South Africans, so long divided by race and class, can create communities that are beneficial to and supportive of those who reside in them.

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