South-South Migration:
An ethnographic study of an Indian business district in Johannesburg

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TO THE LOVING MEMORY OF *AAMCHE* PAPA, YOU LIVE IN EVERY THOUGHT, EVERYTHING FOR HIM AND MUMMY AND THE 14 YENGDES

DECLARATION

I, Suraj Milind Yengde, declare that this thesis is my own work and that acknowledgements are given to the work of others. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.
It has not been submitted before in any form for any other degree or examination in any other university.

Suraj Yengde

29 day of March 2015

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CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION: THE *DESIS* OF FORDSBURG

Fordsburg, in central Johannesburg (Joburg) is a globally connected locality hosting 15-20 thousand visitors every month from all over the world. Fordsburg is a microcosm of Johannesburg's cosmopolitanism and bears a distinctly South Asian flavour. With a growing south Asian and Indian presence, it has assumed the name 'Indian market of Johannesburg'. The dedication of the shopkeepers to keep prices low and the options of good bargains for consumers has helped the area to develop its own identity. The passion to rise upwards among newly arrived south Asian migrants marks the mood throughout Fordsburg market.[1] This thesis will provide insights on Fordsburg as an area for Indian businesses deriving stories of businessmen, and labourers from various backgrounds, professions and nationalities.

The core question that can be asked is *what does contemporary migration within the global south mean?* The main aim of this thesis is to engage with the emerging debates on south-south migration and to respond to the growing mobility of Indian labour migration to Africa. In order to address this question, I will have to engage in a detailed historical analysis of Fordsburg and the flea market

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[1] Newly arrived refers to the migration since 2000. It is considered newly arrived because there is confusion between post 1990 migration and the twenty first century migration. South Asian migration to South Africa during the early 1990s political transition period is referred to by some as "new wave" of migration (Munshi, 2013: 120). Post 1990-1994 migrants had arrived in the new South Africa which was yet to reformulate the policies for refugees. South Africa had inherited the restrictive immigration policy which was still hostile towards unskilled immigration. Hence, the Indians migrants that asked for refugee status were not granted Refugee permit in spite of 1547 applications in 1996 (*Source: SAMP Migration Data base,* in the paper submitted by ILO, Labour Migration to South Africa in the 1990s Policy Paper Series No. 4 (February 1998). After the year 2000 there was not much difference in the policy towards unskilled immigration, this in turn did not stop migration but instead made a way for immigrants coming in with illegal documents. Additionally, 1994 is a good bar line to define the actualities of Indian immigrants. Studies done on the immigrants communities in the post-1994 state that there were not many Indian immigrant labourers in South Africa post transition which leaves Indian immigrant studies unattended (for more on this, Zuberi & Sibanda, 2004: 1467).

as a case study, and the role it plays in recent Indian immigrants' lives. The flea market is a small business space in Fordsburg area which is one of the main sites of this research. It is mostly populated by south Asian labourers and business people. This project engages with three broad empirical themes:

- The relevance of *Fordsburg and flea market* to Indian trading[2] practices in Johannesburg;

- contemporary *Indian activities* in Fordsburg and the flea market; and

- *Indian labour migration* to South Africa.

Taking from the ethnographic data there are a few issues I deal with –

First, the present situation of the inflow of newly arriving migrants and the possibilities they create within Fordsburg's trading milieu.

Second, the changing cultural, economic and political aspects among contemporary labour migrants.

Third, the life of labour migrants in Fordsburg, and how they respond to the social-cultural spatial differences in Fordsburg.

And finally, changing nature and attitudinal characteristics of Indian immigrants in Fordsburg.

Previous scholarly work on Fordsburg traces the historical connections of Indian traders, emphasising their contribution to making Fordsburg an area of thriving business community (Carrim, 1990; Itzkin, 2000; Brink, 2008). Building on this literature, this thesis examines the characteristics of contemporary labour migration, focusing on recent Indian immigrants. Fordsburg becomes an important entry point for Indian traders and labourers. It is a crucial site

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[2] The trading in this context refers to the business practices carried in the flea market and Fordsburg-like business locations in Johannesburg studied for this research. The traders discussed in this thesis are mostly petty traders who are involved in the exchange of commodities (consumer goods) produced overseas. The traders here are merely offering the services to a consumer-based business market by adding a surplus value to the services.

that provides opportunities to work, trade, and possibly continue living in South Africa. Almost all of the migrants discussed in this thesis wanted to make better money than they did back home. However, if money was the only reason then why did they risk their lives and travel to South Africa?[3] Are there any anxieties generated by the thought of being deported from the country due to the lack of legal documents? Why have they risked coming to Africa, in particular South Africa, instead of going to the Middle East or indeed European countries? What is the role of agents/subcontractors in drawing their attention towards South Africa? What is the life of labourers after arriving in South Africa; do they reproduce their cultural and business habits or do they assimilate into the host society's work ethics? Taking these questions into consideration, I shall try to evaluate both the causes of their presence in Fordsburg as well as their contribution to the local businesses in Johannesburg. I have also attempted to trace commonalities between the early Indian migrants of the nineteenth century and present day migrants. This thesis will provide new insights on the newly established flea market which contributes substantially to the economy of Fordsburg with an estimated turnover of approximately half a million Rand per month.

Locating the phenomenon of south-south migration

Studying south-south migration is important because, according to the World Bank, the number of international migrants in 2015-16 will exceed 250 million. Of this, south-south migration accounts for the major share in international migration which is 37% (Fig. 1). It is larger than the south-north migration which is 35% (World Bank, 2015). Figures like this explain the growing importance of southern mobility that is exceeding the generalised description of south-north migrants (UNDESA, 2013). This is, however an organisational figure which cannot be taken as it

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[3] South African policies are hostile towards immigration of labourers from the sub-continent and other parts of Africa (Crush, 2000). For more on this, see Mattes R, Taylor D M, McDonald D A, Poore A, and Richmond A (1999)

is; additionally, the figures from the south are "less reliable" than those of the north, hence it is expected that south-south migration exceeds its trajectory (Ratha, 2015). Still the figures above speak about the growing resurgence of southern migratory movements. Castles and Wise (2007) put forward the reason for this growing south-south migration. It is due to development-induced displacements that have left countries in the south vulnerable, leaving them impoverished, and marginalised in war torn areas. This situation has escalated the migration to neighbouring countries in the region. Current examples of war and economic meltdown in the Middle East and in Africa have contributed to the growth of a significant number of refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced people and labour migrants in the neighbouring countries (UN News, 2014). Syrians in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinians in Egypt, Congolese and Zimbabweans in South Africa are few examples. This is a very serious phenomenon and has to be studied clearly without explicitly relying on the exaggerated northern interferences that undermine the clarity of the topic. Hence, in the surge of growing debates of the global south and southern cooperation, study on the labour migration - which is the essence of development led projects in the world - becomes an important analysis to proffer new theoretical models. Taking from the experiences of continental migration between two historically connected former colonies of Britain – India and South Africa, I aim to understand the novelty of contemporary labour migration. I would argue, this migration within the south which is not regional, goes contrary to the theories of the north suggesting new understandings of migration.
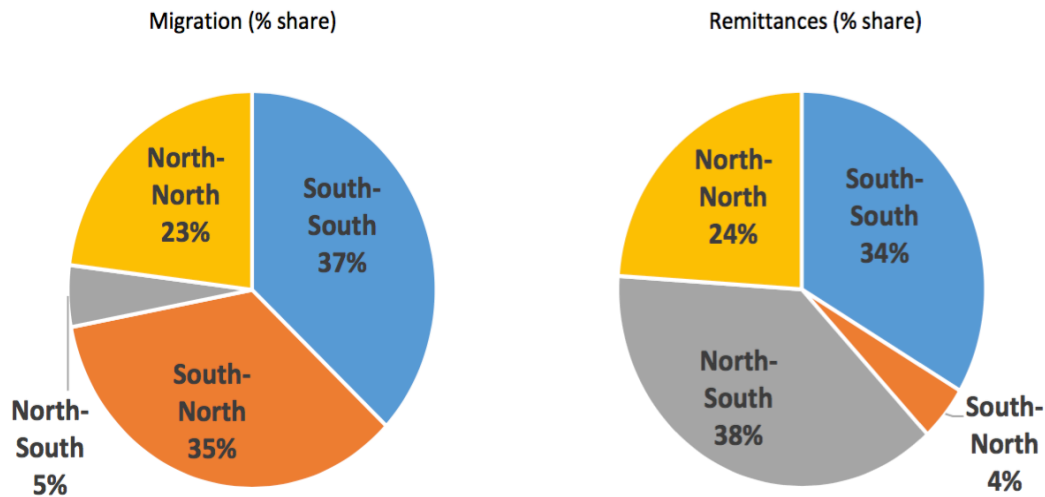
Figure 1. "South-South migration is larger than South-North migration" (Source: Migration Development Brief 24, 2015)

One of the determinant factors of south-south cooperation has been the advancement in the human resource exchanges from among the countries of the global south. Rather than relying on the former colonial powers, the southern spaces have looked for alternatives – the neighbours; former colonialized spaces and traditional mercantile connection to give a new shape to old paradigms. The term south-south cooperation or the Global South agenda is critiqued for its lack of unity which is due to the differences of, "colonial past, cultural traditions, economic trajectories, and administrative or organisational structures" (Grovogui, 2011:175). However, political scientists like Grovogui in disagreeing with this critique argue that the post-colonial and cold war era established a righteous sense of agency among the newly independent nation states of the Third World. Their new perception of authority in the new world order is now re-introduced as the Global South phenomenon. For Grovogui, the Global South or south-south cooperation is a political movement that seeks to re-establish its own authority. Boaventura Santos (2014) argues that the global north-south is a political location and not a geographical one which transnationalises the epitome of human and ecological suffering. I argue that within the domain of south-south cooperation, one of the most important aspects has been the movement of its people. Therefore, it

is not only a political movement but also it is an empirical and sociological movement of the people of this space that defines twenty first century south-south cooperation.

The peculiarity of cross border migration among contemporary migrants is that Indian migrants travelling thousands of miles, and embarking on a journey to unknown parts of the world is not a simple fact of migration. I argue the journey aspect and pre-migration activities undertaken (dared) by migrants are themselves 'extraordinary' acts. In arguing this, I particularly look at the youth who engage in transnational border crossing which is another dimension to the phenomenon of the global migration. What is it that a migrant labourer has done that is extraordinary? The very fact that they "migrate." Migration is not an easy task especially if it is an undocumented border crossing that requires adventurous risks and life threatening situations. Apart from this, migrating to a country in a plane crossing *saat samundar* (seven seas)[4] is a daring decision which is not taken by everyone. Hence, the migrants who are studied are 'normal' people with an 'extraordinary' attitude towards surviving in critical situations.

Synopsis

In chapter one I introduce theoretical arguments elaborated in the mid-twentieth century along with contemporary theories that discuss transnational labour migration. Reviewing the existing literature in detail, I aim to fit Fordsburg's landscape into the existing and relevant migration debates. I also focus on theories produced in the global south. Drawing on the literatures of south-south migration and global south cooperation I provide critical observations on theories premised on the experiences of the north and as well as south which I argue are insufficient in addressing southern experience. Finally, I introduce the different methodological concepts utilised in this thesis.

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[4] This refers to migrants who have crossed the seas and migrated abroad.

In chapter two, I introduce Fordsburg and the flea market drawing from the archival materials on Johannesburg's formation and the construction of Johannesburg's urban geography from the late nineteenth century onwards. I also present the practices and attitudes that contemporary labour migrants bring to Fordsburg and the way these have impacted on the trading ethics of Fordsburg. I analyse the effect of growing number of Chinese business communities on Indian businesses.

In chapter three, I discuss the cultural aspects of labour migrants with a focus on their lifestyle, food, clothing habits and language. I analyse how culture affects labourers' lives, post migration.

In chapter four, I discuss the economic issues affecting labour migration. In this chapter, I argue that migration for present day young labour migrants address more than economic needs. It has to do with lifestyle, adventure, international experience and in becoming a 'grown man'. It also answers the much anticipated question as to why labour migrants select Africa and what is the role of black Africans in Fordsburg's economy.

Chapter five discusses broader debates on south-south migration from developing to developing countries. Taking cues from contemporary Indian migration to South Africa, I argue that migration within the southern context has new theoretical dimensions to offer to the theories of migration.

Chapter six explores the business scenario of Fordsburg area. This chapter unfolds the trading style of migrant workers who have turned into capital owners. Taking the case study of mobile phone shops in Oriental Plaza and Fordsburg, I explore how the attitudes and behaviours of Indian traders fit with the South African trade ethics and how they impact inter-ethnic and owner-customer relationships.

Finally, I conclude the thesis in chapter seven by addressing some of the issues that were left out on account of my being unable to gather sufficient reliable information – gender, sexuality and

the role of gift economy in performance of masculinity. It will suggest further research possibilities that could be continued from this thesis's findings.

Methodology

Here I spell out some of my theoretical understandings of the research area. It is crucial for the understanding and proceeding into the inquiry of the premise of the research. It is the methodology that shapes the results of the social science research (Greenwood and Levine, 2006).

Locating the methods of 'ethnoscapes'

In order to understand the cosmopolitan spaces that have witnessed ethnic frictions and formation of the spatial histories connected to the freedom struggle as in Fordsburg in Johannesburg, I draw on Appadurai's suggestion that we need to engage in an ethnography that is "sensitive to the historical nature of what we see today" (Appadurai, 1996: 64). Appadurai has argued that there needs to be a constant evolution of the anthropological approach towards the changing social and more importantly the cultural processes. For him, the growing mobility of notions such as "people, wealth, and territory" alters the imagination of contemporary 'cultural reproduction' (Appadurai, 1996: 49). Appadurai's approach aims at understanding a society that is a landscape of persons in flux – of immigrants, tourists, exiles, travellers, guest workers – suggesting that we live in a world of continuous mobility. However, true this may be, there exists a novel landscape which offers a stable environment for communities that are adjusting to global capital shifts. In the context of Fordsburg, we can see an ethnic space that is evolving trying to create an identity by adjusting to the global (human) mobility and capital shifts. Hence, to understand the very nature of an ethnic enclave a critical harmony between historical ethnography and anthropological history has to be formed. This means that we have to connect the narratives of the lives of people in flux to exploring the genealogy of the present (Appadurai, 1996). In order to write about current activities of a space,

one needs to structure and rework with the methodological underpinnings. I find Appadurai's notion of ethnographic cosmopolitanism useful. He aims to move beyond fetishism of the western experience of cosmopolitanism that is inherently dominated by the Eurocentric vision of the world (Chun, 2012).

This thesis aimed to critically examine the daily lives of migrants in the flea market of Fordsburg. Migrants in Fordsburg comprise of various nationalities and race – predominantly, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon, Mozambique, Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Since the focus of this thesis is to understand Indian labour and capital in Fordsburg, the thesis then takes its form drawing from the minute ethnographic details of Indians in Fordsburg. However, migrants from other nationalities do contribute significantly to my understanding of the ethnic landscape. *The thesis draws from empirical and archival findings* of *over 46 structured/semi-structured interviews, over 90 unstructured interviews and informal conversations* in the *field, 23 life histories, participant observations of Indians of all ages and gender working in Fordsburg along with a long-term ethnographic research carried out over 32 months in the field (2012-2016) in four countries–South Africa, Mozambique, India and a brief trip to Singapore.* Of the migrants interviewed, I selected some migrants in order to have focused observations to get a holistic picture of their life – pre and post migration phase. Archival study in South Africa – Johannesburg was important to trace the historical beginnings of the site–Fordsburg and the flea market. In the following chapters wherever I have quoted a statement with a footnote saying 'interview' it means I draw the information from a direct interview. And at times wherever I have quoted a statement with a footnote without mentioning interview, that means it was taken from a casual conversation or a group discussion with the informant(s).

The sampling was done according to the demographic division of the Indian migrants arriving in Fordsburg. It was based on my ethnographic observations wherein regional representation, language, age, gender, profession, and future plans were the 6 main categories that helped to identify the respondents for this study. Of the I migrants that I observed, a majority were under 30 in age, unmarried males, Muslims with a few non-Muslims and were Gujaratis. I focussed on these categories as the main group. I have indicated the age of the specific respondent in the text. The male composition was largely male, as this group was easy to access. I have explained the reasons for this in chapter 7 in detail. A majority of the migrants interviewed in this study were educated at least until grade 10. There were seven who claimed to have a bachelor's degree from India. English was not a difficulty for migrants to communicate and interact with their English speaking customers. Given the working background of these migrants, one could assume these were not from poor or peasant class. These were a mobile and connected group of youngsters who had benefitted from their extended group of class-caste networks.

In order to get a complete picture of Indian labour migration, I spent time in Johannesburg with occasional field trips to Durban (Grey Street complex, Overport), Cape Town (Sea Point and Gatesville township) and Mpumalanga in South Africa from 2012-2013. Additionally, I travelled to Mozambique in the regions of Maputo, Inhamane, Xai Xai to understand undocumented cross border labour migration in 2014. In Singapore, I visited Little India and Chinatown, two famous ethnic sites of Singapore's modern multi-cultural identity. These trips were intended to understand and compare the differences of ethnic quarters in non-western countries. Little India resonated with the vibrancy, business, migration, and exotic preservation of Indian identity retained through cultural markers and religious affirmation. Oceanic history and independent struggle mediated through nationalist discourse in Singapore and makes for strong Indian connections with native

Singapore society. Along with the nationalist discourse, an impact of social reform movement led by Periyar in south India is overwhelmingly visible in the archived information among the Indian communities in Singapore. Contemporary Indian professional and semi-skilled migration to Singapore is seen as a continuance of the historical migration. Indian communities (old and new arrivals) continue to gather on the weekends in Little India to connect with fellow nationals thereby creating an Indian diasporic location in the developing environment of Asia.

Finally, to get the whole picture of the migrants' past and their initial experiences of their pre-migration phase I explore their plans, thoughts, anxieties, and home and familial backgrounds, that motivated them to travel to South Africa. I undertook a field trip in India 2014–2015, to Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara, and Gandhinagar where I interviewed recruiting agents who gave me some insights into a migrant's motivation in selecting South Africa. In India, apart from agents, I also engaged with officials from the Bureau of Immigration in order to get an understanding of the volume of immigrant inflow to South Africa and to understand the government's approach towards such migration. The immigration department officials noted that, of the migrants going to Africa, a considerable number of the migrants have a South African visa. Of the migrants that were departing from the Mumbai International airport to South Africa most were Gujarati labour migrants. On the question of whether the migrants that were departing to South Africa were professionals or labourers, one official noted,

> "You see we do not know if they are labourers or they are visitors or indeed professionals. All we do here is to check if they are genuine passengers and that they have a permit of the respective country they are intending to travel."[5]

He continued,

> "We know that many of them might go to work when in fact they have 'visitor's visa' but again we cannot stop them or interrogate, although we can and we try to, but many migrants

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[5] Immigration Official at the Mumbai International Airport, 03 February, 2015

already have a structured plan and they have been planning this for a long time. Right from the day they applied for the passports up until getting the visa."[6]

Information like this helped to get a bird's eye view about the immigration situation in India. The situation mentioned at the airport by one of the immigration officials resonates with the situation of migrants in Fordsburg. The immigration official said, there were cases everyday of migrants going to South Africa and while he could not give an exact number he was confident that there is an increasing flow of young labour migrants leaving for South Africa. Back in South Africa in Fordsburg, this appears to be true when every week new migrants are seen arriving. Apart from Fordsburg, migrants go to other parts of South Africa as well.

Although ethnographic research in Johannesburg covered multiple sites where Indians have set up businesses, there was a detailed focus on Fordsburg. Johannesburg is the crucial site that acts as a base for labour migrants from India. This research covers Indian labour and capital activities at different times; historical as well as contemporary. To address historical issues, I had to undertake archival work in the MuseumAfrica, South African Historical Archives, the website of South African History Online, Historical Papers Research Archives, the library at the University of Witwatersrand, South African court records, legal journals, and in the offices of Indian businessmen to check the records of Indian labour and migration. MuseumAfrica and South African Historical Archives were of great assistance to trace the history of urban spaces of Johannesburg. They provided photographs and documents relating to the formation of Fordsburg and other important incidents. Apart from this, to address the issues of lives of labourers, I had to engage in interviews at the establishments of small shops and petty businesses.

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[6] Ibid.

To get a detailed understanding of migrant life I visited workplaces and private residential spaces which they called "boarding." Close observation of the activities of labourers by visiting their residential and workplaces offered more insights on the contrasting details of lifestyles in work place and residential areas (see for example, Benson, 2010). By gathering the contrasting information during the visits to two different locations I was able to arrive at some tentative conclusions. Hence, the arguments that I put forward come from the overall examination of migrants' life, at work and during leisure. Apart from the life stories and surveys, I found court cases were a good source to understand the current political economic situation of Indians in South Africa. Court cases gave an idea about the current situation of Indian labourers in the eyes of South African laws. Various landmark cases filed in the court concerning the status of undocumented migration and asylum seekers in South Africa helped to understand the Indian immigrant's situation within the broader legal context of South Africa. Apart from the documentary evidence, the narratives and everyday metaphors of discussion and gossip among migrant workers and entrepreneurs reveal personal details and experiences.

The favourite past-time of traders is to engage in 'rumours' which are effective and the fastest medium of transfer of information. These can be seen as a source of knowledge production and ethnographers like Harney (2006) use different 'rumours' and 'gossip' in his anthropological enquiry among migrant workers in Italy. This source of knowledge (gossip and rumour) I argue has to be taken seriously, as Harney builds his arguments on the wide-spread 'rumours' among migrants and supplement these with evidence gathered through ethnography. Rumours in Fordsburg are often generated between work or in leisure time. Rumours tend to be unattributed and uninformed versions of a story and they proliferate in the flea market and Fordsburg due to the shared space and common interests and fears of migrants. For example, rumours played an

important role in spreading the xenophobic feelings as violence erupted in 2015. Rumours work through social media as well and migrants often receive the rumours on their cell phone via Facebook or WhatsApp. This is further circulated on a larger scale among contacts in Fordsburg. Rumours also help the researcher to understand the range of opinions and fears on certain issues.

Since gossip is an integral part of social life among migrants I include rumour and gossip as an emerging field of methodological enquiry for writing the narrative of Fordsburg. I also suggest that gossip and rumours help us understand how migrant workers cope with loneliness, boredom as well as anxiety. *Badi badi baatein* – brag talk among young male migrants form the basis of gossip among migrants in Fordsburg. They also add tit-bits of bravery and courage to every narration. I use these brag talks as a mode of investigation into migrant's relation with reality of the situation and their responses to such incidents. The phenomenon of *badi badi baatein* was very crucial in gathering important data about migrant life.
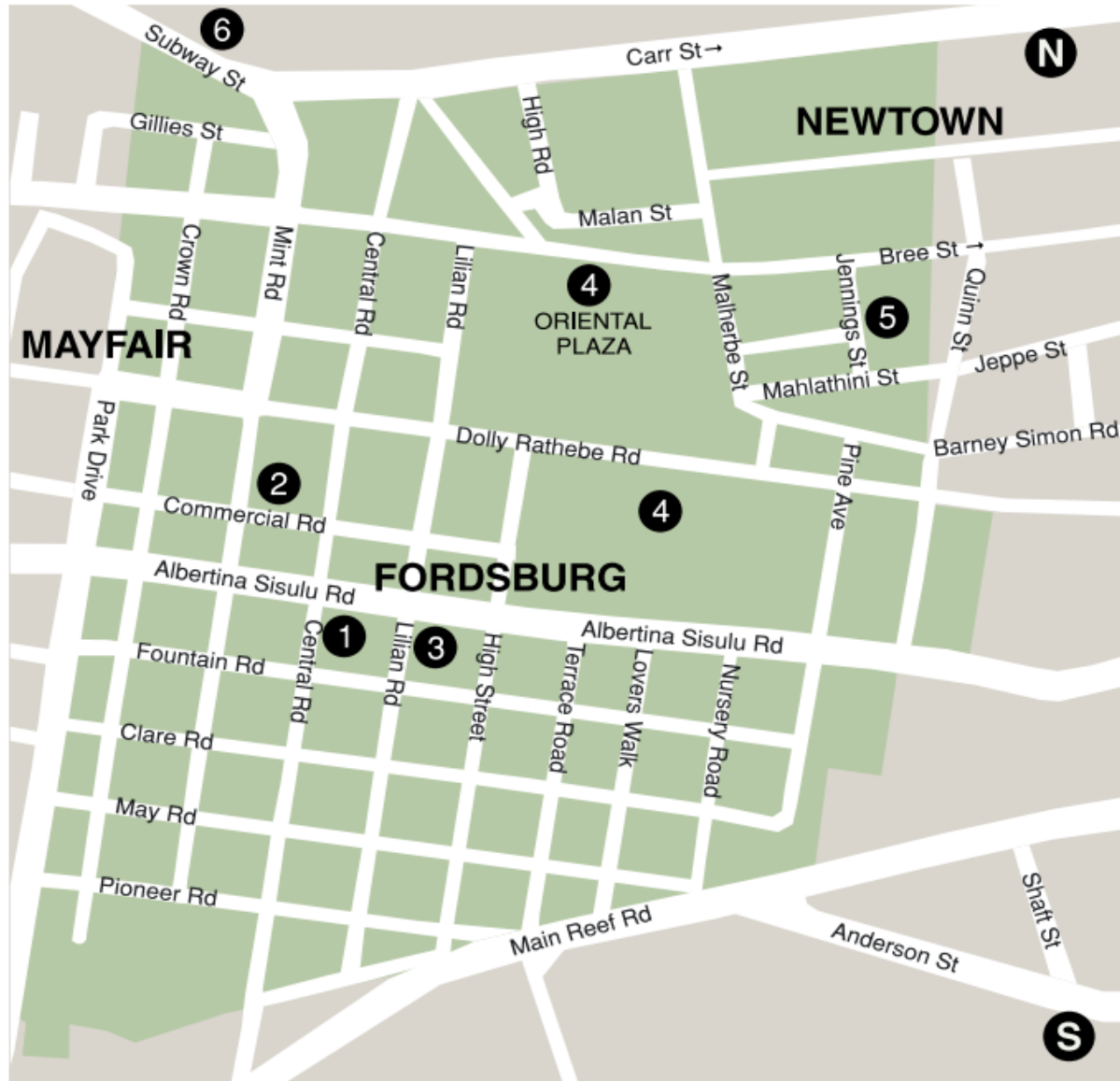
Figure 2. Map of Fordsburg (source: Johannesburg in your pocket, 2014)

I used semi-structured interviews, surveys, participant observation, informal talks, casual conversations and personal interviews to gather the data in South Africa, Mozambique and India. Government reports documenting labourers were used to analyse the presence of Indian migrants in South Africa (SA). Semi-structured interviews with the labourers working in the Indian business districts (IBDs) were conducted to get an idea about their past and current life. Additionally, I

interviewed shop owners in the IBD, the local South African workers and South African Indians[7] to understand their attitude towards newly arriving migrants. Participant observation in the flea market stall was crucial to get first-hand information on the working atmosphere and personal lives of the migrants. The majority of migrants observed were male and aged between 18 to 30 years, and most of them were unmarried. I directed my interviews towards young, male, unmarried Indian migrants in Fordsburg who constituted the largest number among Indian migrants. I spent a lot of time hanging with Imaan (30), Ajay (33), Ghoolam (26), Sultan (22), Salimtabrez (26) and Hitesh's (38)[8] stalls in the flea market, whenever I visited Fordsburg. They offered me an additional chair to sit with them to continue my observations. I gained some experience in the clothing business. Since Imaan and Hitesh were engaged in the clothing business, I was trained in how to deal with the customers and the techniques of bargaining and selling the products. Additionally, I spent considerable amount of time in the shops on Fordsburg's main street - Latish's grocery store, Bharat's salon shop and Abhishek's restaurant. These shops are located on the key sites of Fordsburg and that gave me access to observe the customers, shop owners, labourers and black African workers.

Other than some work done on the neighbourhoods of Pageview Oriental Plaza, there is limited work done on the history of Fordsburg. Therefore, I had to depend on primary sources since there is less literature available specifically on Indian neighbourhoods. Fielding is of the opinion that, 'only ethnographic research can reveal the subtle details of the experience of migration' (Fielding, 1992: 2005). I build on Kevin McHugh's observation that, ethnographies go

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[7] I use South African Indian and 'locals' interchangeably for South African citizens of Indian origin. The locals in the Fordsburg context refers to Fordsburg residents of South African Indian origin who have domiciled in Fordsburg during the Apartheid era.

[8] Names of all the informants are kept secret to observe the anonymity, unless required. The age mentioned is an approximation.

beyond insider experience (McHugh, 2000: 73), along with also advancing the methodological strategy of hybrid ethnographic methods which I will introduce in a short while.

Ethnography as a methodology

Before we write about ethnography, a question worth asking is, 'Is *ethnography site bound*? Is a site a drawn space or a dispersed yet congenially defined conjuncture of time bound geography? Roy (2012) in her essay draws from Foucault's notion of apparatus as a phenomenon to capture the discourse of human beings. Problematizing her study on the global movement of finance, Roy offers further thinking to the idea of ethnography of circulations proposed by Appadurai (2001). For Appadurai (2001: 25) worlds are put into motion by the circulation of capital, which is an after-effect of globalisation. In order to understand this movement an investigative analysis of ethnography of circulations has to be undertaken "moving away from the ethnography of locations." For Roy (2012) ethnography of a movement of finance capital which is itself in *movement* is the ethnography of circulations that has to be grounded with the ethnography of locations. She questions that even with "mobile methodologies at hand can one still designate it as ethnographic (Roy, 2012: 34). Her approach is to think beyond the traditional ethnography which is the "ontology of immersion or the encompassment of a bounded locality" (Roy, 2012: 37). In thinking of ethnography as a mobile and circulating phenomenon, I argue that ethnography as a space bound territory, has to be taken further because ethnography as a methodological concept is un-located and undefined into one categorical context. If we relate ethnography to a 'zoned' idea, then the zoning of a specific space which urbanists like Roy are attempting to think of as an unimportant category critically assumes the place of spatiality. Spatiality in the ethnographic sense has developed beyond the phenomenon of binding — to something physical and also in the abstract sense. Hence, I would insist on thinking of ethnographic methodology as 'ethnography of the

unstable,' which is to say that it is amorphous and global and a notion difficult to be pinned down. As much as it is difficult to gather pertinent ethnographic data which is beyond 'traditional ethnography' it becomes important to ground the space into a normative cluster.

I use this idea to explore which methodological approach is effective in an ethnographic study in a space bounded by the issues of legality and illegality of migrants. I experiment using various social science research method tools to get comprehensive information onsite. During the ethnographic research I had to adapt myself and adopt different persona to adjust to different circumstances. There were instances during the ethnographic research where I was welcomed into an area and other vulnerable areas where I was unwelcome. Studying undocumented migrants is one of the challenging fields in humanities and social sciences, and this feeling is echoed by other scholars who have worked on similar themes of forced migration (Jacobsen & Landau, 2003).

Navigating identity; overcoming the suspicion

The first and foremost challenge for many ethnographers is accessibility. Gaining access into an entirely new area and landscape is a challenge in itself and every researcher has to tackle it. It was the same with me. In spite of being an Indian, of a similar age as my respondents, and able to communicate in three languages that migrants spoke or understood, I was still unwelcome in the spaces of undocumented labour migrants. Since Fordsburg and the flea market were business spaces I had to engage with the area not only as a researcher but as a customer as well. After several weeks of observation, I realised the best way to enter the space of Fordsburg and the flea market was to become a customer. In the beginning I could gain access to the area only as a customer where shop owners and business people welcomed me because I was a customer trying to make friendly conversation. In the earlier months of my field work in the flea market, one of the stall owners, Imaan told me that he could only give me the interview if I purchased things from

him. Apart from his eagerness as a stall owner to sell his products I realised Indian stall owners would entertain me if I helped them, as they were helping me. Imaan's argument was "Let's help each other." It was a mutual trade off. He argued if he offers an interview and spends the time with me, he would lose business. It is only when I agreed to buy a T-shirt from his stall that Imaan started to discuss his business and life, feeding me with more information. Initially he used to call me 'Suraj ji'. *Ji* is used to address someone elder or respected. Now he addresses me as, 'Suraj bhai'. *Bhai* means brother, a more affectionate word to address someone you know well.

I called Imaan a week after our first interaction for an interview. Imaan still appeared hesitant but after two days he called me back and told that since I bought from him it was his responsibility to help me. Before the interview I was hanging around the flea market and perhaps after seeing my constant presence for about a week he felt compelled to offer an interview. He preferred to engage with me in a safe and comfortable place. So he took me inside his car for the interview. He closed his glass windows allowing no visibility to outsiders and we talked for about an hour. After the interview was finished Imaan appeared to trust me. Later, whenever he had time, he allowed interviews sometimes at his stall while he was selling the clothes, sometimes at another shop that he owned and sometimes in the car simultaneously not missing the chance of selling his products. He also helped me connect with other immigrants. This made my presence visible among immigrants in the flea market. Taking from Imaan's experience I realised the importance of being a customer in Fordsburg and the flea market. Hence, to get in-depth information I decided to alternate my presence as a customer or researcher whenever required. When I entered the working space of the flea market and Fordsburg as a researcher I had access to different information than when I entered as a customer.

Being a customer

After four months of my presence as a researcher I tried to balance this position with being a customer. Therefore, the first challenge for me to be a customer was to understand the nature of a customer, what it means to be a customer? What qualifies one to become a customer and how to differentiate between the 'visitor' and 'customer'? There is a fine line between both which I will discuss in a short while. In order to do this, I started with observing customers in Fordsburg and the flea market. After several weeks of my observation, this is what I think qualifies one to become a customer in Fordsburg. There are different types of customers who can be categorised into race, religion, caste, region and gender.

Race – Apart from black and Indian workers that I observed there was diverse representation of customers of different race groups. Fordsburg and the flea market hosts customers of different races, although it is an ethnic enclave of predominantly South Asians. Apart from South Asians who are frequent visitors one can spot white South Africans, black Africans, and coloured visitors along with tourists, mainly from Europe, and North America. Most of them come to either eat Indian food, or to buy groceries from Indian stores, usually, the people in this category are seen at the weekend flea market.

Religion – Fordsburg and the flea market is dominated by the South Asian Muslim business community. Even the South Africans customers of Indian origin who frequently visit Fordsburg and the flea market mainly consist of Muslims. There are some Christian and Hindu businessmen and customers as well. It is a diverse area that accommodates people of different faiths and regions as evident from the presence of mosques in the same area as the Hindu temple in Mayfair. There are also various shops that cater to the religious needs of different faiths in Fordsburg. For example, Islamic Trust and other shops of Islamic literature are present in the flea market and in shops in Fordsburg. Similarly, the Hindu shop 'Swadeshi' near the flea market accommodates Hindu believers offering prayer related products.

Caste - Caste is an intrinsic factor in the South Asian context. Caste intersects every religion in the subcontinent, and the same is seen among migrants in Fordsburg as well. People are conscious about caste but do not carry the caste identity as much as in India. Few of my informants were willing to discuss their caste. Imaan, Bharat, Ashraf, Abhishek, Hitesh, Ajay talked about their caste relations and practices, while some informants did not mention it at all. Customers of different castes visit Fordsburg and this is evident in their dietary choices. The Hindus coming from castes that practice vegetarianism visit 'pure vegetarian' restaurants only.

Nation/Region – Often customers chose the shops of their preference depending upon the region they come from. It was observed that, customers who come from India visit Indian shops and it

was the same with the Bangladeshi and Pakistani customers. There is a strong national affiliation. So much so that when Latish, a grocery store owner was selling his products to Indian customers he would show them the products and mention it that they come from India to emphasise its importance. Similarly, Bangladeshi shop owners promoted Bengali products which are preferred by the Bangladeshi customers. Expatriate Indians tend to go to shops, restaurants catering goods and food from their region.

Gender – Fordsburg and flea market is a family friendly space said one of the business owners in Fordsburg. This is evident during the weekend when the crowds are mainly families who are visiting together. Visitors to the market were across genders.

Hence the above mentioned categories were important for me to analyse the different variables that created inter-relationships among customers in Fordsburg. However, among these categories there is one distinct category that I call 'general customer'. A general customer is the one who is of South African Indian origin and preferably communicates in English only. Other features of the general customer are:

A general customer doesn't visit every day. S/he visits once a week or occasionally depending on the needs. Whereas a 'regular' customer visits every two-three days. The relationship between a customer and shop owner depends on the number and frequency of visits one pays to the shop. Very often the customer talks with the shop/stall owner only till s/he is getting the bill or if there is a chance of bargain. Sometimes the discussion gets personal as well. They ask each other about family and visits to India if they are known to each other. Usually the South African Indians commute to the shops that were owned by South African Indians. These were old ties that formed as a sense of community attachment.

The characteristics and differences of customers are important to mention because it helped me find an appropriate methodological framework for research. The ethnography undertaken in this research goes beyond the ethnographer's experience. Where the data is gathered not only by observing the participants or spending considerable amount of time in the field, but a critical enquiry of ethnography as a methodology was observed. This led to problematize the data and to

critique the positionality of informants. This I believe is a unique contribution to the critical studies of ethnography. It also states the methodological limits and challenges. Based on these facts I will present the framework of my research in this thesis.

Good and bad customer

Each time I visited the flea market or Fordsburg there were different layers of identities that were attached to me and these different identities decided the nature of the response from the informants in Fordsburg. For example, when I retained my identity as a customer—I was seen as sometimes annoying and sometimes as a good customer. What it means to be a good or an annoying customer depends on the stall owner. A good customer generally means the one who buys, gives money, leaves the shop and visits again. An annoying customer on the other hand is the one who asks too many questions, wastes time and then decides not to buy anything. Annoying customers are well known in the market. It is because, stall / shop owners often gossip about customers during the spare time. So if you are labelled as an annoying customer then you are received with hostility and odd looks. Once I happened to be an 'annoying customer,' which made me feel uncomfortable and unwanted in the flea market. I sensed this from the odd looks in my direction from the traders in the flea market and in Fordsburg. The experiences of being a good-bad-annoying customer and the responses of migrant workers will be elaborated further in chapter 6. And yet, although the classification of good-bad-annoying exists in the flea market, there is no concept of being an "unwanted customer." There is always a need for customers, however annoying or bad. Why the customer surpasses the stigma of being 'unwanted' will be discussed in the following chapters.

Theorising the methodology

There are benefits and drawbacks as a researcher in a space that s/he is non-acquainted with. The positives for conducting my research in Fordsburg were - my being Indian, multi-lingual with a

knowledge of slang, with an idea of lifestyle, and the ability to relate to the class of young Indian labourers because of my rural, semi-urban and urban upbringing. However, surprisingly the above mentioned positives also acted as negatives in various instances. The negatives were - that I was non-Muslim, Indian, human rights lawyer, coming from Mumbai, student-researcher, and affiliation with the Centre for Indian Studies in Africa at the University of the Witwatersrand. This led to suspicions that I was from the Indian intelligence unit sponsored by the Government of India to check on undocumented Indian immigrants. This suspicion was further strengthened by my attempts to get interviews and personal information. However, I tried to overcome it by experimenting and adapting my presence according to the situation.

It is often discussed that a researcher has to keep visiting the field until the researcher becomes invisible. Unfortunately for me it was never an easy case. I had layers of identities that were attached to my presence. For them, I was first a student of University of Wits, then I was a researcher, followed by writer, investigator, friend, brother and an acquaintance. Although all of these identities sound like one and the same but it formed difference of opinion. For them it was different and each category defined its exclusive identity. For example, since I am a student, young migrants were curious about university life in South Africa. They would ask me about education and way of student's life in South Africa. Older migrants too showed their interest. Elderly migrants like Ashraf often enquired about the university costs, the level of education for his children pursuing undergraduate studies in Surat. Being a student never attracted negative attention; it was always an admiring response that I received being in this position. When migrants would ask me about my university education and specifically what I do, I would answer that I am researching Indian immigration; I used this opportunity to enter into the migrant's space and to introduce my research topic to them—my potential informants. This way I could also assume the

dual position of being a student and a researcher. For most of them, researcher was someone who conducted surveys or experiments in the lab. When I was asked about my job as a researcher and what it means to be a researcher, I would explain that after researching about the area I would write a thesis that would be submitted towards the completion of my doctoral studies at Wits University. They assumed that it was a job where everything was dependant on writing; many confused me with being a journalist. Slowly as time passed by I was able to develop a relationship close enough for some of them to call me their brother or friend.

The different identities that were attached to me helped me generate rich and varied information for me to analyse the different ethnic situations. Thus my methodological approach evolved trying to gather pertinent data in a diverse location, and situation. Having to deal with different types of informants — differing in age, religion, language, gender, race, region, profession – determined my knowledge base. Based on the above mentioned characteristic identities I was able to collect the data and information which has become major part of this thesis. Additionally, these differing identities provided me with what I call, 'irregular', sometimes intimate at other times random information which could be used for further analysis. The changes in perception of who I was meant that I was able to get diverse, different and at times contradictory and valuable information. This helped me to have enough time to cross check and analyse the information.

For example, Bharat told me that he was married and that he had come to South Africa only to get enough money to re-settle in India. Months later he gave me contrary information. He admitted that he had no wife and he was single. He is 23 years old and not 26 which he told me in the beginning. Also the personal information regarding his home town and everything else was different. This made me aware of the hesitations, silences and lies that might arise with the

31

migrants I am interviewing. It is because of their undocumented and conflicted status that they might not be forthcoming in the beginning. Having two different stories gave me enough time to observe and analyse the field notes. Taking from experiences like this, I started experimenting with my field work. I started to document the differences in responses and how they related to my approach with the informants. This was later compiled in a separate data collection report. It was a two-fold experiment I had to do with my changing identity (see above) and second with the methodological approaches. I will elaborate the different experiments I conducted.

Changing the position – exchanging the identity

The experiment went as follows. I interacted with a few migrants in various capacities within a short period of time – as an Indian educated student, as a researcher; and as a customer. It was surprising to me that migrants replied in different ways and their responses changed from their previous ones as I changed my position. For example, interacting with Imaan in the beginning was a very difficult task as mentioned earlier. During the interaction I tweaked my position by adding that apart from being a researcher I also have knowledge of trading in Mumbai because in the past I was involved in a marketing company in Mumbai. Imaan responded to this hook and forgetting my role as a researcher, he went on to discuss his future plans of becoming a dealer and said that he would need someone to vouch for him to establish trade relations in Mumbai (I elaborate this in chapter 4). This would not have been revealed to me when I talked to him as a researcher. During the first interview in the car he offered very basic information about his life. When I asked in the same interview about his business plans, he cleverly avoided it. But when I established that I could connect him to the markets in Mumbai he started discussing his business life. In another instance when I revealed that I was a human rights lawyer, he started to discuss the laws around immigration and how difficult it is for an immigrant to escape the assaults of police in Fordsburg. During this

discussion he narrated a few more stories of immigrants that he had seen in Fordsburg. It was often I who revealed my diverse identities which led to further discussions. However, in some instances when I was describing my life earlier as a student in the UK and my travels in western countries, immigrants expressed their interest to know more. They did this by changing the topic and enquiring more about being in Europe—the visa issue, currency difference, weather and so on. This and other responses that I received from migrants motivated me to go with what I call a hybrid ethnographic methodology.

Hybrid ethnographic methodologies

Hybrid ethnographic methodology is something which consists of methods not used in specifically designed terms and with guidelines. For example, as discussed earlier I derive most of the data of migrant's life from semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are recommended especially in the areas of vulnerability, crime, illegality, because this method as Laforest (2009) argues, is good to understand and analyse information which is not immediately perceptible. This is true in the undocumented immigrant's case where most of the things that appear obvious do not tally with the actual findings as semi-structured interviews help us to understand. It is also because semi-structured interviews are well known to produce a free flow of information that offers in-depth and detailed data. It helps to establish a positive rapport between the interviewer and interviewee that is based on open-ended questions. It also helps the researcher to engage with issues that might come as additional information discussed by the respondent. Semi-structured interviews have a high potential for providing reliable and comparative data (Cohen, 2006).

This method, however, also lacks verifiability, and entails difficulty of making a decision between what is valid information and what is not. It is mentioned that often during semi-structured interviews; respondents sometime do not give correct information and engage in the process by

offering what the interviewer seems to want (sociology.org.uk/methfi). Hence, as much as semi-structured interview is preferred in the ethnography for its flexible nature and reliability, I was confounded by the weakness of semi-structured methodology. Interviews were always lengthy and unreliable. At times when I finished interacting with the immigrants I felt the interview was satisfying. But over the course of my re-engagement with the area and informants the initial information offered by the informants appeared unreliable (discussed earlier regarding Bharat's case). Because of reasons like this, I could not get the reliability aspect out of my mind about the data that I had collected. This and many other methods like the structured interview for example, appeared unfulfilling. In the structured interviews I could gather only the information which was asked and at times it did not put the informant in a comfortable position to answer, because, a) I was dealing with an ethnic immigrant space that accommodates undocumented immigrants, b) most of the informants (undocumented migrants) have never given a formal interview before and they were still trying to make sense of the interview they were offering. Many had in mind TV interviews when asked for an interview; c) they thought this interview would be for a publication (newspapers, radio) so that they could read and circulate among peers and family and d) many questions were directed towards the informal activity of traders and their unrecorded monthly income. These questions were important for me to enquire about the lives of the people and the capacity of the area on a large term.

Hence, due to the above drawbacks, I kept renegotiating my presence in the ethnographic space by changing my position and the reasons for being in the area. Usually migrants after having an intimate detailed discussion about their life—future and the past – were slightly uncomfortable around me. During interviews they had revealed information that they kept secret from their colleagues. Hence, they were afraid of my sharing the information within the area. However, to

pacify them and remove their doubts I started hanging out more with them. I spent a considerable amount of time involved in the participant observation method. I was involved in the business transaction process actively, sometimes selling, sometimes advertising and sometimes providing surety to the customer who had doubts about products. My presence at a stall was unobtrusive; I was just another customer. However, for my informants I was their man working for them. I had to play two roles to create a relaxed environment. I was comfortable and found appropriate details of Fordsburg by participant observation. Therefore, whenever required I mixed the methods of semi-structure along with participant observation, informal talks, casual conversations and personal interviews simultaneously involving the interactional, conversation and behavioural analysis. This may be called as 'Collaborative Approach' used within the analysis of participant observation (Beissel-Durrant, 2004). Collaborative approach can be understood as a collaboration of various methods used in the field to gather diverse information from the informants. In the qualitative methods, ethnography plays an important role in defining the characteristics of findings. Ethnography being my core analysis I experimented with other qualitative methods discussed above. The reason for such experiments was to understand the diversity of the Fordsburg neighbourhood. One of the reasons that I could gain access and insights into the Fordsburg's space was timing. I emphasise that one should know when to enter the space and when not to, in order to balance one's position as a researcher.

The information that was given to me that I term as 'immigrants information' or as a general observation, does not imply that I am claiming that all immigrants believe in what is stated or that it is a common understanding. There were a few issues on which immigrants commonly agreed: asylum issues; the devaluing of rand on the foreign exchange market and its impact on

remittances; and the hostility of police. Apart from these broad issues there were mostly diverse and different views that were noted during the research.

Aim

The primary aim of this project is to study present day Indian labour migrants in South Africa. Labour migration to South Africa is a one and a half century old process. Scholars have worked closely on this process of migration; historians and sociologists have provided inputs on the lives of labour migrants. An interesting fact about early labour migration was that most of the migrants that were recruited on the plantation sites were relatively young migrants (Bhana, 1991). Identically, there is a new emerging migration regime to South Africa, post 1994, which is comprised of young and transient labour migrants. It is difficult to gather the account of young labour migrant's lives in the past. Therefore, this thesis will study the lives of young Indian labour migrants in the contemporary era. This study expects to stand as a focal point for further research on the lives of young, male, transient migrants. McKenzie (2008) understands migration within the south as mainly consisting of young, poorly educated migrants. He observes:

> "Young people aged 12–24 on average account for one-third of the flow and one-quarter of the stock of international migrants. The share of youth in the flow is greatest in migration to developing country destinations and lowest for migration to those developed countries, such as Canada, that rely on skill-intensive admission criteria," McKenzie (2008: 116).

Taking from his observation I will present the analytical discourse of young Indian labour migrants who tend to fall into the first category of McKenzie's study.

Furthermore, taking from Shah's (2012) study on the lives of Asian migrants to North America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, I explore the emerging intimacy among migrants in a 'stranger's space.' However, in the case of the young Indian labour migrants in South Africa, there is a slight difference which brings new dimensions to migrants' lives. These

migrants are not entirely in the 'stranger's space' but in a familiar space that has evolved out of historical networks of trade, labour and kinship where there is a constant reproduction of cultural and social affinities. Therefore, interesting questions arise as to what it means not to live in a community of strangers (White, 1990). This thesis also attempts an initial exploration of intimacy among young labour migrants in the adopted new space. On the other hand, work done in South India, Kerala in particular, by Osella and Osella (2000, 2007) studies the life of male migrants. Their work focuses on understanding masculinity and the factors that contributes to make the migrant a, 'man.' My work extends these insights to Fordsburg's scenario. Migrants in Fordsburg demonstrate masculinity by purchasing and displaying technological gadgets and by buying branded goods. The dressing habits of young male migrants and their changing food and clothing habits in Fordsburg also help us to address similar issues. In as much as this thesis intends to bring in the radical approach of thinking through the southern archives, it acknowledges that writing the theory of the south does not necessarily mean to disavow comparative texts which would help us to criticise the northern approach towards topics under discussion here (see for more, Comaroff and Comaroff, 2011, 2012).

Labour migration to Indian business districts in South Africa is interesting because of the historical connections and the continuity of chain migration that is relevant in the present. South African immigration policies discourage migration of labour that is not qualified to work in a desirable sector (including Indians and Africans). Local South Africans dislike the growing influx of migrants; this creates trouble for labour migrants coming to South Africa. In spite of all this, the Indian labour class still migrates to a country that does not welcome them. However, after arriving they work overtime to accumulate capital and establish businesses of their own. Indian Business Districts (IBDs) play a vital role in providing opportunities for the labourers in getting

jobs and starting new business. The concept of class mobility among the labourers and their becoming capital owners provides a parallel narrative to the stories of lifestyle and economic expansion of the business district. Researchers working on the Indian communities in South Africa have not studied the issue of labour as a form of networked migration seriously. Most of the studies so far have looked into touristic, social, cultural and economic aspects but they do not consider the IBD as a magnet and focus for labour migration. This thesis examines and documents the lives of migrant labourers from India into IBDs.

The lack of travel and work permits among the labour migrants makes their presence in South Africa undocumented. The aspect of illegality is not clearly visible to the South African as well as Indian governments on account of the rapid absorption of new migrants into existing social and business networks. Upon arrival they get involved with the workforce in Fordsburg, make friends, and plan to stay on for a couple of years. Interesting questions arise as to how they entered South Africa without permits, what means do they adopt, and by which routes they enter South Africa? Secondly, after arrival how do they get along with the local authorities and immigration officers? What are the measures used by the labour migrants for prolonging their presence for years? One of the means adopted by migrants is to apply for asylum protection and become legal residents in the country. This then leads to another set of questions as to how and why do they seek asylum permits? What are the networks that prompt them to apply for an asylum permit? The migrants who initially came without permits now have valid work permits. How do these migrants - initially illegal in the eyes of law - become legal residents in the country? Apart from their presence in Fordsburg, what do these migrants expect from Fordsburg?

This thesis will also critically look into the business techniques exchanged in the IBDs. The sub-continental model of business brought by labour migrants' that gives IBDs a different

character than the Indian neighbourhoods of colonial times.[9] There are few changes which are visible in the IBDs: an additional stall adjacent to the shop is an idea brought by the migrants. It can be said that migration is influencing local business communities and practices.[10]

Documenting the southern experience

In recent years many scholarly works on Indians in Africa focus on business and capital establishment rather than migrant labour in Africa. For me this is not a complete picture. There are very few critical analytic studies of Indians in Africa. Studying the migrants' life story is to understand their everyday practices, which is a usual practice in ethnography. However, it is slightly different from Rigg's (2007) understanding of 'everyday' life which entails a study of the normal living of 'ordinary' people. I argue that people living under the spectre of transnational migratory labour do not embody the symbolic representation of 'normal life' (16–17). This phenomenon cannot be conceived as 'ordinary' people's lives.

Studying the 'everyday lives' of labour migrants, which according to Lefebvre (1991) is an evolving concept of social and political action in a particular space, gives a complete picture of labour activities. By referring to this I do not mean approaching labour studies completely from an independent subaltern point of view, but to write a narrative of what Guha (1982) refers to as 'a non-elitist perspective.' The theme of Indian labour migration within the context of south-south migration offers newer insights than studying the usual south-north migration alone. It offers specific features distinguishing it form the traditional north-south, north-north perspective (Lombaerde, Guo and Neto, 2014: 107). This migration can be seen as a response to the hegemonic

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[9] References of colonial era Indian ethnic spaces can be found in the works Olof (1963), Bharati (1972), Dana Seidenberg (1983), T C Chang (2000), Verma (2002).

[10] The 'transformation' due to the influence of migrants has a classical understanding in the work of Alison Mountz and Richard Wright (1996) on the Mexican migrant communities from San Agustín, Oaxaca to the USA which generalises the theory of migratory influence into local communities.

enterprise of global north and as an emerging phenomenon in the age of globalisation (Castles and Wise, 2007). Globalisation for some is a recursive movement that redefined not only boundaries but also the aesthetics of nation-state borders invoking a "profound reorganisation of boundary" (Oza, 2011: 1070). Looking at global capital through southern experiences of migration allows for a critical engagement with the reorganisation of territorial boundaries by local actors and global players. Today the global south logic can be seen as a powerful source of economic and political exchanges within emerging economic blocs like BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). These blocs have emerged as a response with resourceful states attempting to redraw the traditional axes of power (Prashad, 2013).

The overwhelming debates and discussions about migration and its development induced benefits are initiated by the northern states, by organising regular conferences and by raising generous funding to undertake the research in this area of development (migration). There has been very little communication between southern states to cooperate, organise and develop the framework of migration development as northern countries have successfully done (Castles and Wise, 2007). In spite of the policy level difficulties, migration within south-south paradigms continues to take place regularly. South-south migration is an emerging theme which surprisingly gained unexpected attention from the publications in the north. A leading academic journal on migration studies *International Migration Review* undertook this task in 2014 to elaborate on the concept of south-south migration. Editors Lombaerde, Guo and Neto (2014) wrote an introduction to their *Special Collection* attempting to convince the readership and scholars of the importance of south-south phenomenon in migration studies. They argue that in spite of the 'north' and 'south' being problematic categories in the social sciences, a focus on south-south migration is important not only because of its sheer quantitative mobility (about 33-45 percent of the worldwide

migration, cf. Campillo-Carrete, 2013: 12) but also because there is growing availability of data. South-south migration, they argue, "makes sense today" (Lombaerde et al, 2014: 104) and has specific features that differentiate it from the north-north or north-south migration, such as the "role of borders, the migration-conflict nexus and the issue of regional migration governance" (Ibid). Concerning migration studies in the south, lack of sufficient data is one of the pressing needs that haunt policy makers. It has been often mentioned by various organisations that tracking, evaluating and studying emigration in Africa is often difficult to assess because of the lack of "reliable data" (OECD/SWAC, 2006: 19). The Government of India's effort to sponsor studies on the theme of "Labour and Capital Migration from India to Africa and Emerging Global Responsibilities" (http://cisa-wits.org.za/projects/) highlights the growing needs of the southern players to generate "reliable data."[11]

Literature review

Research on migration cannot be done in isolation. Bretell and Hollifield (2007) argue for an interdisciplinary approach to understand migration and reach composite conclusions. Migration studies cross the disciplines of social sciences, health sciences, law and human rights. Important disciplines such as, sociology, political science, history, economics, geography, demography and population studies, cultural studies, psychology and law remain relevant to encompass the overall understanding of the complex processes of migration studies (also see, Castles and Miller, 2009) (For a sociological approach see Richmond (1988b); economics Borjas (1989); political science and cultural studies Galemba (2013), Heyman (2013), law and human rights Taran (2000), Crush (2000), Butler (2001), Bustamante (2002), geography – human trafficking Mountz (2003)).

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[11] The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has been brought under the Ministry of External Affairs as a department in 2016 http://www.mea.gov.in/

Indian identity formation in Fordsburg

This thesis broadly engages with the literatures of history, labour, and migration studies within the context of social sciences, law and human rights disciplines. The historical approach provides a good starting point to focus on the ethnic enclave of 'Fordsburg.' Within the historical work on Fordsburg, very few studies address specifically the Indian connection with the area. Carrim's (1990) work is one of the few historical studies on the Indian communities' in the province of Transvaal. Carrim underscores the hardships faced by the Indian trading community in the 14th Street and Pageview area from where Indians were evicted due to the discriminatory laws passed by the apartheid government in 1977. The community shops which were forcibly removed were resettled in an Indian only shopping mall called Oriental Plaza in the late 1970s in the areas called Fordsburg, and Lenasia. The resettlement had many financial, psycho-social and social consequences for the Indian traders. Lamont's report published in 1980 talks in detail about the economic and psychological impact on the Indian trading community residing in Pageview. Itzkin's (2000) historical work details Gandhi's activism through the Transvaal Indian National Congress in boycotting various discriminatory and unjust laws of the government with a focus on the Indian trading community. Bernard Sachs (1972) takes up the Jewish community's origins and its relation to the urban geography of Johannesburg. Taking from historical studies, this thesis aims to provide a historical understanding of Fordsburg. Similarly, Leyds (1964) work produced during the years of Group Areas Act helps one to understand the planning and development of the Johannesburg landscape. It details the short history of emergence of Fordsburg and how it came into being in the year 1888 (Leyds, 1964: 153).

Along with these works there are other historical studies by Pillay (1976), Swan (1985), Tomaselli (1983) Cachalia, (1983), Padayachee and Morell (1991), Carrim (1990), Vahed (2001,

2005), Bawa (2006), Brink (2008), Desai and Vahed (2010) which addresses the contribution of Indian activism and struggle to Johannesburg's political and economic scenario. Pillay (1976) studies the Indian traders and their activism in the Transvaal region. His study centres on the idea of Indian nationalism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and the political consciousness among Indian trading communities in South Africa. Maureen Swan (1985) works with the archival material of Gandhi's political activism in South Africa and the, Transvaal in particular. Cachalia (1983) on the other hand details the rise of Indian petty traders in Johannesburg area, with a focus on Indian hawker's activism. Tomaselli (1983) explains the way the fruit, and vegetable market was occupied by 'free' Indians in Johannesburg. In spite of a discriminatory regime of registration charges, 'free' Indian Muslims became hawkers of fruit and vegetables (Tomaselli, 1983: 182) and the poor 'free Hindus' were forced into the less lucrative business of flowers. His study explains the way economy of race and religion interplays in the Johannesburg market during the early decades of twentieth century. On a similar note, Padayachee and Morell's (1990) work details the contribution of Indian merchants and the petty traders, or '*dukkawallas*' in the Natal economy before World War I. This work helps to conceptually frame Johannesburg's economic activities during the same era. Bawa's (2006) empirical research presents the formation of Indian family-owned enterprises in South Africa. It helps to understand the way family-owned businesses operated in Johannesburg as a case study. Desai & Vahed (2010) bring a collection of archival material from 1860-1914 detailing the experiences of indentures, passengers, men, women, children and the 'coolies'. Vahed's (2001) study helps us to understand Indian Islamic practices in Natal. Taking an example of the celebration of Muharram, this work explains the inter-group relations within Islam, Hindu and other Indian communities in Natal.

Urban space of Johannesburg

Onselen's (1982) work details the political-economic scenario of the early years of formation of the Witwatersrand region. It argues against the regular histories of Johannesburg during the late nineteenth century that focuses on the expansion of capital and relates its glory through a "romantic gloss". *New Babylon and New Nineveh,* a two volume book on the history of Witwatersrand covers important events from 1886-1914. It engages with the non-elite actors of Johannesburg's growth. This work is concerned with the working class' history. He emphasises the working classes that formed the economic base in Johannesburg's growing industries. Detailing the lives of liquor sellers, black domestic workers, mine workers, prostitutes, cab drivers of various nationalities and origin, washermen (*dhobis*) and other working classes that travelled to Johannesburg from other parts of the world helps us to situate the arguments of Indian influence during the early years of Witwatersrand formation. This work helps us to formulate the historical arguments on the formation of Fordsburg area during the three important decades. And to analyse the expansion of Indian capital during the late years of nineteenth and early years of twentieth century. A chapter that focuses on the transport industry looks at the formation of tram way and horse-drawn cabs within the precinct of Market square. Market Square is a place which is now transformed into a bustling business space called "Fordsburg square" or the flea market. Chapter 2 of this thesis discusses the involvement of Indian and Chinese capital in the horse drawn cab business. This was one of the earliest trades of Witwatersrand where Indians contributed to the ambitious transport industry.

Johannesburg is often described as a modern space of urban governance, and Fordsburg has to be studied within a broader analysis of Johannesburg. Johannesburg has been variously

studied as a place of continuance of historical segregation (Mabin, 2007), as a fantasy (Nakasa, 1986), or the space of a hippy culture providing safe platform for youth in their *Jozi* (Nuttall, 2006). Located in the centre of Johannesburg, the idea of an ethnic enclave can be further explained with the help of works on Johannesburg. Literatures on ethnic enclaves and immigrant identity have helped us to understand the role of such enclaves in immigrant's life. Ethnic enclaves have been observed as spaces that offer viable ground and a functional space to enter a host country's business market. They protect ethnic businesses as opposed to the general wider markets that do not necessarily cater to immigrants' needs. Additionally, ethnic enclaves provide a strong consumer base for many immigrant entrepreneurs. Some scholars have even argued that, the emergence of ethnic enclaves is due to the discrimination in the host society forcing immigrants to raise residential neighbourhoods on ethnic lines – offering immigrant entrepreneurs a "protected safe market" (Aldrich et al, 1985). However, Fordsburg's situation appears to be different. It challenges the theories which suggest that "protected safe market" works in favour of immigrants giving them secure job opportunity and less competition (Palmer, 1984; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). I detail this in chapter two with examples and narratives of Fordsburg.

Mabin's (2007) work underscores the diversity of Johannesburg along linguistic, racial and intra-regional lines that makes the city a space of cultural development. He argues that the essence of history and trajectory of apartheid has carved Johannesburg in such a way that it has the potential of becoming a "mega-urban region" (Mabin, 2007:43). Reviewing the literature on Johannesburg Mabin surveys diverse works that speak to Johannesburg's community through a wide array of approaches - fictional work and travel writings - and tries to grasp the essence of Johannesburg's identity in the global context. Arguing for Johannesburg as a space of the operation of capital, Mabin invokes Johannesburg as a metropolis of racial divisions and income differentials. It is a

city that is a remnant of unequal post-apartheid South Africa. Taking from his observations, I aim to build my observations on urban Johannesburg with a case study of a neighbourhood that hosts unusual migrant labourers from India. Attempts have been made to introduce the spatiality of Johannesburg as cosmopolitan by Harrison, Gotz, Todes and Wray (2015) in their collection of essays on Johannesburg. Contributions include historical, sociological, economic, political economy, architectural, planning, urban geography and related disciplines in understanding Johannesburg's developing urban economic space. Similarly, Palmary, Hamber and Nunez (2015) in their edited volume offer new ethnographic insights on migrants' lives in the city of Johannesburg. This collection introduces new ways of thinking about 'precarious lives' in Johannesburg among migrant communities from the African continent. It argues that predominant debates on the notions of this precariousness are positioned within the hegemonic understanding of the US and European experiences. It intends to offer a new way of thinking through the experiences of localised communities of Johannesburg urging us to "consider the lessons that such localised study brings to global contexts of uncertainty." (Palmary et al., 2015: 7). This is something I intend to offer through the study of an ethnic enclave whose interesting features help to define emerging global concepts of ethnicity and identity in the host society. Additionally, there are recent works on Johannesburg drawing on social sciences and an architectural point of view: by Mbembe and Nuttall (2008), Hyslop (2008), Itzkin (2000), Swan (1985).

Mabin (2007) gives us reasons to think beyond the trajectories of the "global city" appellation conferred upon Johannesburg. Detailing the post-apartheid governance and management issues, he engages with diverse issues that help us to relocate the arguments on the urban city development. Challenging the general narratives of Johannesburg being a place of development and 'Africa's World City' he presents harsh critiques of the growing inequality and

crime, housing, business and financial situations of the city. Examining it through the lens of national and provincial governments, it explains how a city that has enormous potential is one of the world's most unequal cities, "income and wealth wise" (Mabin, 2007: 56). The growing suburbs and the failure of the governments in defining the future of the city has led to the massive difference in the quality of life of certain population groups; predominantly black Africans staying in the townships. The emergence of the northern suburbs and the price of the property has reminded us of the consequence of the "neo-apartheid" in a rather indirect sense (Beavon, 2000 cited in Mabin, 2007). This work helps us to think the broader dynamics of an urban geography of a city with unequal past. However, it does not address the community concerns apart from mentioning the everyday commute for work from one corner of the city to another. It also neglects the middle class non-black and non-white South African who dominate significant financial holdings of the city, the Indian group.

The studies discussed above do not directly address the issue of Indian labour migration to the Indian business district, Fordsburg. Mohammed Carrim's (2013) autobiography records his life in Cape Town and his move to the Transvaal region with a discussion on Fordsburg that sheds light on the happenings in Fordsburg from 1940 onwards. His description of trading in Fordsburg and in Transvaal during the 1920s by his grandfather helps us to understand the differences between trading practices then and now. This work is particularly useful to us in addressing the similarities between the first arrivals and contemporary migrants. Fordsburg's scenario exhibits the workings of an informal economy. Hiralal's (2010a) work on the 'invisible' workers who contribute in the making of the informal economy in Kwazulu-Natal will be helpful in addressing the gendered perspective of the work force in Fordsburg.

Ethnic enclaves

The relation between Fordsburg and contemporary labour migration can be studied in light of studies done elsewhere on Indian business districts in places like Canada (Verma, 2002, Bindra, 1990) and Singapore (Chang, 2000). Verma studies Indian labourers from the state of Punjab who migrated to Canada and settled in what would become 'Little India'. Indian labourers to Canada formed clustered neighbourhoods which famously became known as Indian Business District in Canada. Her study is related to one caste group - Mahton - which experienced social mobility after migrating to Canada. Caste attachments were one of the strong reasons for inviting fellow caste groups to Canada and creating a small neighbourhood of particular caste groups. In this thesis as well we will see how caste and regional attachments function in the mobility of migrants. Bindra (1990) reports on the bustling half a kilometre stretch of 'Little India' in Toronto. There are many similarities with Fordsburg's trading space. It is a place which attracts a few thousand visitors on the weekends. Apart from regional diversities, there are restaurants, and shops selling clothing, books, electronic items and cosmetics. Fordsburg needs to be situated within studies such as these. Moving to Asia, Chang (2000) in Singapore engages with the notion of 'insideness' and 'outsideness' of being in Indian neighbourhoods. Chang's work observes the Indian Business District as a tourist site, rather than seeing it as a site of Indian labour migration to the 'Little India' of Singapore. Taking from the studies of Verma and Chang in particular, this study aims to elaborate the notion of Indian neighbourhoods. Along with the details of historical aspects of formation of Fordsburg, it will focus on contemporary labour migration to these Indian areas. Indian business districts or formation of 'Little India' is not studied broadly in Africa nor indeed in South Africa.

Regarding the site of this research, there is a limited study done on the capital and labour movement in Fordsburg (Rugunanan, Sedat Khan, and Smuts, 2012; Carrim, 1990). Brink's (2008) work details the history of Fordsburg and Flea market. The flea market which was initially called Fordsburg Square was a famous site among the mine workers during 1920s. The miner's strike of 1922 took over Fordsburg Square as their base to train the workers (Brink, 2008). Brink's work underscores the importance of Indian traders in making Fordsburg area a business district after its devastation during the miners' strike in 1922. Ebrahim's (2005) thesis argues that the congregation of ethnic minorities in the urban space contributes to the development of city landscapes and in urban regeneration. He argues that ethnic identities formed in the urban landscape helps the minority communities to organise themselves better. In doing this, the congregation of Indian communities in Fordsburg makes it an exclusive ethnic enclave in Johannesburg. Ebrahim argues that Fordsburg's contribution to urban regeneration is mostly initiated by the private sector and members of the Indian business group. My findings concur with his thesis. Compared to community participation, the public sector and government enterprises play a minimal role. Toffah (2008) studies the economic space of Oriental Plaza along with its reach in the urban geography of Johannesburg. Studying the business spaces of Johannesburg, Toffah situates the continuum of Oriental Plaza into the mall culture of modern day South Africa. She argues that apart from Oriental Plaza being a privately owned institution which is heavily dominated by business exchanges; it is a space that was created to lure the traditionally separated white middle class consumers into the market. Her thesis engages with the issues of Fordsburg's challenges of spatial mobility. She offers solutions to the parking issue which is the pressing need for the market. Her work is useful in understanding the urban environment of immigrant enclaves that regulate the businesses privately.

Rugunanan et al. (2012) on the other hand focus on the sociological aspects of Oriental Plaza. Their interest lies in studying trading patterns of the South African Asian workforce in the Oriental Plaza in Fordsburg. The ethnographic work details the importance of the Asian workforce in running the local economy. This study concludes by detailing the nature of Indian trading activities in Fordsburg, Oriental plaza in particular. It argues that for Indian traders in Oriental Plaza the recognition of identity and reproduction of cultural and traditional values assures their 'Indianness'. All the traders carried their Indian identity with pride and as something which they did not wanted to lose. As much as post-apartheid South Africa values the integration of racial diversities, the India community of Oriental Plaza continued to separate themselves, maintaining an Indian identity. It is this Indianness, I argue, that allows Indian migrants continuous flow to the Fordsburg area. Capturing the life stories of traders and the working conditions in Oriental plaza; Rugunanan et al. (2012) I leave the reader with some unanswered questions of recent migration from India. To fill this gap, my investigation will provide ethnographic observations on recent Indian labour migrants from India who are actively involved in Fordsburg's economy.

Hansen's (2012) work on the India communities in South Africa is of a particular interest to this thesis. Taking the example of a segregated and 'poor Indian' township, Chatsworth, in Durban, Hansen attempts to understand the everyday life of, Indian communities through social behaviour in an Indian neighbourhood. Hansen's ethnography studies Indian communities as isolated and separated in South Africa, who attempt to gain significance. Taking from the regular and daily lives of 'Charous' (a disrespectful term for an Indian in Chatsworth), Hansen engages in conversation with other literatures on Indian diaspora in the Caribbean, North America and east Africa. It details the everyday experiences of the Indian diaspora and how they negotiate their sense of belonging in a space of diversity that they are an active part of. See for example, the work

on the Indian diaspora in Trinidad by Nirajana (2006), in North America by Rai and Reeves (2008) and on east Africa by Oonk (2013), Mawdsley and McCann (2011)). Describing the religious practices (chapter 7 in Hansen, 2012) among Hindus and Muslims who try to identify their status of either being non-lower caste Hindu or being an Arab Muslim from India, he attempts to understand the generalised differences of a normal Indian. Engaging with the resurgence of Bollywood cinema in the South Africa post 1994 he highlights the growing awareness of Indian identity. Using the example of a Bollywood movie, *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* released in 1998, Hansen elaborates the self-conscious sentiments held by young Indians who were distant from Bollywood until then. Hansen however, touches in passing on the economic impact of Bollywood productions but does not explain the emergence of Bollywood as an alternative cinema in South Africa. This is despite a revolution in media production in Bollywood, making these films available at an affordable price through CDs and DVDs. I will address the consequences of cheap and pirated CDs and DVDs on the local economy predominantly sold by migrant labourers from India at a later point.

Theoretical framework

The study of international migration according to Castles and Miller (2009: 20) falls into two broad bodies of social science investigation. The first deals with the "determinants, processes and patterns of migration," while the second focuses on the ways in which "migrants incorporate into the receiving societies." However, Castles and Miller argue that these categories are "artificial" and "detrimental" to a complete understanding of the migratory process. Therefore, they suggest using the term "migration studies." This term incorporates all the factors relating to the migratory processes. Hence, this project attempts to understand the theoretical framework of migration studies. Constant & Massey (2002) warn us against "over-reliance" on a single theory which might

not necessarily help us to understand and explain the broader consequences of international migration. Agreeing with Constant & Massey, this work engages with diverse theories of migration (economic, sociological and political) and ethnic studies (Indian diaspora) to get a broader understanding of the issue. Within the literature on migration studies, Parnwell (1993) brings a new approach to the theories of migration within the third world. Parnwell's work discusses population mobility in the Third World with a specific focus on South East Asia. The author engages with various migration theories starting from E.G. Raventein's *Law of Migration* (1885) to the work of contemporaries like Everett Lee (1966). The work distinguishes between mobility, movement, and migration as three different aspects of development.

Having focussed on the third world country's population movement, he argues that the movement in the vast space of the third world is more of a 'survival strategy' than for economic advancement (Parnwell, 1993: 9) which is seen in the Fordsburg's context as well. Circulation is often the most prevalent type of movement in the third world countries, argues Parnwell. This interpretation offers more insights on the nature of immigration among the Indian labour class to South Africa. The classic explanation of the differences between third world migration and first world migration gives an opportunity to rethink the phases of migration. Parnwell has rightly pointed out that the decision to migrate among the citizens of the countries belonging to the third world is not solely related to economic factors but also social, cultural, political and environment factors. This observation is particularly helpful for this research because most young migrants in Fordsburg are not driven to South Arica solely for economic reasons but cultural and social factors contribute significantly (chapter 4). Movements can be classified as 'Involuntary' or 'Voluntary.' Involuntary movements arise from political and development pressures and are involved with issues of refugees and resettlement. Refugee movements across Africa are of primary interest in

my study, as Indian labour migrants tend to migrate as refugees claiming asylum in South Africa. I will provide further information and insights on the motivations for economic migrants (otherwise called work migrants) to migrate from India to South Africa who voluntarily migrate for economic needs and later use the state machinery after entering the system.

Moving further, various works on the theories of migration have attracted attention since the publication of Ravenstein's (1885) Law of Migration. Some of Ravenstein's observations have stood the test of time, such as "most migrants are related to technological development", "economic factors are the main cause of migration" and "migration flow produces a compensating counter-flow." His observations seem to be true to a certain extent if seen in the present day context in Fordsburg. However, there are certain observations such as the suggestion that urban population is less migratory and females outnumber males in short-distance migration can be contested. Additionally, according to him migration is initiated in stages, where it proceeds from rural to small town, then from small town to the larger cities, and from larger cities to the metropolitan areas (Richmond, 1988b: 9-10). Furthermore, Lee (1966) builds on Ravenstein's observations offering a new model of migration where negative and positive factors combine to influence the decisions to migrate. He contends that the diversity of receiving society affects the volume of immigration. These theories help to engage with the ongoing debates of *macro* models of migration. Similar to Ravenstein's and Lee's analysis one notable work is Stahl's edited book (1988) which identifies the characteristics of international migration flows and discuses different types of migration. He argues that migration from the developing world to the developed world is more of a permanent nature. Disagreeing with Stahl, I argue that, many times voluntary migration from countries like India can also take the form of temporary migration, among and between the countries of the third worlds contrary to the permanent nature suggested by Stahl. Similarly, I

argue against the view of Piore (1979) as mentioned by Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino & Taylor (1993), that immigration between the developing world and the developed world is not of a temporary nature but a permanent one. The main issue is of finding a balance between the push factors from the developing world and the pull factors of the developed world.

According to Castles and Miller (2009: 25-26) concentrating on the push and pull factors is "misleading." Migration decisions according to them are influenced by a wide range of conditions in the host and sending countries. It is not a concept limited to only sending and receiving societies but a range of diverse actors are involved in this process. Castles and Miller (2009) argue that apart from the relation of two countries factors such as "secure employment, availability of investment capital and management of risks over long periods needs to be considered" (24). It refers to interconnected situations happening around the world in global economic scenarios. As Zolberg, Suhrke and Aguao (1989) put it, the push and pull factors are not only related to two economies, but it is determined by the international capitalist economy which controls the movement according to the needs of certain economies (*segmented labour market theory*). I will, investigate if these theories are correct with regard to Indian labour migration to South Africa. In the works of Stahl, less attention is given to the labour migration but more focus is on the refugees and emerging human rights issues concerning migration. Adepoju (1988) presents an overview of African labour migration within the continent (internal) and internationally. Internal migration had a profound impact on the development of the African continent.[12] Many Africans who crossed the international borders could do it due through the social networks and on the basis of economic standing (Parnwell, 1993; Cohen, 1996; Kok, Gelderblom, Oucho, & van Zyl, 2006). Adepoju (1998) employs the notion of 'economic refugees' drawing a

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[12] Internal migration need not to be confused with the migration taking place within the country, for more on this, Zuberi & Sibanda (2004)

fine line between those people that are displaced by natural disaster, political oppression, ethnic violence etc. and others who migrate solely for economic gain under the protection of refugee rights. When it comes to international migration, this work speaks of 'internal' African migration within the continent. It does not shed light on the growing influence of international inward immigration from Asia, Europe and the USA to Africa and the growing influence on the African continent. My study will aim to add further information on international inward migration from India to Africa.

Economic theory

Economic theories of migration dominate the migration studies discipline. There is severe contention among theories of international migration with regard to their respective focus on capital or labour and macro or micro factors (Massey et al, 1993: 432). Therefore, uniform theories on contemporary international migration cannot be formed based on one discipline or isolated analysis. Based on these assumptions, I aim to elaborate and critically analyse existing theoretical literature on international labour migration theories. There are various theories that build on the neo classical models of economics and focus on wages, and differential economic conditions. the Neoclassical theory is constructed on the general models of economics based on the push-pull factors. According to it, people move from densely populated to sparsely populated areas, from low income to high income regions. It is solely based on the emerging economic model of migration theories. Neoclassical principles work on a win-win situation basis. Borjas (1989) contends that it offers "utility-maximisation of individuals and profit-maximisation of employers" (458). Utility maximisation for individuals here can be understood in the context of job opportunities, income and well-being. The Neoclassical model in a nutshell is individual centred, and studies immigrants' "options" to make good decision for themselves without state

intervention; selecting the "best" country to migrate, job and income variations. It is here where individual (immigrant) enjoys the right to make a decision whether to migrate or not, select a certain job or not. State intervention does not influence their choices. The Neoclassical model of economics is further divided into the "macro" and "micro" aspects of migration. Macro migration interacts with the process of labour migration. Lewis (1954) and Harris and Todaro (1970) pioneered the work on the international labour migration process. These are among the oldest existing theories that advance their arguments based on the facts that geographical differences affect the supply and demand of labour. Countries with abundant labour supply have low market wage, whereas the countries with limited sources of labour have high wage (Massey et al, 1993). This difference in wages leads to the movement of people from low wage countries to the high wage countries, which means the migration from developing/under-developed countries to the developed countries. Therefore, in order to control the migration, macro theories propose the elimination of wage differentials in societies (Borjas, 1989).

On the other hand, micro-theories of migration focus on the model of individual decision. Social psychologists have been concerned with addressing the questions of motivation and decision to migrate. It is contended in the micro theories that individual decisions are motivated by economic or family related reasons (cf. Richmond, 1988a). Sjaastad (1962) argues that labourers migrate from one country to another only after calculating the benefits which can be achieved from movement of one place to another. This does not necessarily take place from the under-developed/developing world to the developed world, but can happen within the developing-developing country migration. It is because the labour migration under this category embarks to apply the skills and capture the possibilities of higher wages present in the destination country (Todaro, 1989; Massey et al, 1993). In contrast to the neo-classical economic models there are new

emerging economics of migration that challenge the theories and conclusions of the neoclassical models. Stark and Bloom (1985) along with Taylor (1986) argue that the migration decision is not the outcome of an isolated actor. No individual risks the imperatives of the migration solely on the personal risk factor but the decision is made on the collective basis involving actors from family, kinships and distant relatives in order to avoid the risk of migration (Portes and Borcoz, 1989). This theory challenges and propounds new dimensions to the theories of labour migration as a model of economic advancement. On the other hand, *new economics of labour migration* becomes important concerning this project. It argues that migration decisions are made by more than individuals; it is a collective decision of family, or community where one or more members decide to migrate. It is because, migration is undertaken not to just get higher wages, but also to diversify income opportunities. This provides enough resources for larger investments that can be utilised in an entity of a community or family, such as investing in family farms, repaying the community debt or advancing collective welfare by higher outputs of remuneration (cf. Castles and Miller, 2009: 24).

Finally, *segmented labour market theory* talks about the demand side of the migration, which focuses on the receiving country's aspirations and needs to meet the requirements of the host economy. It is divided into two sectors: primary and secondary sectors. The primary sector generally contains higher-grade, high status, and better paid jobs where the incentives are high with the employers who offer good terms and conditions to work with them by offering insurances, provident funds, social security and alike. Whereas the secondary sector is characterised as the jobs that require low-skills, little training which then results in a low-wage job. Concerning this project, migration to Fordsburg can be seen as a complex mixture of both the sectors (primary and secondary). Those who migrate as labourers are categorised under the secondary sector of "low"

grades, whereas, the labourers who migrate to better their condition consider the situation of working as "higher" as compared to India. Increasing demand for low-skilled labourers in Fordsburg encourages "undocumented migration" which brings up the question of the law. Migration such as this encourages 'illegal' border crossing, creating a racket of human traffickers and smugglers, and emergence of recruitment agents. Hence, it can be seen that as the demand from the employers in the receiving society increases the question of law and control becomes prominent. The efforts of the state to tackle undocumented migration, however, could result in the loss of human capital that the state might benefit from if utilised in the important sectors of agriculture, food processing and other labour-intensive sectors such as mines, factories and which are contribute a large share to the country's economy.

Critiques of theories

It is argued that neoclassical theory is based on several assumptions. It often assumes that potential migrants have "perfect knowledge of wage levels and employment opportunities in the destination region" (Castles and Miller, 2009: 22). Borjas (1989) argues that migration from one region to another is due to economic disparities. This leads to negative effects for the receiving countries, wherein the decline of "skills and lower wages for lower-skilled local workers is seen." However, Chiswick (2000) argues against Borjas, claiming that migrants are self-selective and they are most likely to move due to the expectancy of high returns for their high skills. This in turn does not affect the receiving country but more the country of origin, by causing "brain drain." While many theories are helpful in understanding as to why people decide to leave and settle in other country but none accounts for all the reasons (Castles and Miller, 2009: 30). Neoclassical theories have been accused of being incapable of explaining actual movements or predicting future ones (Castles and Miller, 2009). The new economics of labour migration model challenges the neoclassical

framework's emphasis on individual decisions to migrate for wage maximisation. Instead it emphasises the collective community decisions which are concerned with a much wider range of factors. It further explores historical causes of movements emphasising the role the state plays in determining the migrant's aspirations.

Economic theories rarely engage with the after effects of labour migration, instead their interest lies in valuing the cost of labour migration process (Borjas, 1989). Therefore, this thesis will additionally study the life of migrants after arrivals and the cost benefits they bring to their families and the contribution they make to the host country. The work of Rigg (2007) understands everyday life of people within the periphery of the global south. His work elaborates on the theoretical debates of what a lifestyle means for a person coming from the global south as opposed to the imposed definitions of north (Giddens, 1990). Rigg's work helps the researcher to understand on what terms to embark when writing on the life of people from the global south. It also gathers the understanding of "everyday" which means to study the "personal geographies" of the people from rural and urban parts of south Asia and South East Asia (Rigg, 2007: 17). The onsite of "globalisation" has led to comparative cross border studies, and Rigg claims that more focus has been on the nature of "networks" than the "scales" of this effect. The impact of globalisation on labour migration has not been studied extensively within the south-south. Hence, this thesis aims to not only study the aspects of networks but to build upon the scales of after effects of migration.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to highlight the major issues that I deal within my thesis. The literature review aimed to understand existing discussions concerning migration, ethnic enclaves, and the economic and social consequences of south-south mobility. This will help the thesis to advance discussions

on contemporary Indian labour migration to South Africa. In the next chapter, I engage with the political-economic history of the formation of Fordsburg area, and present how Fordsburg fared in the early years of creation of Witwatersrand and Johannesburg. The following chapters aim to introduce the site and then the lives of contemporary Indian migrants taking from minute ethnographic details. In addition to the above, this thesis also aims to add to our understanding of Indian influence within the complexity of post-apartheid Johannesburg city management and tries to understand why Indian communities remain aloof or are neglected in the governance and development debates of Johannesburg even when they contribute significantly to the city's economic, cultural, political and geographical development.

CHAPTER 2

FORDSBURG, FLEA MARKET, AND FOREIGNERS

Fordsburg

This chapter provides an introduction to the formation of Fordsburg – an area in which Indians began to settle from 1887 in what was then a white area. It will chart the timeline of Indian settlement, inclusion, and finally removal from the Fordsburg area. Additionally, it will introduce contemporary debates around the formation of Fordsburg and the flea market, a market square in Fordsburg. Moving further it will show how immigration to Johannesburg has generated diverse trading and working opportunities in Fordsburg. It will also show how the popularity of an older area of settlement goes up with the resurgence of immigrants from South Asia. South Asian migrants dominate the working scenario of this central district in Johannesburg which has become an ethnic quarter. It is famously known as an 'Indian area' due to the overarching presence of Indian-Bangladeshi-Pakistani related trade and social life.

The primary aim of this chapter is not limited to presenting the history of Fordsburg and its connection with Indians alone. It will also provide insights into Fordsburg as a South Asian business hub, deriving stories of people from various backgrounds, professions and nationalities. Moving further, it will focus on the changing patterns of investment by newly arriving migrants from South Asia and how they contribute towards making Fordsburg an international centre for trade and tourism. This chapter will not look at the Oriental Plaza – the business hub of South Asians - on account of on-going research by (Rugunanan et al, 2012) on Oriental Plaza. I shall attempt to present the unknown stories hidden behind the labour force of Fordsburg. Each person that I interviewed possessed certain characteristics and I shall evaluate the consequences of their presence in Fordsburg. To engage with commonalities, I argue that one has to engage with historical facts in the light of contemporary incidents. Therefore, I have attempted to trace commonalities between the early Indian migrants of the nineteenth century and present day migrants. Along with South Asian immigrants another Asian group, the Chinese continues to influence and dominate the trading activities in central Johannesburg. Therefore, in order to understand how the Chinese compete with the South Asian presence, I present the case study of China malls close to Fordsburg. I use the testimonies of Fordsburg traders to elaborate on how the Chinese presence influences the local market.

Historical background of Indians in Fordsburg

The history of Fordsburg dates back to when the Langlaagte farm (about 5000 acres) was established and developed in the year 1888-89 by the private developers Lewis Peter Ford, a Londoner businessman and Julius Jeppe Senior by their company Fords and Jeppe Estate Company (Norwich, 1986: 103; Brink, 2008). Lewis Ford was an attorney-general in the Shepstone administration responsible for Transvaal. He was also involved with gold mining in Johannesburg.

In the Kaldiedoscopic Transvaal published in 1906 Norwich (1986) notes that not only Lewis Ford and Julius Jeppe but also Carl Jeppe that was involved in the formation of Fordsburg. Leyds (1964) however, credits only Lewis Ford and Julius Jeppe for the formation of townships as residential areas. These areas were eventually named after their founders as, Fordsburg and Jeppestown respectively (Leyds, 1964: 5, 152-3; Meiring, 1985: 94). Langlaagte means a "flat piece of land usually sloping down two hills" (Leyds, 1964: 5). Fordsburg started to be recognised by 1896 (See Fig. 3) but it was formally established in the year 1888 on the wide stretch of barren land of Langlaagte farm (Leyds, 1964: 153; Brink, 2008: 3). By 1887, a year before Fordsburg was being formally developed, Indians had already occupied the segregated 'Indian location' comprising the area between Malherbe, Malan, Location/Carr and Christian Streets (Brink, 2008: 3). The non-white population was concentrated in classified 'locations' such as the 'coolie location' for Indian, 'kaffir locations' for black Africans, and 'Malay locations' for the Cape Coloured (Parnell, 1991: 273; Carrim, 1990: 6; Brink, 1994). By 1893, the discovery of gold in the western part of Johannesburg attracted the poor sections of all races. Immigrants from Zululand, Basutoland, Pondoland, poor Afrikaners, eastern and southern European workers joined the working force of Johannesburg (Hyslop, 2008). Poor white immigrants from eastern Europe moved into Vrededorp, and Indians, coloureds and black Africans all lived mainly in the 'Indian Location' or on the low-lying swampy grounds along the Fordsburg Spruit (Brink, 2008: 8).

As the years passed and trade flourished in the Witwatersrand basin, there was a growing shortage of labour. Labour was brought in from England, Ireland and Australia to work in the mines (Norwich, 1986: 103; Ranger, 2012). Achille Mbembe describes the situation of Johannesburg in the early years of its formation. He writes that everyone from across the globe visited Witwatersrand to fulfil their dreams; for Europeans who were struggling to make ends

meet, Johannesburg as a city offered hopes of "easy and fast riches" for rich and poor who aspired to an "idealised lifestyle that surrendered unreservedly to the world of things – wealth, luxury, and display" (Mbembe, 2008: 40–41). Working class Europeans looked up to the lifestyles of their upper class countrymen. For example, in the Cape Colony, the white working men who were regarded as "lower classes" in Europe "[found] themselves in the aristocracy of colour" in South Africa (Katz in Ranger, 2012: 213). It was a "glamorous" change for migrants who continued to establish their supremacy by forming exclusive white unions advocating for their rights and excluding African mine workers (Ranger, 2012: 2014-5). By 1915, Fordsburg had become a mixed-race working class suburb attracting the English, Jews[13], Afrikaans, Lebanese, Chinese, Indians, Blacks, Coloured, and Afrikaans (Callinicos, 2012: 119; Norwich, 1986: 103; Ebrahim, 2005: 70). Fordsburg was located in a city where "everybody came from somewhere else" and in this land of "strangers" Indians had to grab the opportunity of developing trade (Hyslop, 2008: 122).

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[13] For account of Jews presence in Fordsburg, see Callinicos (2012: 119)

Figure 3. Map showing urban Johannesburg's segregated settlements, circa 1900 (Source: Parnell, 1991)
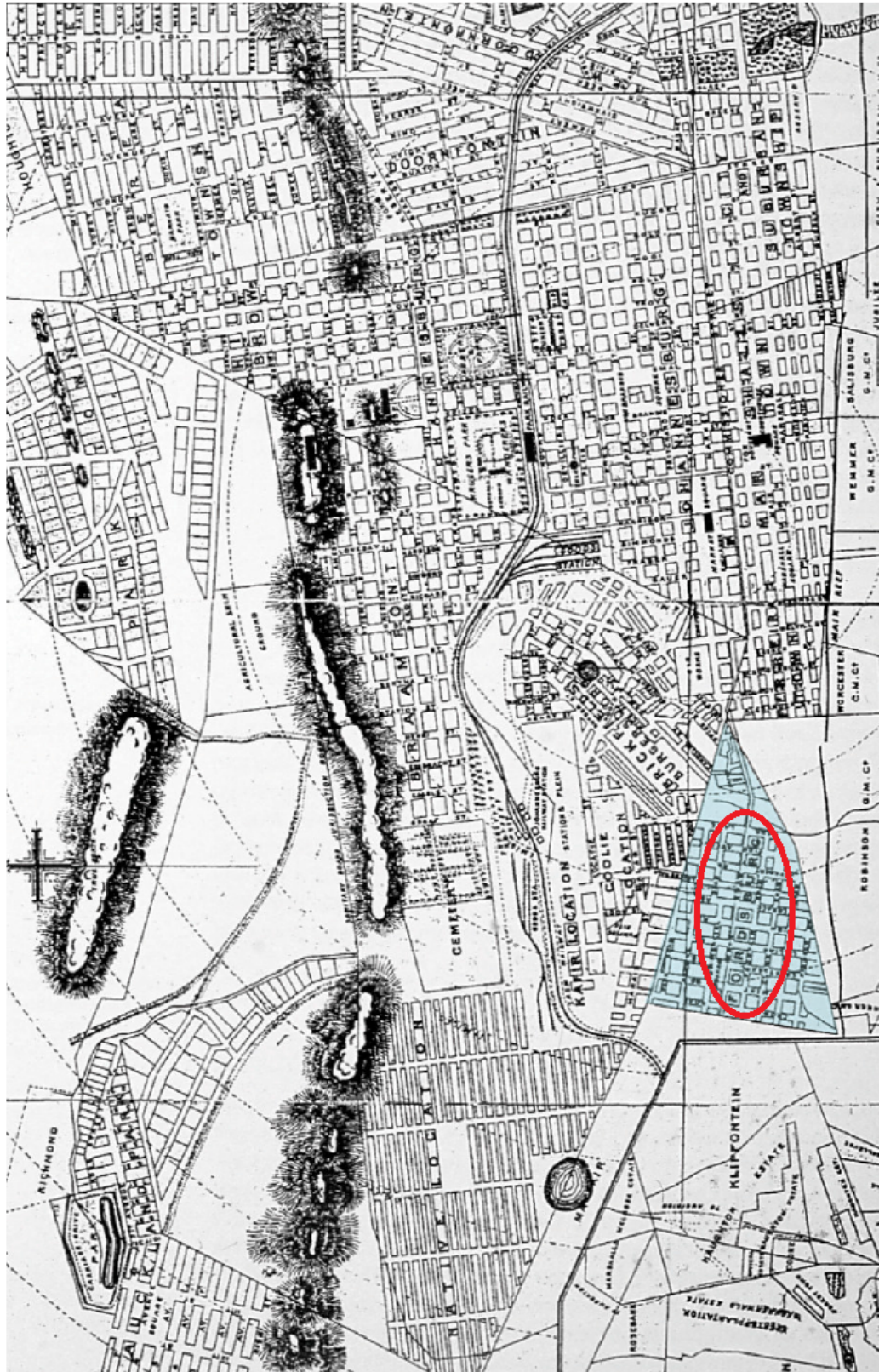
Figure 4. Map of Johannesburg in 1893 (Source: Toffahh, 2008)

The Langlaagte farm was extended to cover present day areas such as Fordsburg, Mayfair, Industria, Crown Mines, consolidated Main Reef road, Newclare and Sophiatown (Fig. 5) (Leyds, 1964: 5). Fordsburg area was located in the centre of gold mines surrounded by Robinson, Crown Mines and the Village Deep gold mines which were within walking distance from Fordsburg on the Langlaagte Farm. Mine workers chose to settle in Fordsburg area after plots were offered for sale from 1887 onwards by Lewis Ford (Norwich, 1986: 103). It was an open area with no restrictions placed on buyers. The buyer was free to use the area for any purpose, either for residence or trading (Leyds, 1964: 153; Norwich, 1986: 103). Sensing trade opportunities, Indian merchants along with their Chinese counterparts set up individual transport businesses of horse-drawn cabs in Fordsburg to transport the mine workers from Fordsburg to the nearby mines (Brink, 2008: 8). The distance between the work place and residential area was far and this problem had to be solved in order to save time for the workers. Hence, a common transport mechanism was proposed (Onselen, 1982: 164). In response to this, Indian traders saw the opportunity for an emerging enterprise in Witwatersrand and entered the transport business. This incident marks the beginning of Indian capital presence in Fordsburg and Indian traders were among the first of a few non-white pioneers who made Fordsburg a bustling business area. Most of the inhabitants of the coolie locations were engaged in hawking. A list was drawn up in 1898 to relocate the emerging Indian and Chinese traders in areas such as Fordsburg, Braamfontein and Jeppestown (Bhana and Brain, 1990: 85). Bhana & Brain's (1990: 84) study records the business capacity of the coolie location in 1897 as having accommodated 96 stands with an assessed value of 35, 951 pounds and a population of 4, 000.

After the discovery of gold and expansion of the urban geography of Witwatersrand into an industrial base, various capitalist enterprises engaged with the bustling town of Johannesburg

to meet the needs of over a quarter million inhabitants (Onselen, 1982: 163). Of them, Johannesburg City and Suburban Tramway Company was launched in the year 1891 by A.H. Nellmapius a confidant of Kruger. It was aimed to connect the growing parts of the neighbourhoods of Johannesburg with various work places in town. By 1986 the tramway started functioning between Jeppestown in the east to Fordsburg in the west. The tramway became a successful enterprise for entrepreneurs and petty bourgeois cab drivers. The arrival of the Natal railway to Witwatersrand in 1895; plagues of locust; droughts of 1896 in the post Anglo-Zulu war period forced Zulu men to migrate to the Witwatersrand to meet their needs.[14] This influx of the labour class into the city provided an additional burden as much as opportunity within the growing landscape of Johannesburg. During this period various transport related initiatives were undertaken by the government. The transport business gained prominence by including people from different races, cultural backgrounds and nationalities (Onselen, 1982: 173). They grew in large numbers uniting the cab owners under the Cab Owners' Association that often petitioned the government to meet their demands. Fordsburg was the centre for cab related activities (Onselen, 1982: 175). Along with Indians, other non-white races that participated in the transport cab business were black, coloured, and Chinese businessmen. But the majority of the cab owners were whites who also dominated the cab owners' association (Ibid).

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[14] "Anglo-Zulu Wars 1879-1896," http://www.sahistory.org.za/south-africa-1806-1899/anglo-zulu-wars-1879-1896 accessed 06 March, 2015
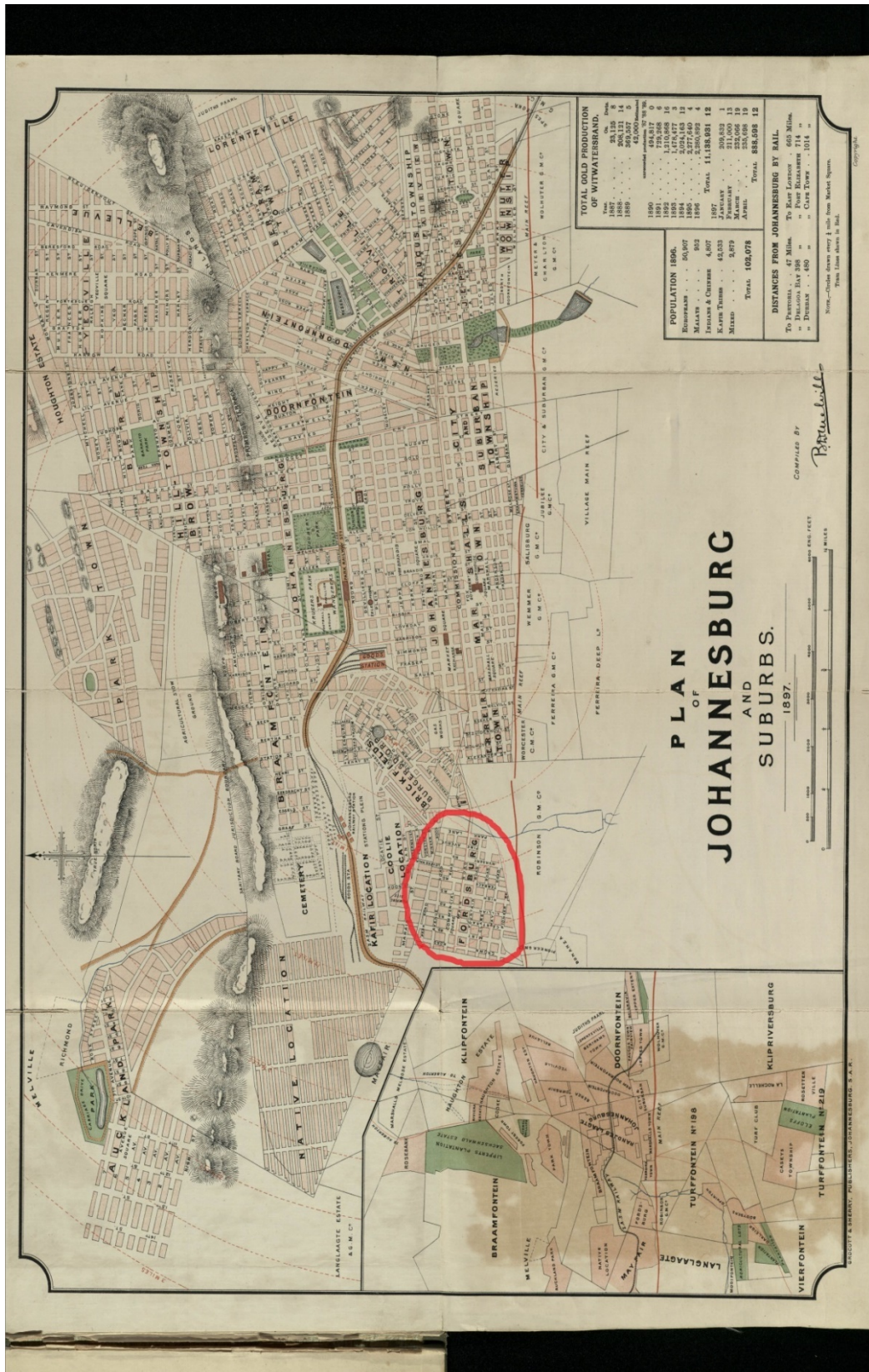
Figure 5. Fordsburg was already made a part of Johannesburg city in 1896-97 (Source: Melville, B, W, *Plan of Johannesburg and suburbs, 1898 Class No. G 8504.J6.1897*)
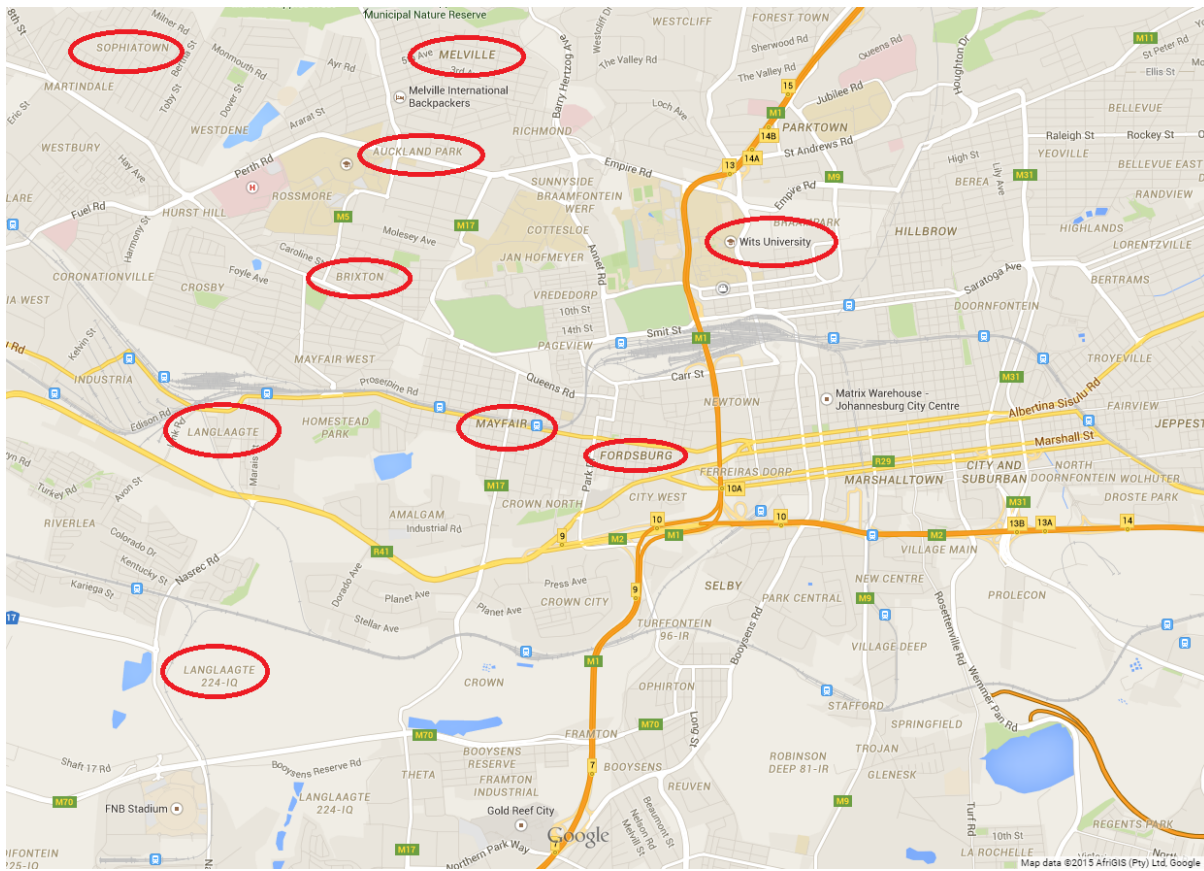
Figure 6. Langlaagte farm as seen in the present day context (Source: Google maps)

Indian labour and capital in Fordsburg

Over the years, Transvaal witnessed dramatic incidents which affected Indian trading activities in Fordsburg. The two Anglo-Boer wars (1880–1881 and 1889–1902) took place towards the end of the nineteenth century. During the second Anglo Boer war (1899-1902) the population of Indians in the area dropped from 5000 to only 600 (Lamont, 1980). After the end of the war, in two years' time, about 1600 returned to the Indian Location. Most of them were hawkers and peddlers who came from Burghersdorp, Fordsburg and Vrededorp and were mainly Gujarati Hindus. The Gujarati Muslims and Memons were traders who started operating stores in these areas by 1904. A medical report surveying the Indian concentration in Fordsburg indicated that 216 Indians were living in the area (Lamont, 1980: 6). They established themselves as "small traders, hawkers,

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labourers, shopkeepers, market gardeners, hotel workers and domestic servants" which meant that typically any job available was taken up by the Indian community (Lamont, 1980: 4). In the year 1904 there was an outbreak of plague in the 'coolie location.' The 'coolie location' was "deliberately" set on fire and all the 1600 buildings, houses and a temple were destroyed (Parnell, 1991: 274; Phillips, 2013).[15] Following this destruction the area was redeveloped and named as New Town. New Town later became home to small and larger Indian owned businesses like the Mia group who had a portfolio of hawking in the 1890s; wholesale business by 1924 and by 1977, the Witwatersrand Gold Mining Company in 1977 (Brink, 2008: 6–7). In the coming years, the erstwhile 'Indian location' of 1887 later merged with Fordsburg making it an area of Indian concentration.

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[15] Howard Philips has undertaken an archival study of the plague incident. His unpublished paper, "Mahatma Gandhi in the Plague-Spotlight" (2013) details the scenario of coolie location during the early twentieth century. How the incident of plague was reported by the colonisers, and how local Indian leaders responded to the incident is elaborated in this study. For more on this also see, Swan (1985), Peberdy (2009).

Figure 7. Proposed land on which Fordsburg area was to be built ca. 1870 (Source: *MuseumAfrica* PH2013-210)

The numbers of Indian traders in Johannesburg increased after the influx of 'passenger' Indians in 1870 in Natal.[16] Passenger Indians were mostly entrepreneurs who came to South Africa to meet the growing needs of indentured immigrants (Hiralal, 2007: 99; Ebr.-Vally, 2001). In the case of indentured labour, after the expiration of their indenture term, if they wanted to enter Transvaal they were referred as "traders who were free from the fetters of servitude" (Rai, 1984: 45). Their entry into the new province was safeguarded by the much debated Pretoria Convention, 1881, and the London Convention, 1884 that protected their rights to immigrate, trade, own property, residence and taxation under the Laws of Transvaal. The President of the Transvaal Republic, Kruger affirmed separate protection to the British subjects and complete freedom to

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[16] Passenger Indians was the second phase of Indian immigration to South Africa. These were the ones who paid their own passage and were different from the indentured labourers. They were merchant class who came with the intention to trade in South Africa. For more on this see, Huttenback, R, *Gandhi in South Africa* (New York, Cornell University Press, 1971), Pillay, B, *British Indians in the Transvaal Trade, Politics and Imperial Relations, 1885-1906* (London, Longman Group, 1976)

trade (Ibid). This assurance confirmed protection of Indians rights, especially the right to religion, own property, travel within South Africa, and to hire or possess big industrial manufactories, ware-houses, and shops.[17] This was a unique opportunity offered to Indians which resulted in the immigration of members of the merchant class to South Africa. Indian merchants travelled to the Transvaal aiming to set up branches of their businesses back home. Of the Indian owned companies in Natal, M C Camrooden and Company which was owned by Mohabbat Cassim Camrooden, Abdul Kadir and Abdul Gani had expanded to the central region of Transvaal creating more opportunities of trade. Abdul Gani who then went to Transvaal spent most of the time with Habib and collectively they dominated Indian politics in the Transvaal until 1909 (Swan 1985: 8). To name a few prominent figures, Dawd Mohabbat reversed the usual order by starting off in the Transvaal instead of Natal. He became a partner of Abubakr Amod's branch in Potchefstroom (Swan, 1985: 7). Apart from trade, intelligent Gujarati clerks, mostly Hindus, were famous all over the Indian Ocean for their efficient management of trade and administrative tasks (Pearson, 2003: 133; Hiralal, 2007).[18] Some of them joined the trading space of Fordsburg to make more profits. Swan's study accounts that the total profits derived from Transvaal Indian trade in 1904 was approximately £69,713.[19]

The shift of Indian trade from Natal to Transvaal was reported in the early decade of the twentieth century.[20] Gandhi who later became a well-known leader of the Indian merchant class

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[17] Pretoria Convention allowed full rights to Indian immigrants' "right to residence, trade and property." London Convention under Article IX ensured right to freedom or religion, property. It furthermore entitled Indians under the Article XIV the right "to enter, travel and reside freely in South Africa and to hire or possess houses, manufactories, ware-house, shops and premises." Rai (1984: 45)

[18] For more on the Indian Ocean trade and Indian Gujarati connection, see, Pearson, M N., *The Indian Ocean* (London: Routledge, 2003)

[19] Swan (1985: 8) fn. TABA, Lt. G. 96/91/2/2, Table D

[20] Rights of Indian traders in Transvaal was recognized in the Article 26 of Pretoria Convention, 1881 section (a) to (e) which manifested the rights of Indians as the British subject be respected throughout Transvaal. This signifies the identification of Indian merchant class by the British government

sought to lead the national campaign against the discriminatory laws and held strikes for equal rights of Indian traders, hawkers and shopkeepers. The apartheid era and the Group Areas Act of 1950 put a considerable amount of restrictions on growth, expansion and diversification of the trade that Indians operated in (Tomaselli, 1983: 219). Hence, the areas that were offered to Indian tradesmen later became to be known as 'Indian areas'. These Indian areas in Johannesburg were limited to Fordsburg, Mayfair, Lenasia and a small portion of the CBD (Bawa, 2006: 169). From 1990 onwards Fordsburg became a recognised Indian area for Indian tradesmen and shop owners. Businessmen removed from the 14th Street of 'Pageview' were relocated to Fordsburg. One can conclude from these various studies that Fordsburg eventually became an exclusively 'Indian area', that offered Indians and as well as the European customers with exotic Indian products.

During the Group Areas Act, Fordsburg was also considered for evictions under the Act like those in 'Fietas' (Pageview).[21] It was in force due to the stiff competition[22] that white business faced from Indian competitors (Pillay, 1976: 2). A common fear that all whites across the country shared was that they would lose their trade to the Indians (Carrim, 2013). Hansen (2012) provides Durban's account of anti-Indian trade sentiment which mobilised wealthy Indian communities to fight against the prevalent racist laws. Similarly, in Johannesburg, the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC) led by Yusuf Dadoo led the protest against forceful evictions of Indians. The TIC argued that the Group Areas Act threatened the very existence of Indians in South Africa. Struggling over these years Fordsburg strived to maintain its own unique identity in Johannesburg's expanding industrial and vibrant manufacturing sectors. Carrim's study shows, 'the obvious changes that

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[21] Pageview is a neighborhood adjacent to Fordsburg which was a segregated area for Indians it was dominated by the Indian traders since 1940. For more on this see, Carrim (1990)

[22] European business class always saw Indian trade as a threat to their business, and it was not only during 1950s Group Area Act that they raised concerns. In 1884 the European traders claimed in their petition to President Kruger that Indian traders monopolized the retail trade in the areas around Pretoria and Johannesburg, which eventually was denied by Indian traders. But the submission of petition (SS 5938/84) by the Pretoria Chamber of Commerce in 1884 points to the fact of Indian trade influence in Johannesburg.

Fordsburg underwent, in a way that was noticeable to even the most uncaring passer-by' (Carrim, 1990: 147). In spite of the forcible removals of Indians to a township 'Lenasia' about 30 km from Johannesburg in 1960s, Fordsburg stood firm as a business centre. Patel (1989) underlines the 'consistent creativity' and 'sheer determination' of Indian traders in sustaining the prosperity of trade in Fordsburg.

Figure 8. Present day view of Fordsburg landscape (Source: Toffah, 2008)

History of the flea market

The history of the flea market can be traced to the miner's strike of 1922. Fordsburg was a stronghold of the mining unions which facilitated the meetings and gatherings of the workers. It was then, as it is now, known as Market Square (Toffah, 2008). In the fight between the

government forces and the mine workers, Market Square was used as a training centre for the mine workers (Brink, 2008). Jan Smuts' government used bombing and mortars to quell the revolt. Market Square along with the neighbouring areas was completely destroyed and since then it was left unattended by the government (Fig. 10). Almost after 70 years, the National Monument Council and Town Planning department took the initiative to preserve the historical infrastructure. Hence, they approached the local tradesmen to rejuvenate the area and bring in shoppers to make it a crowded business area as it was during 1920s and earlier. The first person to take up the challenge was Salaudeen (Dino) Badroodin famously known as 'Salman bhai' who owned a *halal* franchise restaurant – Steers – to accommodate Muslim customers of the nearby area in 1994. It was very popular as there was no *halal* restaurant in the nearby areas that provided western style food for the local Muslim community.

Figure 9. A crowded glimpse of Market Square during one of the working days. It was an important location for trade activities. In this picture the horse drawn cart trade is seen booming with customers ca. 1902 (Source: *MuseumAfrica* MA2006-4456)

Figure 10. After effects of the Miner's strike during 1922 which was famously known as "The Great Rebellion" or "The Red Revolt" or "The Rand Rebellion." P. McIntosh a grocery store seen in the picture was looted (Source: MuseumAfrica MA PH2006-10)

Salman was offered the mandate to start the flea market on Market square which had become a haven for the homeless, and was known locally as 'Hobo Park' (Ostrowick, 2010).[23] The tender was initially offered to his relative who projected a revenue of 4,500 Rand per month to the government whereas Salman estimated it more conservatively at R 1,500 per month. The flea market was initially started in 1994 but did not do well and ended up owing 15,000 Rand in debt to the council. His relative proposed that Salman take over the flea market. Salman had to take on all the responsibilities of flea market including the debts. He says, "...even before I took over the charge of flea market I owed 15,000 Rand debt." He accepted the offer with a 10 years' lease. Developing the area was a major task, so Salman invited various traders to establish their stalls at a rent of 70 Rand per week. Traders did not find it attractive so they did not show any interest in

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[23] Concept of the Flea market was brought in South Africa by the Bruma Lake Flea market that operated in the Cape Town. It was located in a low income area which offered goods at cheaper prices. - Extract from the interview with Salman, 16 December, 2012. For more on this see, Ostrowick (2010)

the market. Salman then came up with another offer to attract the traders to the flea market. He offered space in the flea market to run businesses free of cost for a month as a trial expecting traders to show up; but again, no one turned up. Salman continued to pay the monthly rent to the council until the expiration of his contract; he ran the flea market paying for the vacant piece of land. His motivation behind accepting the offer was to renovate the area and preserve the historical importance of the flea market.

Salman planned to build a hotel that would accommodate Indians who travelled to Johannesburg from other parts of South Africa and elsewhere. He wanted to make it a 'Little India' but his plans did not convince other investors, who dissociated themselves from the plan for investing in the flea market. Maintaining it as a heritage site was another option but with the change in the apartheid government the issue of heritage itself became a contentious one, and all the plans were abandoned.[24] The post-apartheid government of Johannesburg City was not interested in maintaining the historical sites as a heritage that was related to the white past. This curtailed the renovation of the flea market, claims Salman. Salman saw the flea market as an area of significant political importance, economically viable and as a tourist site. Elsewhere in the world wherever Indian diaspora established its business in small ethnic enclaves it became known as Little India. Most of the time it was a self-acquired identity by the Indians to separate from other business areas; whereas in some cases the government took interest in renaming the Indian enclaves as 'Little India,' for touristic and historical importance. Singapore's 'Little India' is a national asset that upholds the rights of Indian traders and residents (Chang, 2000: 351). In Johannesburg too, during the 1970s, Oriental Plaza was one such site that was exclusively reserved for Indians making it a destination for Indian trade and a tourist attraction bringing diversity to the urban

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[24] Interview with Salman, 16 December, 2012

landscape (Rhodes-Harrison, et al, 1968). But in the contemporary context there is no such effort

visible on the part of government.

Figure 11. Singapore's Little India (Source: Authors photograph, February 2016)

Figure 12. A business location inside Little India resonates with the flea market of Fordsburg (Source: Authors photograph, February 2016)

Emergence of the flea market

From 2000 onwards restaurants, grocery stores and barber shop owners started taking interest in Fordsburg. The flea market (or Fordsburg square) started attracting crowds in the thousands for reasons I will address in a short while. *Halaal* food along with Bollywood entertainment CDs and clothing were sold at affordable prices.[25] As a result shop owners started employing migrant labourers from South Asia; because these labourers offered different tastes, services and versatile haircuts. This drove many local South African Indian communities to Fordsburg.[26] After the

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[25] Growing interest of Bollywood in South African Indian as well as non-Indian communities is explained by Hansen (2012), chapter 6. He places a Bollywood production *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* produced in 1998 that brought the idea Indian identity to the South African Indians. Drawing from various experiences he elaborates on the increased love amongst Indian communities towards Bollywood. Hence, in order to meet the demands and needs of the growing interest, migrant

labourers chose to enter this venture. They started pirating the DVDs and CDs to supply to the demand in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg. On account of pirated DVDs business and its importance and viability among immigrant communities elsewhere, see Harney's (2007; 2013) ethnographic work on the immigrants in south Italy where, immigrants mostly undertake selling the pirated DVD and CDs business due to its easy returns and limited admin work to set up the shop.

[26] Mohabbat is CEO of IT Company in Fordsburg that provides IT solutions to almost all shops in Fordsburg and surrounding area catering Indian and Somali customers in Fordsburg. Interview, December, 2012

expiration of the initial lease in 2004, Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) along with the National Monument Council and Town Planning took charge of the flea market. The then Mayor of Johannesburg city, Amos Masondo, proposed an inner city upgrade over a period of five years and a separate budget was allocated for each area. Fordsburg was included this plan. There was research conducted which Brink (2008) was part of as a heritage architect. Mint Road along with its flea market was also under this plan.[27] The city council's interest, it can be argued, was due to the result of growing numbers of traders in the flea market that attracted crowd in thousands.

A governing committee of local businessmen was formed that liaised between the government and traders. Local traders along used local political pressure and lobbied to create a permanent sheltered market space. JDA proposed to make it a public open space that would be accessible to the general public. Dinath, a planning manager at the JDA says that according to global quality standards, there needs to be a certain amount of public open spaces in any city. So JDA was pushing to make it a public open space too. However, one of the conditions of having a public open space was to make it 30% covered and have the rest open. Metropolitan Trading Company (MTC) decided to continue with the plan and make a retractable roof which could be covered and uncovered as the need arose. This led to a large expense of about 9 million Rand, according to the local trading community. Stalls of three by two metres were offered to the traders of the flea market at a rent of 400 Rand per month, they maintain the same rate even today. It is now known as Johannesburg Property Committee; an arm of the government. Today the flea market attracts visitors from all over the world and accommodates over 100 traders, 20 shops and

[27] Interview, Dinath, October 2014

106 stalls[28] with a diverse range of businesses from clothing, jewellery, food, DVDs, fresh vegetables, electronic items, toiletries and cosmetics.

Various respondents estimated that the income generated from the stalls was probably on the higher side and these figures may be taken as indicative of the optimism of the traders rather than an accurate figure. It is estimated that each stall makes approximately a few thousand Rand during the weekends which adds up to a total collection of some hundred thousand Rand every weekend in the flea market alone. There is no formal account of the revenue generated in the flea market. This is because it is an informal economy, that combines irregular, illegal, undocumented and under-reported forms of earnings that is often 'off the books'. (Harney, 2004). This form of economy is "unregulated or unprotected by the state" and does not necessarily follow the "institutional norms and rules" (Harney, 2004: 314). Actual revenue and output cannot be ascertained with any degree of accuracy due to a certain closed, secretive atmosphere among the community of businesspersons in the flea market.[29] The businesses that run over the boundaries of the flea market also benefit from the pool of customers pouring into the area. The flea market operates only on the weekends since the stall owners work elsewhere during the weekdays. It is a common practice among newly arrived migrants who already have a job to take up a stall in the flea market. Many success stories originated in the flea market as I realised in the course of interviews. When a young Gujarati man Imaan came to work in a clothing factory as a tailor in 2006, he saw the opportunity to trade as a hawker on the streets outside flea market. Within months

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[28] These numbers are as on the 14th March 2015. Apparently there has been an increase in the stalls over the course of a year. The stalls vary in sizes some have a three by four meter some have less and some have more depending upon the negotiated space with the council.

[29] I was asked by one of the leaders of the business community in the flea market to show the manuscript of this chapter. After reading it, he expressed his strong objection about the estimated figures that I mentioned. He wanted to avoid the discussion on the revenue of the flea market, instead asked me to delete the whole paragraph due to its "vague" estimates. When asked how much it is, he declined to answer the question. This insecurity among the businesspersons of the flea market is due to the anxiety generated by the overwhelming response of the customers. After spending a weekend in the flea market observing the trading, one can easily guess that there is a handsome revenue generated with no/limited formal accounting system to record the activities.

of hawking he got a shop inside the flea market, and after a while, he owned a stall in the flea market. Today he runs a clothes shop in the Fordsburg area, along with the flea market stall on the weekends.[30]

The credit of introducing the flea market to the world goes to Salman who managed to attract crowds through providing a familiar space for families to hang out; he could not succeed because it was a one-man show. In the later years, however, it became well known as "Little India" (Nagel, 2011), a fulfilment of Salman's dream. The reason why Metropolitan Trading Company succeeded as opposed to Salman's earlier efforts is due to the following reasons - fellow traders did not find it interesting because of the overarching presence of Oriental Plaza and there was lack of a work force. During the years following 1994, when South Africa was still in transition, the work force was still not as large as it is today. This means Metropolitan Trading Company could succeed not because of its strategic arrangement but because of its timely presence. From the year 2000 onwards, South Africa witnessed large volume of immigrants from South Asia visiting Fordsburg. This work force later settled in Johannesburg to work in the flea market. Therefore, we see the flea market's success lies in the contribution of the migrants from South Asia. Salman could not get people as easily as the MTC. Moreover, the MTC could reconfigure the existing space so that it adapted to government policies, fine tune the regulations and re-invest for a larger benefit. Arguably, MTC's efforts could not have been successful without the migrants' untiring efforts.

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[30] Interview Imaan, February, 2013

Figure 13. Johannesburg City Heritage inaugurated a plaque outside Flea Market to commemorate the "Battle of Fordsburg Square 14 March 1922." It suggests that Fordsburg continues to be a politicised space. Since the early days of its formation it was centre to the political scene of Johannesburg (Source: Author's photograph, November 2013)
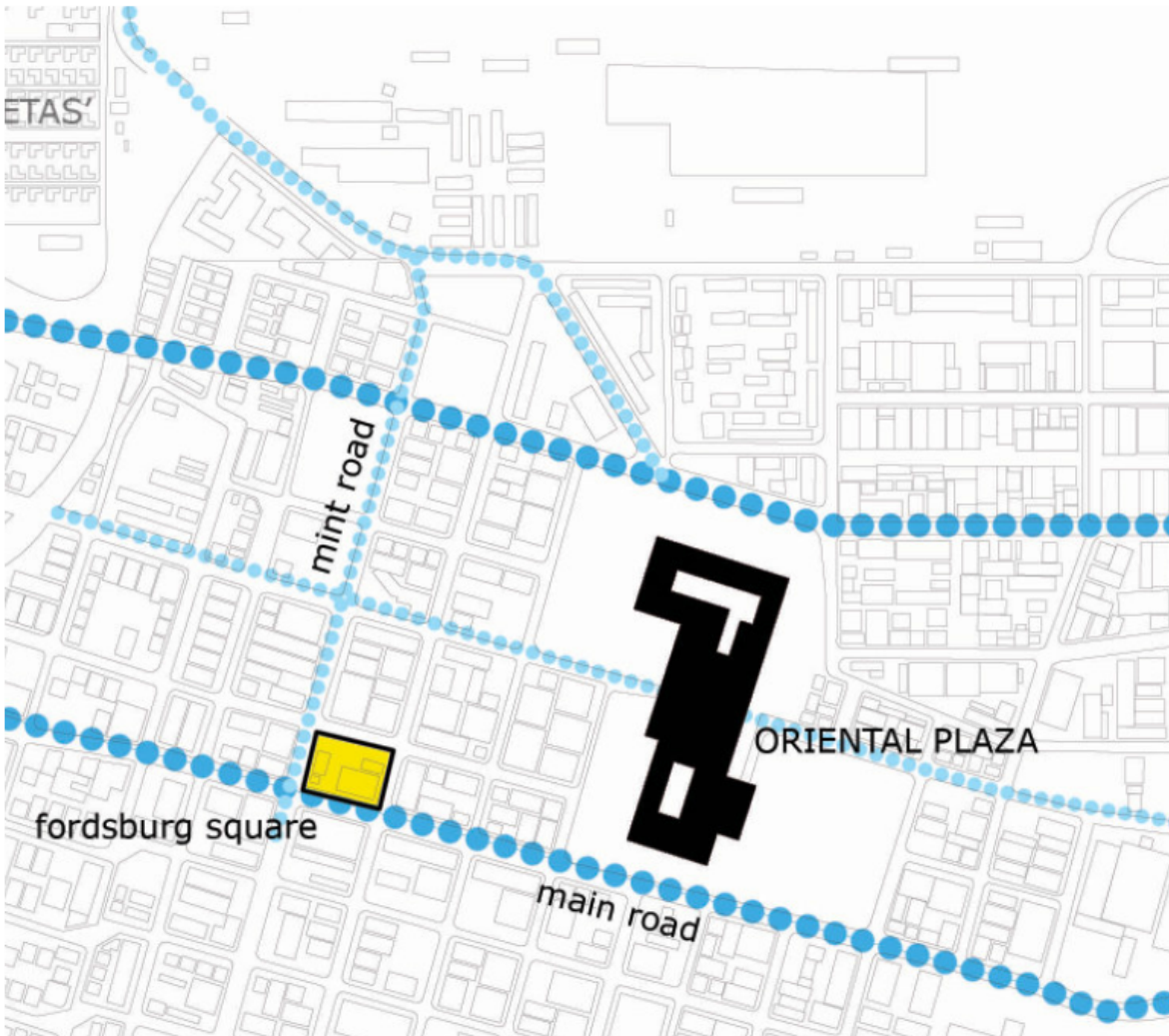
Figure 14. Fordsburg Square which is also known as the Flea Market (Source: Toffah, 2008)

New migrants coming in, what does it mean for Fordsburg?

This section will provide detailed information on the role of migrants in Fordsburg and a critique of the literature on the immigration of labour migrants. Prior to 1994, there was no opportunity for Indian migrants to come to South Africa (SA). The Indian government opposed apartheid and this led to a cessation of diplomatic relations between the two countries (McCann, 2010). After 1994 the laws were relaxed and that gave a sense of freedom of movement throughout South Africa.

Not all the migrants that came to South Africa came of their own volition or with an ambition to do well in South Africa. Their first choice was Europe, America or the Middle East

and not South Africa. However, seeing the opportunity in the newly opened economy they entered different sectors and gathered enough capital to start businesses of their own in Johannesburg. As news of success stories started to spread back home, more migrants started following their predecessors and Fordsburg became a migrant hub for Johannesburg. The businesses owned by locals initially were entirely dependent on the local Indians first as customers, but with the growing population of migrants the businesses began to accommodate other migrants' needs as well. For instance, the restaurants initially catered to the South African Indian taste but soon there was an increasing attempt to accommodate the tastes of migrants. The food was usually not fusion food but an indigenous taste of "being hot": a variety of spices and vegetables or meat cooked together. This trend of catering to recent migrants is visible in other businesses also such as, clothing, cosmetics, barbershops, etc. Salman claims the population of migrants in Fordsburg is 10 times that of the locals. Many locals have left the place after the end of apartheid policies, as they now had the right to own properties wherever they like. Almas, for example grew up in his ancestral home in Fordsburg. His ancestors arrived as traders during the early twentieth century formation of Fordsburg. Almas had to attend Fordsburg Primary School due to the imposed apartheid legislations. Post 1994 his family along with their neighbours moved out of the area and settled in wealthier areas of Johannesburg such as Sandton, Houghton, Parktown, Rosebank, etc.

Migrants brought diverse trading ideas to Fordsburg (chapter 6); it made Fordsburg a vibrant business community that attracted various customers from different parts of the world. "Fordsburg would not have been what it is today," says Mohabbat, a local South African Indian businessman who is witness to the Fordsburg economic transformation since mid-1990s.[31]

> As 80-90% of population in flea market and Fordsburg consists of migrants, and many of them have brought value to the area. A stall is rented for 400 Rand according to the current

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[31] Interview, December 2012.

government figures. However, if a new trader wants to run a stall in flea market he has to pay almost 50-70 % more than the actual amount which goes up to a few thousand Rand.[32]

The upward movement in the price of properties and products was due to the significant contribution of migrants. Salman recalls the days when there were just a few restaurants in Fordsburg and the available restaurants were flooded with customers. Seeing this opportunity, the migrants entered the food business. They specialised in in South Asian flavours by offering food from various regions of the sub-continent, e.g. North Indian, South Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi cuisines. Today there are about 30-50 restaurants in a 500 sq.m. radius alone. Or, take the example of barber shops. In the late 1990s there were 3 shops in Fordsburg, but in just 5 years this number has increased to 20-30 shops in every corner of Fordsburg "providing varieties of options for the customers giving free head massage after the haircut and shaving for a bare amount of thirty rand," says Mohabbat. This was a new and widely accepted concept for South African customers. The important thing to note among these newly established shops is that most of the shops which are functioning today are run by migrants who in a short period of 10 years' time have started their own businesses: whether restaurants, barber shops, grocery shops or "cosmetic parlours." Fordsburg is an active trading area with a distinct trading style that involves bargaining, and therefore the availability of cheaper goods as compared to other areas. It is open round the clock to accommodate professional classes who cannot shop during office hours, and runs on weekends, holidays and late hours.

Clash of cultures and its consequences

Despite all the benefits there is an emerging clash between migrants and locals of Fordsburg, sometimes assuming cultural dimensions which create friction in day-to-day business activities.

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[32] Interview with Mohabbat, December, 2012, Fordsburg

The migrants working in stalls are mostly undocumented and do not have the necessary work permits. They have either entered through the neighbouring country's borders or have visited the country on a tourist visa but never returned or 'overstayed.' On arrival most of them seek refugee status, work through existing connections in government offices or through agents that help them in getting the refugee status without much effort (chapter 5). Hence, due to the unavailability of proper documents migrants find their capacity to expand into the formal sector limited. Instead they continue working in informal sector and remain undocumented for a long time. Many migrants have bettered their professional lives but their presence remains undocumented. No government authority has statistical knowledge of these illegal migrants who are helping to run the country's economy.

Flea market renting scandals are well known too. Rumours surround the area that initially a trader rented a stall in flea market on a minimum rent of 400 Rand per month rent. But today most of the tenants whose names are on the government's list do not actually run the stall but they are run by someone else instead, either by their relatives or familial contacts. This has happened due to the growing influence of migrants who, along with their abilities, have brought more competition to the area. This has made the original tenant sell their rented stalls to other interested traders occasionally, at prices reportedly ranging from 80-100,000 Rand. The system of *pagri*, or advance payment as deposit, has been introduced which is a 'sub-continental' way of doing business wherein the new tenant is asked to deposit a certain amount and then run the business. This has affected the local market according to one of the local Indian businessmen, who says, "there was no system of *pagri* earlier; it was easy way to rent property."[33] There is a fear in South Africa of this system becoming mainstream. *Pagris* are possible because migrants are dealing with

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[33] Imran, December, 2012

other migrants who share similar practices creating a sub-economy bordering on illegality. Another issue is that the properties are sub-let, up to three degrees. The property originally belongs to someone; it is rented to a second person who sub-lets to a third person. For example, Latish, an Indian immigrant from Gujarat in his early 40s runs a shop which is sub-let from an Indian who had rented the property from Main Central Properties. So the shops run by migrants do not belong to them, but are sub-let on various degrees.

The issue of sanitation standards is another contentious one with the local community. In the early years, the traders in the flea market and elsewhere in Fordsburg left their garbage in the market at the end of the day. "The shabby look of Fordsburg is a major contribution of foreigners who carry the business standards from home and refrain from maintaining personal responsibilities." This is a grievance of the local business community of Fordsburg. Hence, "the locals avoid their commute to Fordsburg due to sanitation," says Imran, an elderly committee member. Initially, Salman says,

> "There was a control over the flea market as it belonged to one specific person. If there was some complaint from the locals about loud music, it was controlled immediately as there was someone regulating the rules of flea market. But after the governments' takeover it has totally become an uncontrollable area. Because there is a committee appointed to look into the affairs of the market, and this committee consists of members who are traders themselves and to come to a final decision takes a long time, because everyone has his own interest."[34]

Imran has a shop in the flea market since the market began. He says,

> "Most of the times we are not considered as an authority because these migrants have brought their own ways to get the things done and hence our control over them remains partially enforceable."[35]

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[34] Salman, December, 2012
[35] Imran, December, 2012

There are other issues that led to conflict between the locals and migrants. During the mid-2000s migrants started getting married to local girls. Although it was a regular trend, it was sometimes not acceptable as some migrants married only to get their papers. After getting the necessary legal documents they escaped leaving their pregnant wives behind and creating resentment among South African Indians. Some of these migrants were already married back home but they married in South Africa too just to get their legal papers. It was difficult to keep track of undocumented migrants. In one instance, Imran recalls, a local wealthy merchant opened up a new shop for the Pakistani youth who had promised to marry his daughter. After the marriage the man escaped leaving his pregnant wife and with heavy losses in business. They could not track him as there was no evidence of his coming to South Africa. He had entered without informing either government, crossing the borders illegally. Park and Rugunanan (2010: 18) in their study on the Asian immigrant communities in South Africa also reported similar experiences. A Pakistani informant admitted of such instances of "stealing a local woman" only for the documents and later abandoning them.

Another conflict arose around the sense of nationalism that was strong among the local businessmen. They all had long term plans with regard to the investment and future of their business that contributed to the overall welfare of their families and the country as a whole. Salman, for instance, focused on rejuvenating the Fordsburg area and maintaining the heritage attached to Fordsburg. Newly arrived migrants do not relate to these ideas as they have no connection with the history of South Africa. Furthermore, when it comes to the welfare of community as a whole, migrants seem to distance themselves, as they are not South Africans. They do not affiliate with any national policies that govern them; hence they take risks putting national interest in danger. Imran says, "these migrants ultimately do not contribute equally to the national

economy as they do to their home economy, because their ultimate aim is to make the money and send it back home, so they do whatever they can to get things done irrespective of means." There is no policy among the migrant traders regarding the creation of jobs, opening up the market, considering business with local manufacturers and sustaining the economy within the community which was true 10 years ago. "Now there is no such arrangement among the traders," says Salman.

Salman was more concerned about preserving the area and making it a global attraction by inviting tourists and providing them with Indian goods. But his ideas were not entertained; the flea market which was supposed to be a public space is no more a public space where families can come and relax. Initially when he had the ownership, he maintained the balance between trade and the family leisure space. Migrants are perceived as having brought their culture, religion, sectarian differences, ways of life, bribery and adaptability into Fordsburg's climate. Locals say bribery was seldom visible during the days of apartheid era, because they claim, they were brought up in a very strict environment and the apartheid era made them more sensitive about such issues, but the new batch of migrants do not give a second thought to the paying of bribes. Locals say they would never think of doing it, as they see it as foolhardy. They are used to living within the laws that monitor their activities. The present regime lacks an appropriate control over the immigrants. The phenomenon of corruption goes hand in hand with everyday negotiations of immigrants from South Asia. Experiences of dealing with corruption in India were an asset for the migrants to get over the system of dealing with bureaucracy. Developing certain relations with the immigration officials, wholesalers, home affairs department, renting stalls from the city council which otherwise requires a lengthy and hectic bureaucracy to go through - corrupt practices helped them adapt to and overcome these to secure their own interests.

In addition, youths coming from orthodox backgrounds in the sub-continent carry sectarian animosities with them. An elderly local says there was initially no difference among themselves despite belonging to different sects, castes and religions but after the introduction of democracy these new migrants have come with a different concept taught to them back home which was never known to locals in their whole life. Although these differences are in the minds of the youth but it does not take the form of violence as in India, Pakistan or Bangladesh and he says "sadly it has arrived and will continue." In some instances, migrants and locals do not go to each other's mosques.

In spite of these differences and the clash of cultural ideologies, there is still a strong bond between the locals and the migrants. Locals see a parallel between the struggle of present day youth and that of their forefathers, who faced similar situations. Imran says migrants come from extremely poor families and probably have no means of livelihood back home. Local South African Indians have sympathy for their situation, and help them in getting the jobs and establishing links. When asked if they would encourage the migrants to come to South Africa, and whether they would help the migrants in getting jobs after arrival, all the established businessmen locals and migrants said they would definitely encourage and help them in getting jobs in South Africa. This meant that at the end of the day despite on-going problems between the migrants and the locals there is a sense of empathy towards these newly arriving migrants. It must be understood that migration in this context is a phenomenon of growing solidarity towards each other. Migration is understood as a process; those now settled here were once migrants too. South African Indians do not seem to forget their identity and remember their origin despite four-five generations of discontinued contact with India. There are many assumptions that might arise with this notion of being a migrant in a settled society. Migration here is understood as the influx of Indians who are

looking for a better life and job. This reason is similar to that of the locals' ancestors' reason for migration, and hence we see newly arriving migrants are received with a sense of affection. Indian migrants over the years will still see themselves as migrants. The self-adopted position of being a migrant creates solidarity for newly arriving migrants coming from India. However, another reason that strongly influences locals are favourable opinions which is due to the inter-dependency on the trade relations and economic prosperity brought by the migrants (chapter 6).

Familial connections

Most of the people that come to Fordsburg are in one way or the other related to someone in South Africa. The interviews that I undertook were with those who had already established contacts in Johannesburg. Migrants admit that these contacts helped to generate more contacts and also helped in handling issues of loneliness and home sickness. When asked about familial connections and their importance, Mohabbat said most of the local Indian traders in Fordsburg are linked to India in spite of them being fourth-generation South Africans. When they visit India they try to look for the possibilities of jobs and business in South Africa for their relatives to give them a better life than in India. "It is in our nature to help family members" he says, "If any of my relatives need my recommendation or help in setting up business in South Africa I would definitely help him." He adds that in the past 20 years he has helped 20 relatives by settling them in South Africa. There is a diverse network of connections in the Indian family system. There are immediate in-laws, siblings' in-laws, cousins, distant relatives that still maintain contact with each other; this helps the movement of people to South Africa. South African Indian locals encourage fellow Indian relatives to set up business and help them in getting jobs in South Africa. Mohabbat says, "If my relative needs a job and he is new in South Africa I would happily take him in my shop to work

until he finds a suitable one."[36] This is done across Fordsburg. When migrants arrive with the already established contacts, they are hosted by their relatives/ friends/ acquaintances who offer them food and accommodation until they find jobs for themselves. The first few days spent at relatives'/friend's house are spent recovering from the stress of the journey. Internet and telephones are offered to make regular contacts back home until migrants get a phone connection for him/ herself.

This new migration is a threat to the old businesses as there is an increase in competition and the merchants that used to monopolise products in the past, now have to rethink the profit margin in the times of cut-throat competition with foreigners (migrants). Mohabbat says he has no problem with this competition,

> "…as these labourers who come to Fordsburg are cheap work force. This affects the whole system of manufacturing costs and margins. Cheaper the labour, cheaper the products: more consumers. It is overall calculating to the benefit of market, businesses, newly arrived foreigners, jobs, labour force and satisfaction of consumers."

Businessmen like Mohabbat look at the benefits accruing to Fordsburg as a whole rather than just one group. They look at the possibility of encouraging more customers to come towards Fordsburg to collectively sustain the capital flow in Fordsburg. When asked about the sectarian conflicts between Islam and the caste divisions in the Muslim society in Fordsburg, everybody said they never faced these differences unlike in India. Here people are seen as more open, involving everyone and respecting values. Zameer, age 31, an Indian Muslim male barber from eastern region of Gujarat followed his elder brother who was working in Fordsburg as a barber. Zameer now owns a haircut shop in partnership with a Hindu lady from Rajasthan in Fordsburg. Zameer said, "For me it does not matter who prays to whom. Or the way they offer prayer. It all depends on the personal choice of the devotee." He furthermore added that he has a "partnership with a

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[36] Interview with Mohabbat, December, 2012, Fordsburg

Hindu lady and religion never came between them." He stressed that, "people in India should look towards us in South Africa and be inspired to live life in harmony with other faiths as we do here."[37]

Mohabbat had a different opinion to Zameer's. Although he did not witness the caste prejudices and the Shia-Sunni conflict in everyday life, differences like *salafi and non-salafi* seem to matter. He was not sure what the difference was but clarified that he has never seen sectarianism becoming a problem in doing business in Fordsburg. Referring to the internal mosque conflicts, he avoided the eye contact during the interview while describing the differences. Recalling some of the incidents where he noticed people arguing over loyalty towards Islam that had configured the debate around *salafi* and *non-salafi*. Upon asking what it means, he hastily replied that he does not confer to such differences and that he is not part of such groups. So he is unable to offer more insights on the issue. In some instances, it was observed that religious fanaticism exists among young migrants in Fordsburg. Muslim and Hindu youth appeared to be conscious of their religious identity. Often Muslim migrants behave in a way that affirms their Muslim identity; through their way of dressing, talking or mentioning that a migrant is a regular visitor to the mosque (see chapter 3). Mushtaq, a Bangladeshi migrant often reproduced religious affirmation in general conversations. He was aware of his national political situation and his present identity in South Africa. He was keen to discuss about his belief system and nationalism. Referring to Sheikh Hasina's government in Bangladesh he complained that the government is not standing for its Islamic rules. Upon asking if he is a Bengali he refused to answer and said that he comes from Pakistan. His accent appeared very different and on probing he confirmed that he is not a Bengali but Bangladeshi.

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[37] Zameer, December, 2012

The term "Bengali reassures us that we are still part of India, while we are not. We are an independent nation, so if you would like to refer to me, I would want to be referred as Bangladeshi." The discussion of nationality turned to religion. He said that he was a proud Muslim who always carried the Islamic principles of being a pious and noble man. He was ready to contradict every argument against Islamic ideals and believed in his interpretative upbringing of Islamic tradition. When I enquired about the sectarian differences in Fordsburg, he refused to accept the existence of such differences, but also immediately confirmed that he loved to visit the Bangladeshi mosque every week. "We have certain issues with the Shias but it appears in Bangladesh, we are a majority Sunni country and therefore have a Sunni background." Although the fact that he prefers to attend a Sunni mosque as opposed to the Shia, he does not want an outsider to take cognisance of "*aamader byagtigata byapar* (our internal issue)."

On the notion of business partnerships, as explained earlier Indian business people often engaged in the partnership businesses. Hiralal (2007) in her essay explains the importance of partnership businesses for the early arrivals during the early twentieth century. It was to safeguard the interests of business people. Looking at examples such as Zameer, it is evident that a business partnership is encouraged for efficient trade management. Like Zameer, Akram, Nadim, and Imaan who came to South Africa to assist their brothers entered in a partnership business. Hence, we see partnerships are seen as an easy way to enter the competitive market of Fordsburg (chapter 4).

Similarity between the first Indian migrants and current Indian migrants

This section will try to explore similarities between the present day migration and the first phase of Indian immigration to South Africa. There is firstly, a broad similarity between the first arrivals in Natal and current arrivals. Initially they came on ships and made friends during the voyage (*Jahaji bhai*) to their destination (cf. Desai and Vahed, 2010). In the present scenario, they came

through multiple routes – air and road way and while on their journey to reach the destination they met new people who ultimately became their friends. Ashraf's story of reaching Johannesburg gives the details of hardships and difficulties he had to face to reach Johannesburg via Mozambique. Ashraf, known as *chacha* is an elderly barber from Surat in his 50s who works in a haircut shop in Fordsburg. He came to Fordsburg three years ago on the suggestion of an agent in Surat who helps potential migrants to migrate and explains them how to survive 'illegality' in South Africa, by claiming asylum protection. Ashraf did this when he arrived in Johannesburg. His journey to Fordsburg lasted for 8 days and he faced a lack of food, sanitation and medical facilities, similar to what was recorded in the narratives of travellers 150 years ago. Additionally, modern immigration among Gujaratis is an extended form of networked migration that initiated immigration from specific areas of Gujarat namely, Surat, Kutch and Kathiawad. Historically too, Hansen (2012: 240) observes that immigration among Muslims of Indian origin in the early days of Indian immigration came from Surat, Kutch and Kathiawad. Among the informants in Fordsburg, almost 90% came from the above mentioned areas with a few exceptions, Khalid, came from Uttar Pradesh, Ghoolam from Mumbai and Abhishek from Kerala.

The role that agents played during recruitment of indentured labour for the British Empire is quite similar to the mediation of the agents now (Metcalf 2007: 95,141,144). The agents went to villages and cities to recruit labourers who were in dire conditions. They offered them dreams of better life and hence the recruitment was only partly coercive in nature. Bhana and Pachai's (1984) archival work explains the role of *Sirdars* (agents) that were sent by the Immigration Trust Board to India for recruiting friends and relatives to work in Natal. These "sweet talking agents" lured poor and gullible Indians to get on the ships that travelled to Africa, Caribbean and to other Indian Ocean ports (Hansen, 2012: 318). Even today we find the similarities in the recruitment in

retrospect although the pattern has changed but the fundamental aspect of recruitment and encouragement by the "sweet talking agents" is still visible. Initially, Ashraf expressed his will to work in the Middle East, but instead he was offered a better life and job prospects with good salary in South Africa so he went with the option offered by an agent. But when he arrived, all the promises made by the agent in India that he would make at least 50,000 rupees ($ 8,000) per month proved illusory. To date he is struggling to make even half that amount, "they said big big things and when you actually come you get nothing but disappointment" said a worried Ashraf.[38]

With this example it is seen that there are considerable similarities between the Indian foreign nationals coming now and the first phase of migrants in the nineteenth century. For example, the second generation of South African Indians in the twentieth century went to distant villages, and lived in rural conditions (Pillay, 1976: 2). A study by (McCrystal & Massdorp 1967: 1-3) states that, during the late nineteenth century Indians brought life to trading, by competing with white traders, as white traders did not wish to trade in rural areas mainly along the coast where Indian traders operated. Indians even travelled from village to village delivering the goods during the nineteenth century. Borrows quotes Indian Immigrants' Commission Report of 1885-87,

> "...Indian hawkers…, go busily, with heavy baskets on their heads from house to house and the citizens can daily, at their own doors, and at low rates, purchase wholesome vegetables and fruit which, not many years ago, they could not, with certainty, procure even in public markets and at exorbitant prices (Burrows, 1967: 14)".

The ability to find gaps in businesses and to fill them is still prevalent among the Indian immigrants.

The present day scenario is the same claims Mohabbat. New migrants, when they first come to South Africa, are taken to townships or small villages where they work as skilled-labourers

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[38] Ashraf, February, 2013

or semi-skilled labourers. When they find an opportunity they immediately establish their own trade. For present day networked migrants, Fordsburg was not their initial plan; first they resided in villages and distant remote areas or townships. For example, Kailash, an Indian chef from Kerala said that he first arrived in a township of Lenasia. Later he decided to move to another small city to work in Venda. After a few months he was taken to Mayfair, an area close to Fordsburg for work. And since then he has been stationed in Fordsburg to work in a well-known South Indian restaurant. Similarly, Ashraf planned to work in a rural area in the outskirts of Gauteng province but decided to come to Johannesburg because of established connections. He says,

> "I was planning to work in a small town initially. Ready to work anywhere; there was and there is no problem. It is just the friends and relatives who invited me to stay with them until I find a job. This is how I ended up coming to Fordsburg."[39]

"When they come they first live in the bushes" says Mohabbat and to prove his claim he shares the stories of his ancestors about their survival in the age when his ancestors and his father ran a business in extremely rural areas and lived in the villages of the North-West Province where he was born and brought up as a child. In the historical context we see there were many areas in Natal that were occupied by Indians such as Lower Tugela, Inanda, Umvoti, and Umzinto.[40] These areas were far from the centres of trade. Indian labourers after the expiration of their term entered diverse businesses such as farming, market gardening, or agricultural labour (Rai, 1984: 35-37). They started to farm vegetables in the small space that were often leased or bought after the completion of the indenture (Hansen, 2012: 28). Pillay's argument of market gardening in Hansen's (2012) descriptive ethnography validates the above argument. Pillay explains his ancestral businesses as market gardening, tracing the origins to his great grand-father who after arrival in South Africa "worked hard for so many years and managed to buy a patch of land" (1976:

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[39] Ashraf, February, 2013
[40] Report of the Indian Colonisation Inquiry Committee, 1934, p. 47, in Rai (1984: 35)

204). This land was useful to produce fresh vegetables and the business flourished until his generation. He remembers that his father was actively involved in the gardening business and used to sell fresh produce every morning in the market. Market gardening was a success story making the Indian way of business a unique style of production in and around Durban area. This success helped the following generations to enter the mainland of Durban working class areas. However, it was not an easy passage for the early generations as unfavourable conditions discouraged their business.[41]

These areas were never considered ideal for business by the Europeans. Hence, we see the discourse of ending up in bushes is prevalent from the late nineteenth and twentieth century onwards. During the early phase of migration, Indian trading areas were limited to certain geographical boundaries. In spite of the restrictions, the entrepreneurial skills and smart business tactics of Indian traders helped them to spread out and venture into different areas for bigger opportunities of trade. The reason for their success as Hiralal (2007) puts it lies in their "inexpensive lifestyle, low overheads, cheap wares and unscrupulous trading methods in rural areas" (100). In the present day context too, Latish's example adds more clarity to this hypothesis. As explained above Latish arrived in South Africa during the mid-1990s and ended up in one of the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal province, in Pietermaritzburg district. He planned to sell clothes in the rural areas of Pietermaritzburg with the assistance of one of his relatives who was doing business in the same area. After making some profits he decided to shift to the city centre of Pietermaritzburg. After spending five years in Pietermaritzburg, he then decided to move to Johannesburg. Today he owns a grocery store on the main streets of Fordsburg.[42] This story too

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[41] "H 12 Brochure- Meet the Indian in South Africa," Microfilm, p. 13; and "H 16 Article - Indian land and agriculture in SA," *AD 1710 Hassim Seedat collection* Historical Papers Research Archives, UWL
[42] Latish, January, 2013

gives a glimpse of migrants who first venture into rural areas, and after gaining experience in the villages, finally end up in the major cities. This observation might not apply to every immigrant. In the present day context contemporary labour migrants do not necessarily go to the villages when they arrive. In most cases, they have contacts in Fordsburg who offer them jobs in Johannesburg itself.

Early migrants, after the expiration of their indenture turned to market gardening and trading. Later they started buying land to produce fresh vegetables and delivering to the Indian as well as black customers (cf. Freund, 1991). Similarly, present day migrants first come as labourers in somewhat similar situations like the indentured labourers of the past. Their customers are black Africans as well. However, there is a slight difference between the indentured migrants and present day labour migrants. Labour migrants are not bound by any legal constraints as opposed to the indentures that had to comply with the regulations made by the Natal Legislative colony (Rai, 1984: 29).[43] Present day labour migrants after working in a specific industry for a while aspire to own a business. Zameer told me his future aspiration was that he would definitely have a shop of his own. He is working hard to save enough to invest in a property and start a hair cutting salon of his own. Currently, he sublets the shop and runs it, but initially he started his life in South Africa working for wages with the owner of the shop. Similar emotions are shared by a majority of the labour migrants in Fordsburg. This pattern of accumulating savings and working long hours by immigrant workers is observed in the United States of America among temporary workers of different ethnicities (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990: 125).

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[43] There were many regulations that governed the indentured labour Indian migrants in Natal, Immigration Ordinance of 1859, Indian Immigration Act, 1851, The Act of 1895 were the legislations that were amended from time to time for the better administration of Indian labourers and to keep the terms of service regulated strictly.

Chinese influence

The Chinese presence in South Africa dates back to the nineteenth century mass immigration era. They started arriving during the 1870s to trade and work in the diamond and gold mines in Johannesburg. Along with Indians, Chinese were the first Asian tradesmen to trade in Fordsburg (Brink, 2008: 8). There is a significant presence of Indian markets in Fordsburg and Chinese malls in the areas of Amalgam and Old Highgate in the outskirts of Fordsburg area. The Chinese malls and the Indian stalls in Fordsburg create competition among these two ancient Asian trading communities that are striving in the African economy. This section will look into the aspects of Chinese influence on the Fordsburg market, and how the Asian trading communities compete with each other to gain maximum profits. The focus of this section is to look at the South Asian paradigm of investment and try to understand the effects of Chinese malls. Chinese trade remains an under researched area in the ethnic trade activities.

Chinese–Indian collaboration

The history of Chinese resistance against the discriminatory laws of white government runs parallel to the stories of Indian struggle. Chinese traders too participated in various strikes and protests against the apartheid government policies that were affecting their trade and human rights. Town planning in colonial South Africa was based on race. Although in the initial years, the Chinese community distanced themselves from Indians, the Indian business communities adjusted with Chinese business families in the Asiatic Bazaar, as black Africans were adjusted in the distant townships (Carrim, 2013: 14). The leader of the Transvaal Chinese Association Mr Quinn claimed in 1904 that Indians should be evicted from Johannesburg town on grounds of sanitary regulations. Municipal authorities were anxious about the sanitary conditions prevailing in the coolie location. Hence, Indians were evicted from the location and temporarily housed in Klipspruit (Lamont,

1980: 6). Quinn supported the Public Health Committee's report to evict *"Kaffirs"* and Indian community to Klipspruit because Indians were "worse neighbours than the former (black Africans)" (CMWG, 1999, Vol 4: 98).[44] However, in the later years as the political situation got worse for non-whites Quinn actively collaborated with Indian community.

The memoirs of Gandhi detail the participation of Chinese against Selborne's registration ordinance when the Transvaal Chinese Associations' petition was prepared by Gandhi in 1907 (Swan, 1985: 137). The famous Gandhi-Smuts compromise was done in collaboration with the Transvaal Chinese Association Chairman Leng Quinn, and Thambi Naidoo where joint letters were addressed to the office of the Colonial Secretary by Gandhi, Quinn and Naidoo (CMWG, 1999, Vol 8: 98-100).[45] Quinn also participated in the joint protest against the government's policies of registration along with Gandhi (CMWG, 1999, Vol 8: 124). Chinese and Indian activism often converged because of a common struggle against laws that prohibited Asiatic rights in Transvaal[46] (Pillay, 1976: 17). So much so that Henry Polak editor of *Indian Opinion*[47] was appointed Honorary Adviser to the Chinese Association upon the request of Quinn (CMWG, 1999, Vol 8: 54). Since then both the communities have been active traders in Johannesburg.

Chinese capital today

In recent times there has been a growing influence of Chinese products in the local market with the Chinese malls in the outskirts of Fordsburg area. There are more than 23 active Chinese malls in Johannesburg area with a close concentration in Fordsburg and Crown Mines (Dittgen, 2013). The China mall offers better rates to customers than the Fordsburg market. During the interviews in Fordsburg; everyone expressed concerns about the growing influence of Chinese malls in the

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[44] "The Johannesburg Town Council," *Indian Opinion, 22-10-1904*
[45] Sample of the letter titled, "LETTER TO COLONIAL SECRETARY, January 28, 1908"
[46] *Indian Opinion, 30-5-1908*. Letter by Quinn to the M. Chamney, Colonial Office.
[47] C.M. Doke Collection (DCAS Acc 385) Documentation Centre or African Studies, University of South Africa

surrounding areas of Johannesburg. Mohabbat explained the current situation of Chinese involvement which is affecting the customers of Fordsburg market.

> "Chinese deal with the wholesale market, when a merchant wants to buy from the Chinese, s/he is bound to buy in bulk to avail the lower price than the market price. This way Chinese import goods in large amount and sell in bulk where sales are high as compared to the wholesaler of Fordsburg."[48]

Chinese malls are mainly concerned with wholesale trading and only recently have they started to retail. Wholesale trading dominates the trade activities of China malls (Dittgen, 2013). This has created tough competition among the wholesalers of Fordsburg and the Chinese malls. Initially, Fordsburg was the only market which attracted customers from all over Johannesburg and the nearby towns of Gauteng Province. But now the focus is shifting from Fordsburg to Chinese malls among customers and wholesalers. Even the Indians trading in flea market get wholesale stocks of clothes, cosmetics, groceries from Chinese malls and sell it in the flea market.[49] Hence, the flea market known for exclusive Indian products has been undermined with the Chinese products being traded widely. The growing competition with the Chinese market has affected the pricing of local wholesalers who are struggling to attract the South Asian traders trading in Fordsburg. Latish who runs a grocery shop in Fordsburg has seen the growing influence of Chinese malls on the trading patterns in Fordsburg. He recalls hawkers and street vendors used to make their living through selling on streets in different areas. But after the introduction of malls, selling on streets declined and at one point it totally collapsed, thereby impacting the livelihood of hawkers.[50]

Post 1994, the migrants already had someone back home dealing with the same business hence it was easy for them to import the goods to South Africa. But the new migrants are from a

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[48] Mohabbat, December, 2012
[49] Imran, December, 2012
[50] Latish, January, 2013

totally different background and considerably poorer than the post 1994 ones. Hence, when they establish their own trade, they do not have any family members back home to import the goods, so they go to Chinese malls seeking better deals than Fordsburg. The Fordsburg market had been sustained by a monopoly over exclusive Indian spices that attracted black African and other customers. With the increase of China market trade, Chinese also entered the spice trade and started trading in spices at more affordable rate than Fordsburg. Hence, the non-South Asian customer has diverted their attention from Fordsburg to the Chinese malls which gives them far cheaper price. Imran explains,

> "Only Indians can understand the value of good spice, but when it comes to a foreign customer, all they need is spice and they cannot differentiate between the quality of Indians and Chinese. Hence, naturally they do not seek the quality. So they go for the market which is offering them cheaper rate."[51]

This is in reference to the 'exotic market' which sells exotic goods to customers of specific ethnic groups (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990). For example, selling spices by Indians in an Indian neighbourhood has a special significance and authenticity than in other markets. However, the above mentioned situation challenges the theories which contend that 'exotic markets' lack competition thereby offering goods at a cheaper price (Palmer, 1984). In Fordsburg's context, it appears similar and contrary at the same time. There is an emergence of many ethnic shops by the immigrants from the same regional and linguistic background. These similarities result in comparisons which in turn forces the shop owners to sell with competitive prices. Apart from the internal competition there is an emergence of external markets. In fact, the external market (Chinese) is also an ethnic market that can be identified with the 'exotic' identity of Fordsburg, attracting native and ethnic customers.

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[51] Imran, December, 2012

This is something new in the studies of ethnic entrepreneur methods where ethnic markets compete with each other due to the diversity of trade options. Studies focussed on the entrepreneurship of immigrants tend to argue that often ethnic markets face severe challenges by the host economy due to 'discrimination' and 'hostility'. However, emergence of multi-ethnic neighbourhoods and markets do not necessarily suggest the existence of discrimination. In a struggling national economy there is little inclination to interfere in ethnic markets. Fordsburg, though an Indian neighbourhood, caters to the needs of Turks, Syrian, Egyptian, Jordanian, Thai, Mozambican, Chinese and other western groups. Hence, the protection market theory proposed by scholars (Palmer, 1984; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990) does not concur with the on-ground situation in Fordsburg's case. It is because theories discussed in the north using North America as an example, have specific neighbourhoods that are unique spaces catering only to certain ethnic groups. But in the South African case, the prevalence of trade, free mobility and competition encourages ethnic markets to be involved in multiple activities of trade not related to a single group.

Challenges of Fordsburg in contrast to Chinese malls

The popularity of Fordsburg and the flea market has been underestimated by the local council. Due to this, the area faces a great car parking problem. The original Fordsburg town planning department did not specify on-site parking claims (Toffah, 2008: 96). There is no council parking space created for the customers visiting Fordsburg, but there is plenty of parking space available to the customers visiting the Chinese mall. Fordsburg is in great demand but lacks sufficient infrastructure. There is always an imbalance between the demand and supply that affects the market's reputation and its ability to attract customers in future. The non-availability of space is another drawback for the emerging flea market; it has become too congested for customers to move

freely throughout the market. The traders are squeezed into a small space totalling 105 stalls in the flea market with 20 additional shops. This creates limitation for the traders to have their own space to display their items in a convenient way. Lack of extra space has become a major problem to improve the current scenario of the flea market (Fig. 15). There are a few things that attract customers – predominantly food, DVDs, grocery and barbershops; the rest has shifted to Chinese malls. The older South Asian solidarity among the business class has sustained the trade in Fordsburg and the flea market so far. But in the recent years of competition even South Asian traders are now turning towards the wholesalers in Chinese malls.

On the other hand, there are still few groups of traders who trade with local South African wholesalers due to their old connections and South Asian solidarity. This group is in a minority as it comprises post 1994 migrants who came with distinct plans and already established contacts. But recently established shops by new migrants do not have the same sense of solidarity and connection with local wholesalers. Hence, at the end of the day all they aim is to make profit and become rich in short time. This attitude distances them from the welfare of community and South Asian solidarity that was instrumental in welcoming the influx of migrants. Harney (2006) attempts to understand the ethnic affinity among the migrant traders and its relation in the development of migrant groups. Taking cues from the example of Bangladeshi traders in Italy, he tries to explain the reasons for solidarities within migrant groups. The notion of buying goods from a fellow national who is an established wholesaler by newly arrived migrant entrepreneurs is observed in the Bangladeshi migration context. Bangladeshi migrant traders retail the stock bought from fellow Bangladeshi wholesalers who are not many and at times located in a remote destination. This has to do with the social mobility among migrants which are part of the "on-ward migration" where networks among national groups help each other. However, in Fordsburg's case

too, the affinity among wholesalers and traders has to do with historical transactions and business contacts which still runs on the basis of mutual benefit.

Fordsburg future – looking ahead

From the interviews it was clear that apart from Fordsburg being a dynamic trade area the drawbacks that it had were overlooked by the investors and residents of the Fordsburg. Apart from the huge investment in food, clothing, and cell phone accessories, there is an opportunity for investment which obviously will not be filled by the new working class migrants but big entrepreneurs from India who have targeted Africa as their investment zone. This is in relation to the new Indian companies that are investing in Africa as a possible destination for trade. Steel, conglomerates, pharmaceuticals, IT, communications, banking, automobiles, power, manufacturing, and mines being some of them. Goldstein, Pinaud, Reisen and Chen's (2006) study looks at Indian capital presence and details the companies' impact on the African economy. There are close to a hundred companies including big players like TATA, Mahindra (automobile), Dr Reddy, Cipla, Ranbaxy (pharma), Essar (minerals), Bharati Airtel (telecom), Bank of Baroda, State Bank of India, Canara Bank, Bank of India (banking) etc. investing in millions in Africa.

The important aspect to note on the development of Fordsburg is that, no renovation of buildings has been done for the past three decades. The reason is that, the owners of the shops do not run the shops anymore and have sold or rented the properties to foreign nationals whose temporary presence in the property is a disincentive to invest. Moreover, the second generation is no longer interested in following their ancestral business. Hence, due to these reasons the condition of buildings and roads is the same as it was 30 years ago with some minor changes. Mohabbat points to the difference between the development of other suburbs and Fordsburg. The major contrast is the heavy investments by multi-nationals in areas such as Sandton. There is a wide gap

between the development of sky scrapers in other areas and Fordsburg. Foreign investors are not interested in Fordsburg and Oriental Plaza that is serving almost a million customers per month with 360 shops. But there lies a gap in the property investment in Fordsburg area, claims Mohabbat. There is a need for extending the possibilities of residential areas in Fordsburg. Lack of accommodation facilities and non- renovated old houses provide an opportunity for investors to invest in the properties and build skyscrapers which could facilitate both trade and the living facilities.

Figure 15. Present day Flea Market from outside; congested car parking is seen (Source: Author's photograph, March, 2013)

Figure 16. Inner view of the Flea Market (Source: Author's Photograph, November, 2013)

Imran said, "these days almost every visitor has a car and if the person wants to visit Fordsburg the first thing he worries about is parking. We often see cars taking several rounds of Fordsburg to find a suitable parking and if not found, it returns back." Salman raised the same concern about parking facilities, and said that, if he was to invest in Fordsburg he would invest in a parking lot, which is an urgent need for business to improve in Fordsburg. The people that own the properties in Fordsburg are very few. I interviewed a few customers asking what is their concern about Fordsburg, and 80% responded about lack of a parking facility. Mohabbat says, "there is no scope for new trade as there are already many. But the potential of Fordsburg lies in land."[52] The value of land in Johannesburg is increasing every day (IOL Properties, 2012). A plot of land in Johannesburg costs almost few millions (Pam Golding properties, 2014; property24, 2014). Additionally, Fordsburg area being in the central part of commercial Johannesburg has its advantages. It has good flow of capital and the market is striving to speed up its business ventures

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[52] Interview with Mohabbat, December, 2012, Fordsburg

with few thousand customers visiting the area. What it lacks is the infrastructure. If this is resolved Fordsburg can become one of the biggest commercial suburbs of Southern Africa. The growing trade aspirations and expensive property prices have traditionally been the nature of Fordsburg and its nearby areas which led to the forceful evictions of the Indian traders during 1950 onwards. As for parking Toffah (2008: 96) in her thesis provides alternative architectural solutions to the parking problems in Fordsburg area which is to either have a roof top parking on the Oriental Plaza or create basement parking; alternatively, building an independent property for parking in the nearby area.

Conclusion

This chapter attempted to introduce Fordsburg and the flea market, tracing the histories of Indian trade existence in these areas. It has looked into the historical aspects of the Fordsburg and flea market; the influence of South Asian trade in these areas; post 1994 business establishments in Fordsburg; and changing patterns of businesses. It provided a critique on the influx of migrants and the competition between Asian giants – India and China. It has looked into the established familial connections that encourage migration pointing to similarities between the first phase of migration and present day migration. Fordsburg is facing dual competition, among the South Asians themselves and Chinese on the other hand. Growing influence of China malls around the Fordsburg area has alarmed the South Asian trading milieu, the locals, post 1994 and newly arrived migrants.

The fear of losing customers creates a strong unity among the South Asian traders to work with a strategy in attracting customers and foreign investment to Fordsburg. New investors can work with the model of the flea market and attempt to expand Fordsburg's influence in the neighbouring suburbs to invest in the development of property in Fordsburg which is a generation-

next business model. In spite of the frictions within Fordsburg, the important thing is that the conflicts remain within the borders of the area. The locals look at the newly arriving migrants with affection and relate to them with their ancestor's experiences. Fordsburg has been a space of continuing tension since the early 1920s to present, however what helps is the sense of maturity and adaptability among local Indians. The quality of compromise, hard work and an open approach makes the South Asian business community a tough competitor in southern Africa. The business community which was once indentured labour and 'passenger' Indians was treated with hostility; they have now emerged as a strong business community. In the time to come Fordsburg will make its important place in the economy of Johannesburg and will emerge as a business centre of South Africa; and in this development, migrants' contribution will be heard. Behind the working force of Johannesburg's vibrant ethnic enclave is the life of labourers who live, work and play in the same space – Fordsburg. This leads us to think about the performance of cultural habits of migrants in Fordsburg. How do they manage to perform and reproduce their social affinities as well as religious commitment? In order to understand this, it is important to see the eating, clothing and language habits among young Indian migrants. To know what it looks like to be in Fordsburg surrounded by Indian immigrants let's turn to next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

CULTURAL PROCESSES: CHANGING LIFESTYLE, FOOD AND CLOTHING HABITS AND LANGUAGE[53]

My engineer friend and I went to have Turkish kebabs during the Eid-Al Adha week in 2014 in Fordsburg. As we occupied our seats in the Turkish restaurant, a group of ten young Indian and Pakistani migrants arrived in the restaurant. They were dressed in regular jeans and t-shirts and sweaters because of the cold outside. All of them had beards full or cropped. They were speaking in Hindi and Urdu and observing the customers in the restaurant. As they took their seats, all of them brought out their big screen smartphones. They were all different brands; some had LG, whereas some had iPhone 6, Samsung Galaxy Tab, HTC and Nokia Lumia. They started scrolling through their phones. Some were replying to messages; whereas some were checking their Facebook updates, or going through pictures. A few were unsure about operating the phone so they were sliding the screen up and down as it appeared they had no updates. Of the ten, nine put their heads down concentrating on their phones. There was no continuous conversation apart from a mere exchange of a few words. My engineer friend pointed to the scenario and said, "Look at those young people at the table. Can you see anyone talking with any of the others?"

Everyone was conversing with their smartphones and not with each other. It was surprising to my friend and I. This scenario depicted the importance and dominance of smartphones among the young migrant group. A group that spends more time with their phone than with their friends. Even though they were dining together none of them talked with each other. Perhaps all of them used social media to communicate with the world, and hence each of them knew what was happening with the other without asking. Everyone found their comfort in their own private world holding the phone in their palm. The palm in India is read to divine the fortune – *naseeb* – or luck. Here the palm clearly signified the *naseeb* of migrants, their achievements and future through the large screen displays . Migrants engaged in a social space with smartphones interacting through non-conversational gestures. Each one created an image of his dominance and achievement through

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[53] * Part of this chapter is published as "Smartphone Migration" Emerging Lifestyle and Changing Habits of Indian Labor Migrants in Johannesburg. *Social Transformations: Journal Of The Global South,* 2 (1), 2014, 3-33

the phone he held. The larger the screen the bigger the achievement he portrayed. It was a competition where the display of smartphones as a modern technological device affirmed their right to their social and community status. In this chapter, I will expand on the idea of smartphone and the relation to the performance of wealth and achievement.

Figure 17. Migrants with their smartphones in action (Source: Authors photograph, October 2014)

Cultural process

Migration is an on-going phenomenon and migrants have to adapt to the latest social, economic

and cultural developments around them. Hence, in the case of contemporary labour migration,

adapting to a new society is a core challenge that migrants face. Based on these assumptions, I will

advance my arguments and explain how labour migrants adapt themselves to a new environment

and try to assimilate cultural, economic and political practices of the host country. Assimilation theory according to Faist (2000: 204) is the gradual socio-economical, and also cultural and behavioural, adaptation of an immigrant. Assimilation theory, therefore, can be used to interpret the cultural aspects of labour migrants in Fordsburg, which will be further elaborated in this chapter. Assimilation theory over the years have been also been criticised for being an ethnocentric idea that is limited by its own biases and patronising of "minority peoples struggling to retain their cultural and ethnic integrity" (Alba and Nee, 1997: 827). Reviewing assimilation theory, Alba and Nee argue that it is unwise to reject the assimilation concept because it stands at the base of determining the issues of ethnicity and race within the immigrant society. For them "assimilation still has great power for an understanding of the contemporary ethnic scene" (Alba and Nee, 1997: 863). Although their analysis is centred on the countries like the United States with a large immigrant population, an analysis of South Africa's contemporary immigrant scene shows that assimilation is still relevant as a concept for contemporary multi-racial realities and the shaping of immigrant identities. Hence, this chapter will explore how assimilation works through the inter-relation of migrants within the ethnic space of Fordsburg.

In the earlier chapters, we have discussed the historical aspects of Fordsburg. I have argued for similarities between the first arrivals and contemporary ones and the growing influence of South Asian labourers on creating a new identity in the Indian business district, Fordsburg. This chapter and the ones that follow look at the aspects of cultural, economic, and political process of Indian labour migrants to Fordsburg which is the core interest of this thesis. These aspects are important to answer the question as to what happens to migrants after they arrive. Oonk's (2013) work is of special interest as it opens up the parameters for understanding economic, cultural and political conditions of South Asian migrants in East Africa. Oonk (2013) argues that cultural

aspects concern the diet, clothing, marriage practices and language (reading and writing) of Indian migrants in East Africa. He analyses the performance of migrants in the host society and their changing habits over the years of settlement in East Africa. According to his study, a migrant who is settled in the host society for centuries is still a stranger due to the persistence of food, clothing, and other cultural habits. His findings were a result of historical and ethnographic observations covering the period between 1800 to 2000. Drawing on his observations, this study will add further texture on the lives of migrants in the post-migration phase, while complicating the analysis by investigating what cultural aspects mean in light of technological innovations. It will examine the lifestyle of labour migrants as a cultural process and their changing habits of consumption of technology which, I argue, come to dictate the everyday life of migrants. I will try to supplement my observations with historical narratives to make a strong case for my arguments.

Continuing with the discussion on the cultural representation of migrants, Harney's (2007) work seems apposite here. He underscores the methodological gaps and theoretical limitations of the transnational mobility literature that dominates migration and cross border cultural and identity studies (Chambers, 1994). Harney stresses on developments in transnational activities brought about by innovations in technology, communications and trading networks. He argues that observations on transnational movements are limited in their understanding of international mobility due to an emphasis on nation states, cultural intermediaries, political practices and economic activities seen as involving travelling from fixed space to another. Taking an example from Italian immigrants in Naples, Italy, he argues that the dominant discourses in the transnational migration and integration literature do not seriously consider the trajectories of migration as a spatially unbounded phenomenon. It 'omits' or rather, 'limits' our understanding of diverse aspects of migration that are taking place in the wake of technology, trade and communications. I argue

for cultural material production as a phenomenon that transgresses through the use of new communicative technologies.

Cultural aspects

Before we proceed it is important to underline the concept of identity in the context of this chapter. Can we speak of identity as a stable entity? Identity is a fragile, vulnerable and a term on conjuncture without a fixed or linear trajectory. Cultural theorist Stuart Hall helps us to think about the forms of 'cultural identity.' The first concept thinks of identity as a 'one true self,' "where shared cultures hide inside many other superficial artificially imposed selves" (Hall, 1990: 223). It has a shared history and ancestry in common and a oneness hides all the other complex differences. A second position on cultural identity thinks of it as being the origin of differences and not the similarities that mark-up 'what we really are.' It also argues that a common identity imposed upon the layers of differences among individuals and the cultural representation of a certain group does not help us in understanding or representing identity. Hall (1990) suggests there are different identities attached to a person and there are different names given to the different identities depending upon our position. Looking beyond one identity offers the possibility of "ruptures and discontinuities which constitute the precise uniqueness" of a certain identity (Hall, 1990: 225). He furthermore states that whatever we do in society is 'positioned' (Hall, 1990: 222). Fordsburg's Indians are also positioned within the binaries of home and host country, and adversely placed within a notion of diaspora. Here the national identity of migrants is drawn from the national culture they come from which eventually becomes their cultural identity (Hall, 1992). This identity is projected as a unified national representation into the migration phase because national culture seeks to unify the differences and diversities of class, gender, race and other ethnic categories into one cultural identity belonging to one national family (Hall, 1992: 296). Therefore,

the migrants become Indians, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis when describing themselves in the outer space of the host society, through what Hall calls as 'narrative of the self' (Hall, 1990).

Stuart Hall (2003) tries to summarise the early debates of identity formation in his landmark thesis, *Who Needs Identity?* He suggests an approach towards understanding 'identification' and 'identity' as performative. Identification according to him is a conditioned logic 'lodged in contingency' (Hall, 2003: 3). Identification is never a totality nor indeed can it be constrained: it is a process which is on-going (Hall, 1992: 287-88). 'Identity' is formed within the discursive practices of 'difference and exclusion.' Therefore, identity is never a unified object of representation. Fordsburg's Indians represent the true character of identity as being fragmented and fractured yet sharing the common norm of origin or history. Indian immigrants project the imagination of their being someone into a social space. It is true that they are marked by others as being someone; without the outer core there is no credibility of the self. How a migrant represents themselves is a correlation between their fantasy of themselves and how they are perceived. The individual projections of identity derive very often from particular global imaginations of self. The performative self works with modular themes of 'coming to terms with the routes' of origin and the imagining to roots (cf. Hall, 2003: 4). The routes of identification need not be the same even when there is common origin. Technologies and devices too allow migrants to come to terms with the seeming fixity of their present markers—i.e. clothes, languages. Technologically mediated representations of self-exceed the logic of an individual as a representative of a certain group deriving from a common past or the origin of the group that the migrant is located in. Subjective identity or discourse of belonging, need not be connected to a place, or a person. It is mediated through the thought of belonging, albeit superficial—to the world connected with the technological device.

Hence, I start with the engagement of labour migrants in Fordsburg with consumption as a factor that generates the formation of identity. I note significant changes happening in the life of labourers which directly affects the business district. The consumer habits and intra-trade relations in the flea market and Fordsburg adds to the consumption debates of South Africa. As Iqani and Kenny (2015) argue in their seminal work that studying consumption in South Africa matters because it offers insights into the "global patterns of inequality and race-based economic oppression" (97). One can also argue for specific consumption patterns in Africa and the global south, given its rising middle-class a consumer base and urban settlements (Mbembe, 2016).

Iqani and Kenny (2015) explain the growing neoliberal pressure that has transcended the private realms of the public in South Africa. This incursion is effectively executed by channelling consumer habits which rely heavily on popular consumer culture. These cultures as Iqani and Kenny (2015: 97) argue, are inherent to the conceptual frameworks of modern democracy which is mobilised through freedom and public realms. Using the case study of the global south as an example, they argue for the particularistic and universalistic projects of neoliberal consumer culture. Consumption produces "new cultural forms" it also diversifies existing cultural stabilities. Iqani and Kenny's (2015) work suggests a broader approach to understanding the growing influence of consumption among the emerging South African middle-class. Their approach however, limits one to capture the diverse and at times modestly located other non-white and non-native groups. These groups play a significant role in determining the standards of consumption culture that is evolving and changing like never before.

Oonk (2013: 112) states, "cultural change is inevitable, but even more so for migrants," who experience a landscape of inter-mixing of races, ethnicities, castes, religion, region and profession. According to Oonk (2013: 6, 111) migrants who are seen as settlers have two options

which is either to reproduce their original culture (pluralism), or adapt to the new environment (integration). In the following section, I will introduce culture as a part of process with respect to changing lifestyles of migrants, food and clothing habits, and the language issue of newly arriving migrants. This interaction gives the sense of acculturation among newly arriving Indian labour migrants. The process of acculturation and social integration of migrant labourers, according to Richmond (1988a: 109), is "as complex as the societies involved in the international movement of people." In Fordsburg's context, the social integration of migrants is a complex phenomenon. There are layers of cultural performances which determine the acculturation.

Individuals migrate for economic gains and a productive lifestyle. According to Marx (in Wolff, 2002: 112), workers sell their labour, skills and time to acquire enough money to buy the basic necessities of life. However, in the smartphone age, as we can see in Fordsburg, young migrants work to buy a certain lifestyle, which apparently becomes a necessity of life. This is contrary to the necessities of life for a worker in the classical Marxist understanding which is bread, clothing, and shelter. This is usually determined as the bare necessities to keep the "body and soul together" and thus become the minimum standard of living (Brooks, 2002). What labourers are demanding now is due to the effects in the advancement in technology (smartphone, electronic technological devices) which was not a widely discussed phenomenon at the time of Marx. Marx in his *Poverty of Philosophy* (1955) was critical of technology. For him the available technology would determine the economic structure which is the foundation of society. In the context of contemporary migration, the idea of necessities of life and communicative technologies such as cell phones are interrelated. For labour migrants, basic necessities override the food and clothing narrative of survival and incorporates materialistic needs like cell phones. This constitutes

the idea of growing consumption among migrant workers, where labour migrants are not merely labourers but consumers of global capital.

Lifestyles of migrants

First of all, let me clarify what I mean between 'Lifestyle migration' and the 'Lifestyle of migrants'. Lifestyle migration is an emerging concept mostly based in and discussed in the West. It has a different meaning from the 'Lifestyle of migrants' discussed in this section. In spite of the differences in the methodological approach of the two concepts of lifestyles, it becomes important to point to the difference and clarify the similarities for an understanding of the argument. I accept that employing 'lifestyle' in the context of Fordsburg migrants might not be consonant with the approach of 'Lifestyle migration' studies. However, juxtaposing these two themes might initiate a debate on how concepts acquire inflections in different geographies in the metropolis and the periphery. So what is the relevance of the idea of lifestyle migration to the stories of Fordsburg's migrants?

Lifestyle migrants are those who migrate to gain a 'good life'. These migrants are mostly from the developed countries who undertake migration to be "anti-modern, escapist, and to reinvent self" (Benson and O'Reilly 2009a, 2009b; O'Reilly and Benson 2009). It is mostly seen as retirement migration, leisure migration, or otherwise seasonal migration. Such types of migrants, as explained by O'Reilly and Benson (2009), are relatively affluent migrants. Migrants mostly migrate from the North to South or within the North. Migrants in the UK migrate to Cyprus, Turkey, or rural parts of France (Benson, 2010); similarly, migrants from the USA migrate to other countries like Mexico and elsewhere. According to Castles and Miller (2009: 5) it is not necessary that only a poor population moves, migration between the rich countries is increasingly visible in global migration trends. This means North to South or North-North migration takes place around the notion of 'lifestyle'. Here, lifestyle means to have a "quality life" as opposed to just a "better

life" (O'Reilly and Benson 2009: 5). Having a quality life is to have good housing, weather, and is usually considered as a certain kind of lifestyle. This perspective is taken from the European/American view, but what a lifestyle means for a young Indian labour migrant—who is not migrating to enjoy the perks of cheap costs, a healthy climate, and freedom from individualisation and excess taxes—is different. Literature produced in the recent years that focuses on the quality of "lifestyle" as a reason for migration (Cohen, Duncan and Thulemark 2015; Benson and O' Reilly, 2009a, 2009b; O'Reilly, K. and Benson, 2009; Huete, Mantecón, and Estévez, 2013) concentrate on the movement in the first world. The space of Fordsburg and migration in the Global South allows us to understand the lifestyle phenomenon differently and move beyond Eurocentric observations that fail to address the southern context. The migrants to Fordsburg offer an alternative argument to the theories of the North. Fordsburg migrants present a process of active migration taking place in the Global South.

The migrants discussed here come from the rural parts of Gujarat, Kerala, and Maharashtra. There are a few exceptions from the urban areas of these states. When I talk about lifestyle, I am referring to the ways they communicate, do business, interact and use modern technologies like mobile phones and tablets, which are often discussed among the migrants. As opposed to the descriptions offered by scholars in the North (cf. Benson, 2010). 'Lifestyle' for young Indian migrants is an aspiration to the lifestyle of the rich in India; that is, they replicate lifestyle patterns in India. They escape Indian conditions and reinvent themselves by appropriating basic attributes that make one modern. Hence, according to them, being modern is to carry electronic devices and to wear certain clothes. Therefore, the notion of 'lifestyle' here will be studied with perspectives different from those suggested by the scholars from the North.

Ghoolam, when he first arrived in Fordsburg in 2009-10 was a different person. His employer Ali, observed:

> "He was shy, polite and never used to look into the eyes of foreigners or elders as a mark of respect. He always kept his voice low and did the things extremely fast, as he was used to get the things done in India. There people want you to finish the work fast, fast and very fast."[54]

When I interviewed Ghoolam I could see the changes in his lifestyle. Now he is no longer shy; talks to people and deals with customers with confidence. He has no one above him to tell him what to do. Most times, he knows what his job is, and completes the work even before told. His voice demonstrates his level of confidence. He trains new arrivals who are not used to the new working environment.

Ghoolam is an example of how the lifestyle of a person changes in a new environment in a short span of time. Ghoolam comes from the Kathiawar area in Gujarat, (he did not mention his village) but stressed that Kathiawar is famous and known all over so he prefers to say that he is from Kathiawar. He says that initially, he was a shy village boy who had limited access to the lifestyle of university going youngsters in Surat. He always wanted to be like the university students of Surat; he aspired to that lifestyle and believed that lifestyle is all that matters to make you a better person. And thus, the hunt for a better lifestyle drove him to South Africa. Migrants perceived South Africa as an alternative option to Europe or America. For them, it was a country with diverse job opportunities and business options. South Africa, being the leading economy of Africa, offered positive dreams for the future. It is more "modern," said Ghoolam, than the Congo or Rwanda. Lifestyle, then, for the modern-day youth, is one of the main reasons to escape situations where they cannot afford a decent lifestyle.

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[54] Interview, Ali, 2nd June 2013.

There is a connection between the lifestyle and food and clothing habits of migrants. A lifestyle refers to everyday activities, including decisions and actions involving smartphones. Food and clothing habits are part of the changing migratory experiences, which are connected to advances in media and technology as much as immersion in consumer behaviour. Everyday activities of labour migrants influence their behaviour, while food and clothing habits become, at times, an expression of self and identity. Lifestyle, is something to be demonstrated in public. Hence, it becomes important for one to manage the overall components of life for migrants. The use of modern technologies, like smartphones and tablets, among migrants is highly visible. The connection of technology and migration is an emerging concept which is studied by Madianou and Miller (2011a) in their work on migration and the incorporation of technology in communication for migrants in the UK. Migration involves the separation of families. Hence, the means to communicate becomes pivotal to staying in touch with the family back home. In the smartphone age, once the costs of living are met, communication across long distances becomes easy and accessible for the migrants who have communication devices (Madianou and Miller, 2012). This is important for a migrant to maintain familial contact as much as personal affiliations, now made easy by the availability of technology. It was mostly letters that governed personal communications for migrants a few years ago (Madianou and Miller, 2011b).

The main concern of this chapter, however, is not to examine the impact of communication devices but to ascertain the way these devices have brought change in the experiences of migration. Migration here, as will be discussed later, is a site for capturing significant life moments, conveying messages, bragging about achievements, demonstrating richness, and demanding

respect. It is a matter of pride and status for someone to have the latest phone or tablet and gather a crowd around him.[55] Since most migrant labourers cannot afford a smartphone back home.

Similar observations are made by Lucht (2012) in Italy concerning African migrants who use expensive phones to demonstrate their high status and prosperity. Carrying such devices and attracting the attention of his fellow countrymen has a larger significance. Material objects invoke the feeling of being someone among migrants who has more value and authority, which is then translated into respect from other migrants who go to him for seeking advice on various issues. These range from immigration consultations, to advice on sending remittances or to borrow some money. A smartphone for a migrant can provide a form of recognition that is akin to being someone influential in their village. Ghoolam's testimony explains how it generates a hierarchy of respect. Ghoolam recounted:

> "I had a Nokia 1100 model for years and all I could with it was answer the phone or else play the snake game in boredom. It had limited facilities. I used to get annoyed, sometimes even jealous after seeing people from the upper class that used to always flash their latest phones with great pride demonstrating their status. We used to see it with great admiration. I could not afford it, and I could have never bought it in India."[56]

There is a reason why he could not have bought it ever in India. Smartphones in India cost around 10,000 rupees or more. That is a price which a small retailer/petty businessman, who invests in a shop and sells things with a low profit margin, can rarely afford. As the business grows, he reinvests his capital for furthering his business. An amount like that is also a good investment to start a small business.[57] A person that earns around 4,000 to 5,000 rupees per month, and then receives an extra 10,000 rupees would rather use that towards house and family needs, than on

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[55] On the status symbol and showing off of cellphones in the public. Lycett and Dunbar (2000) observe this behaviour akin to "Lekking" where male advertises his qualities in the social group by displaying aesthetics of making one-self. It is a suggestive of attracting the other sex' attention.

[56] Interview, Ghoolam , 16th January, 2013.

[57] Based on multiple stories of labour migrants.

buying mobile phones, tablets, and other electronic gadgets. The class of labour migrants coming to South Africa are mostly from these backgrounds. Therefore, they would have never compromised their family needs with the purchase of a smartphone. For example, Ghoolam is son of a labourer who, along with his family, lived in shacks. He started working by the age of 16 to support his family. When he migrated at the age of 20, he started sending some money home to improve the basic conditions of his family. He now makes decent money to proudly show off his Galaxy S series smartphone to his colleagues in the flea market. He further explained the need for smartphones, saying, "It is useful for one to communicate without paying, by using [the] WhatsApp application or BBM."[58] Once a migrant has a new phone, he develops what I call the 'technological attitude,' where a migrant never misses an opportunity to display his phone or tablet. The migrant also begins to talk in a different tone with confidence. The abjectness of being a migrant seems to fade away slowly, with the feeling that he is technologically equal to other people, so he is able engage with people that he used to admire or even envy. For example, bragging about his latest purchase, Ghoolam said:

> "*Aaj kal ka zamana sirf BBM aur WhatsApp pe chalata hain bhai.*" (These days everything works with BBM and WhatsApp.) It is easy for me to communicate with BBM, since I cannot attend the calls during working hours (*kaam che bhai kaam*).

When I first exchanged my cell phone number with Ghoolam, he asked me to send the BBM pin. I responded that I do not have a Blackberry. Then he asked to me to send a WhatsApp message, and I said I have neither of them. He replied, flabbergasted,

> "Which world are you living in? Seems like you are lost in the old generation. Here everything is adjusted with these new devices, if you need to stay in touch you will have to get connected, or else I won't write to you."[59]

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[58] WhatsApp and BBM are applications that offer affordable messenger services, available to smartphone users.
[59] Interview, Ghoolam , 16th January, 2013

And until today Ghoolam has never sent me a message or called me as I am not on the above mentioned e-platforms. When I met him after three months, he proudly showed me his new Galaxy tablet phone (Fig. 18). This shows that migrants are aware of the latest developments in technology; they make sure to keep themselves updated with the latest phone applications and software in the market. Ghoolam can now take pictures, make videos, and upload them on his Facebook page for his friends in India, to keep them up to date with his life in a foreign country. And finally he can Skype with his family and his friends, who also have one of the smartphones sent by Ghoolam. Harney (2013), studies the use of mobile phones and their cultural and commercial impact on the lifestyle of migrants. In his case study, the usage of Facebook among migrants in Italy demonstrates that almost 90% migrants had Facebook accounts. This is seen as a 'lucky' generation of migrants who compare themselves with an older generation of migrants that had no access to mobile phone technology. However, the social entailments of smartphone usage are not visible in Harney's work, even if there is a sociological awareness of new technologies.

Figure 18. One of the migrant labourers displaying his newly bought Galaxy note (Author's photograph, November 2013)

Beyond talking about the benefits of having a smartphone, Ghoolam never mentioned the economics of lifestyle; rather, he avoided it. I use the term economics of lifestyle to understand the costs to maintain a certain lifestyle. He could have sent money to India to invest in some property, or could have bought some consumer goods for the amount that he spent on his device. Instead, maintaining a lifestyle is seen as more important than those. Ghoolam's lifestyle has indeed changed from what it used to be in India. He can now brag about his achievements by flashing his mobile phone, using new technological devices in public and sending WhatsApp messages to his colleagues. The important thing to notice in Ghoolam's lifestyle is that, while he was not necessarily enjoying his life in South Africa, since he always talked to me about returning to India, he was trying to convince himself about the fruits of his sacrifice and hard work. The things that he always envied in other people are now part of his life, and he can now help his family

and relatives to afford such a lifestyle. It is difficult for his family in India to get on the internet and Skype with him, but after sending the smartphone to them, he can now see his family and communicate often, which was not possible for the immediate post-1994 migrants.

Madianou and Miller's work (2011a, 2012) explicitly discussed the way communication in the modern age became a means to convey a certain type of message. Initially, it was an expensive and difficult task for a migrant to get on the phone to communicate back home. But after the invention of modern devices, a migrant can choose among the various options s/he has: "calling through a landline, mobile phone, or Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP), or via applications such as Skype" (Madianou and Miller, 2012: 170). 'Skyping' has increased enormously among Indian labour migrants. The face to face communication available easily on a smart phone gives access to the inner world of the migrant's family. It seemed to me almost all of them Skype with their family and friends. For some it is a comfort of seeing their children and wives; for some it is to provide assurance to their parents that they are not getting spoiled by the lifestyle of a foreign country like South Africa.[60] Exhibiting a modern lifestyle is not only particular to young migrants; elderly migrants demand such smart devices as well. One of the elderly migrants, Ahmed, asked his fellow colleagues to get the latest smartphone for his younger son who had just passed his university undergraduate course in Surat. He had promised him a good cell phone if he scored good marks in the examination. He told his colleagues that, "My son always asks for a smartphone since his friends in the university were equipped with such devices. I could have never afforded to buy him [one] during his university years, but now I think I can fulfil his demands." Hence, we see migration is seen as a means to achieving dreams relating to consumer goods—in this case, mobile phones and electronic gadgets. We can see wealth and status being balanced with these

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[60] Sunil, 27 August, 2013

'cultural ornaments' (Lycett and Dunbar, 2000). Lycett and Dunbar (2000) explain how cell phones as a male cultural ornament have added to the list of other status boasting consumer goods like 'cosmetics, clothing, watches, vehicles and other accessories' (94).

Becoming an adult and a man

Labour migrants with low hierarchy jobs tend to ignore their condition in the host country (South Africa); instead they celebrate their achievements back home. Massey et al. (1993: 441–42) discussed the motivation for a labour migrant to work in the lower scale of the occupational hierarchy: Though the foreign job might be lower in status, a labour migrant "does not view himself as being a part of receiving society." Hence, when they are working in a low status job, migrant labourers do not see themselves as lower, because they are not concerned with the hierarchies in the host country. Instead, they have people in their home country who form an 'audience' for their achievements. They send the latest consumer goods back home and that continues to be their motivation to work in the host society. Sending mobile phones and tablets from South Africa is not the only trend. Some might just send the money to buy such goods in India, and others might buy a second-hand device in Fordsburg to send home. Such acts are seen as part of becoming a responsible adult male by the young migrants who have migrated to prove themselves. Osella and Osella (2000) observe that in order to demonstrate masculinity in South India, the displaying of cash wealth was a way of gaining the status of adulthood among the return migrants from Gulf States. In Fordsburg, displaying electronic gadgets and sending the latest technological devices home has become important to demonstrate masculinity, instead of displaying hard cash. The important point to note here is mobile phones and electronic devices indicate changing lifestyles in a modern era.

Initially, if a labour migrant came to South Africa, his primary aim was to repay his debts back home and build a house in his village to demonstrate his achievements. It was because of the nature of migration itself. Migration during those days was primarily undertaken to repay the heavy debts taken at home. Nowadays, having modern devices in the village and talking on Skype has become part of a changing lifestyle, which I call 'smartphone migration'. Smartphone migration is a modern-day form of migration wherein migrants re-locate with various aspirations; they move not only for economic necessities but to enhance their lifestyles back home. It is slowly, not radically, shifting from the past attributes of lifestyle. The lifestyle discussed in this section involves demonstrating the ability to consume goods that are expensive in the Indian market. Smartphones, like Galaxy Tab and Blackberry, and tablets are products which range between 20,000 to 30,000 Indian rupees. Hence, possessing a smartphone makes migrants appear modern and wealthy. Therefore, one of the first things they do is to get the latest smartphone. Of the migrants that I interviewed and observed, everyone possessed smartphones. Having a smartphone becomes very important for a migrant in Fordsburg; it is projected as a basic necessity. Most of the time, family members in India demand such devices from their relatives in South Africa to brag about their migrant relatives' accomplishments. This scenario appears contrary to the traditional process of migration, wherein a migrant from rural parts who migrated to the developed world used to buy land, build a house or set up a business back home (Castles and Miller, 2009: 33). Buying land was a mark of prestige to demonstrate the achievements. What we see here however, is no major effort taken by the migrants to buy land back home. Instead, they spend their earnings on technological gadgets and consumer goods to increase their "prestige value" (Massey et al. 1993: 452). Consumerism and consumption rather than investment has become the default

paradigm. Armaan, a waiter in his early 20s from Mumbai explained how a mobile phone in India described his status and social belonging.

> "One day I was with friends in Nasik at one of the malls. We ordered a coffee, while I was waiting for the coffee I decided to use the free Wi-Fi offered by the café. As I started to use my iPhone 5, people passing by were giving me strange looks. I was like what the fuck, what has happened? Was there something wrong about my face that they are staring at me? Later my friends told that people in India of my age generally use pirated fake version of the iPhone. Since I had the original one they were keen to look at it. iPhone carried a certain value at home; it made me different from the others."[61]

The migrants that I observed were young, mostly unmarried and reasonably free from the responsibilities of family and relationships. They tend to regulate the economic balance of social life by spending more on 'lifestyle', rather than investing in life insurance policies, financial capital or fixed deposit bank accounts. Osella and Osella (2007) observed that married migrants in South India invest their money in private loan companies to ensure liquidity and easy movement of cash. But for Fordsburg's young migrants, investment in private finance companies is far from their plan. Their primary intention is to satisfy the temporary needs and not to think of long term investments. Hence, we can see that earned wealth is spent on the present needs and the rest is sent home.

The discussion leads us to think about 'modernity'. Modernity is not a static term but changes according to culture, location, language, and profession. In the Global South, the term modernity has a wide range of meanings grounded in the current paradigm of consumerism and the performance of identity through accessories. In Indonesia for example, being modern is to have a "modern lifestyle" (Rigg, 2007: 59). Similarly, in Thailand, being modern is to be able to buy the accessories that define modernity; which includes modern (Western clothes) and consumer goods, like technologically advanced gadgets, from "mobile phones to personal stereos" (Rigg,

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[61] Armaan, 11 May, 2015

2007: 62; cf. Osella and Osella, 2000). This has given rise to a "consumerism" phenomenon. As Rigg (2007: 67) argues, the pressure to become modern has "infiltrated every crack, corner and fissure of the world" in the Global South. To cope with the pressures of modernity, migrating to a space of wealth is seen as a way to engage on one's own terms. This pressure is widely seen among the working class youth of the Global South, be they from Indonesia, India, Thailand, Laos, South Africa, Pakistan, Bangladesh, or Nepal.

For a modern youth migrant labourer in Fordsburg, modernity manifests itself in a degree of achievement. Rigg (2007: 44, 139) has shown that the desire among the youth of Global South is to attain a high profile lifestyle. Similar patterns can be seen in the context of Indian labour migrants who tend to migrate to search for a (new) "modern" life. In case of Ghoolam, as mentioned above, it was lifestyle that mattered the most, and his quest for a modern life style brought him to South Africa. Modernity crosses interests of various cultural, economic and social aspects of life. With these narrations and stories, I have shown that the effects and consequences of migration change due to the change in migrant's life. In some cases, 'change' means having a smartphone (Parnwell, 1993; Richmond, 1988a).

Clothing habits

In this section, I will try to explain clothing habits among labour migrants, as a part of their shifting lifestyle. Changing habits among migrants are seen as a course of "adaptation," as explained in Herskovits's *Acculturation* (1938), where a person creates a hybrid of two cultures; his own and another. Taking from this explanation, I argue that changing food and clothing habits are part of the "adaptation processes" among new migrants in Fordsburg. The process of "adaptation" according to Richmond (1988a: 111) is a multidimensional process in which, "acculturation interacts with economic adaptation, social integration, satisfaction and degree of identification in

the new country" of arrival. Oonk's work (2009; 2013) on Indians in East Africa recorded the changing food and clothing habits in detail from the late nineteenth century onwards. While analysing the changing dressing habits among the elite business class of Indian migrants, his study gives an overview of the South Asian dressing sense (clothing habits) in an abstract way, without focusing on the overall aspects of South Asian class and regional diversities. According to him, clothing habits represented class, profession, and identity for the labour migrants. During the early years of the twentieth century, Indian businessmen in global or multi-national businesses dressed in a suit and tie, while they preferred wearing traditional and religious clothes in shops and in community functions. In the present-day context, this has totally changed.

According to Oonk (2013), wearing the traditional dress is influenced by the religion and region one comes from. Clothing habits during the early years of the twentieth century carried certain values and resources of identity. Today, it does not necessarily carry the same values as it did in the past. In order to avoid abstract generalisations, I will look at particular classes of Indians: the working class, traders, and new migrants in general. These three classifications will further my argument about changing sartorial and dietary habits among migrants after coming to South Africa. These observations are necessary to locate the differences as seen among migrants. Changing habits offer a clear picture of the migrant's acceptance of "adaptation." I will explore the trajectories of how migrants change, if at all. I will furthermore situate the argument of changing habits among migrants as part of a modernisation process. During my ethnographic research, I closely observed the changing habits of clothing and food among migrants. They included migrants coming from differing age groups, regions, castes, and religions. These aspects are important to locate the argument, for in India, food habits are determined by these factors. In the modern era, clothing habits have changed to Western styles of shirts, pants, and jeans. Finally, I

will observe the effects of clothing on the appearance of a person. I shall ask the question of whether a migrant labourer maintains his hair style, beard, and earrings to reproduce his identity along with the Westernized clothes he wears.

Influence of Islam on clothing fashion

For Muslim migrants in Africa, clothing signifies one's identity as being a Gujarati, demonstrating Pan-Islamic and Arab connectedness. This appearance is somewhat similar to the Indian Muslims in South India (Osella and Osella, 2007). Clothing for a Muslim man becomes an important aesthetic of identity. Migrants are cultural and symbolic bearers of the village/religious identity, which is represented in the closed community performances in Fordsburg. To understand the changing habits of clothing among Muslims, I turn to my respondent Ghoolam. Ghoolam comes from a Sunni Muslim background. He was hired by one of the Sunni Muslims, who also comes from Gujarat. Ghoolam's appearance is a distinctive representation of a young Indian Muslim. He maintains short hair, with discreet sideburns, a beard grown to emulate the Prophet Muhammad, and he occasionally applies *surma*[62] to his eyes. He wears a black *kurta*[63] to avoid the *buri nazar* (evil eye)[64]; jeans rolled from the bottom so that if he happens to visit the Mosque he will not take the dirt along with the jeans he is wearing; and finally a good pair of branded sports shoes. He manages his modern lifestyle with these gestures. He does not want to feel like a villager by wearing only white *kurtas*, so he prefers wearing *kurtas* in different colours. He wears jeans instead of pyjamas; and some accessories like necklaces and wrist bands, to add a modern touch to his

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[62] *Surma* is antimony applied by Muslim men during special occasions, like Jumma, Friday prayers.

[63] A *kurta* is a loose shirt predominantly worn by males, which has different styles; it can be as long as below the knee, or short until the waist.

[64] It is taboo among most South Asian cultures that people have wrong intentions towards you, for this might affect your life. So in order to avoid it, one wears black, by way of *kurta*, *surma*, or a dot of kajal (Kohl).

outfit. Like Ghoolam, there is another Gujarati who works in a juice shop and who serves as a good example of the presentation of modernity through clothing habits.

Shoaib was recruited by one of his distant relatives, who is a South African Indian now in his late fifties. Shoaib's appearance gives an impression of his educational background and maturity in dealing with customers. He loves sports. This is evident in his appearance. He wears a skullcap to cover his head, grows his beard like Ghoolam, wears a Barcelona football club T-shirt, jeans rolled from the bottom above the ankle, and a pair of branded sports shoes. The significance of this appearance is the influence of Tablighi Jamaat,[65] which encourages their followers to maintain the "pious" look in society. Tablighi Jamaat was introduced in South Africa by Indian Muslim scholars in 1962. Since then the influence of Tablighi Jamaat is seen in the everyday appearances of South African Indian Muslims, across age groups (Hansen, 2012: 244, 320). This is evident with the appearance of young South African Muslim Indians who try to maintain the pious look in social and religious ceremonies. Altaf for example is a hip-hop loving young male who wears stylish t-shirts, low-waist jeans exposing his underwear, and sneakers, but if he has to attend certain ceremonies he has an Arabic style scarf which he always carries in his bag. Whenever required he wears it in the Arabic fashion to make himself presentable in the presence of elderly Muslims. Similarly, Nadiya and her friends wear a *hijab* (head scarf) often. They say "it is of our own volition and we love to wear *hijab*. It not only has religious affiliation but personally too I like it. Some of my Muslim friends do not like it while I do and we are fine with it."[66]

This disciplining of fashion within Islamic codes of practice has significantly gained due to the Tablighi Jamaat's influence in mosques and weekly sermons. Vahed (2000) offers a critical

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[65] *Tablighi Jamat* is an Islamic movement which has evolved from the Deobandi movement. Their primary principles are inspired by the works and life of Prophet Muhammad. The movement was started in 1926 by Muhammad Ilyas al-Kandhlawi in India. For more, see http://tablighijamaat.org.

[66] Interview, Nadiya, 20 November, 2014

analysis of the gesture of being pious. He claims it has little to do with piety but more to do with the growing influence of Jamaat that has gained prominence over the past few decades. A few Muslim women questioned the legitimacy of the veil, as the practice was not deemed compulsory by the founders of the Jamaat in South Africa. These neo-Islamic practices introduced by the Jamaat have to do with the South Asian manifestations of Islam and the political differences among factions in that part of the world which are re-interpreted by its branches in South Africa (Hansen, 2012). Hence, among the immigrants, Shoaib's appearance is in some way similar to Ghoolam's appearance, but there lies a distinction in the personalities of both Indian Muslim migrants, which will be discussed in a short while.

Shoaib came to Fordsburg from Gujarat in 2009 on a visiting visa. In his early twenties, he started to work with a local South African businessman who employed him in the year 2010. Shoaib had to work hard to impress his boss, who eventually decided to continue his contract. He has applied for a work permit. Shoaib sees himself as a modern guy with both traditional and religious affiliations and does not want his boss and relatives to feel that he is westernising himself. Shoaib struggles to maintain a modern identity in his clothing habits, along with being a pious, religious persona. Although he is aware of the fact that his grown beard and folded pants are his choice, he does not want people to feel that he is the same rural man from Gujarat. So when he talks to others, he adopts a South African Indian-Black mixture of accents, uses newly invented vocabularies by young people like saying, "bru" for "brother," "dog" for "friend," "What y' doin'?" for "What are you doing?" He stresses particular syllables to sound like a South African. He avoids Indian slang while speaking English, which would mark him as a new migrant. He ends his conversation with "neh" a typical South African Indian-Black way to end a statement. For example, "This food is good neh." He also stresses on "is" and the words starting with "r" and

repeats "is" in a statement instead of "it" which is an Indian South African way of speaking. For example, "That one? Is good I would trrie (try) it" with a soft on "t" making it sound "tá" (as in theatre). He has developed this style of speaking over the years and his work allows him to merge with the non-Indian Hindi/Gujarati speaking people.[67]

When I communicated with him for the first time in Hindi, he replied in English. Months later, after getting to know him personally, he still continued to answer me in English. To differentiate himself from other new arrivals, he attempts to speak differently; he also does this because he will most likely continue living in South Africa, which is a process of "anticipatory socialization." Fanon (1970: 13) explains the idea of language among non-white speakers. The ability to grasp a certain language puts one in a dominant position, but above all, it means to "assume a culture." Moreover, it is evidence of "dislocation and separation" from the group one is born in (Fanon, 1970: 19). Furthermore, discontinuing the normal way of life is to disregard the past, which according to Giddens (1990), is a mode of modernity that implies the discontinuity with the past. For Shoaib, avoiding Indian slang is to incline towards modernity, an action to overcome the rural and traditional barriers of the past. This way, we can see how language affirms a disregarding of the past, the discontinuation of which is considered a symbol of modernity. Additionally, language and communicative patterns among immigrants are a primary means of acknowledging and marking social identity, and to work for inclusion in certain groups which they want to be part of. It also develops and reproduces social boundaries that define one's belonging to a certain section of the society (Bailey, 2000).

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[67] This was observed among other migrants also who were working in a local South African company/shop that forced them to interact in English with local Indians and other South Africans. This has heavily influenced their English accent. Ghoolam also speaks in the similar fashion. One can see they have evolved and adopted the style of speaking which is notably influencing their lifestyle. 15 March 2015.

Ghoolam and Shoaib come from different parts of Gujarat. Both arrived almost in the same year. Both are young Muslim men in their mid-twenties. They escaped rural barriers to become modern and sophisticated persons. They have applied for a work permit. Both speak good English and deal with customers of diverse ethnicity. They are more confident about their life in South Africa than in India. Both of them exhibit their respect towards religious norms and also practice their modern lifestyle. Clothing habits have changed their appearance. Their appearance has modestly changed and both are happy to compromise their culture and tradition for the stake of their dressing habits. Ghoolam and Shoaib are in many ways typical of all the young Muslim migrants in the Fordsburg flea market, who balance modernity and tradition. Luckily they are successful in this, for they receive no complaints from family members and elderly employers. Modernity for young migrants like Ghoolam and Shoaib is what Rigg (2007: 67) called, "the lingua franca of connection." It becomes a staged demonstration to have the dual representation of being a Muslim and a fashionable person, which is a self-representation of a "progressive" outlook. Osella and Osella (2007) studied South Indian Muslims' clothing styles. The dress code for a Muslim man makes reference to the "Islamic idioms of modesty," and in Fordsburg's sense, it is a global style of Islamic "decent dress" that confirms a separate Muslim identity. Clothing style for a Muslim migrant is a way of affirming certain beliefs rooting one's identity in a different space. The dress is the signature of fashion statement and social prestige for young men in Fordsburg. As Ghoolam rightly put it, "Posh clothes, luxurious lifestyle and traditional affiliations are something very important to most of us."

Hindu identity

Moving on, I will give an account of two Hindu migrants and their clothing habits to analyse the role of religion and its influence on identity. It is necessary to compare Hindu and Muslim migrants

because, in India, dressing habits are heavily "produced, performed and read through" the fine distinction between Hindus and Muslims (Osella and Osella, 2007: 8). Muslims' dressing style is typically more conservative when compared to the Hindus' style which is aspirational i.e. to dress like a westerner. The conservative style follows some religious norms, like wearing the pants above the ankle and not having styled shirts and jeans. Whereas the liberal style refers to having styled clothes, wearing low-waist jeans, having tattoos, pierced ears, and skull-necklaces. In the following examples, I argue that the dressing habit is not only about religion or tradition, but also about background, profession, and culture. During my study, I closely observed Hitesh, a self-employed petty businessman trading in Indian women's accessories; and Bharat, a barber who came to South Africa in 2012. In these two examples, I will show that age and profession matter for a person to assimilate in a new environment and change according to the local standards. Changing oneself to be more local can be done easily by clothing habits, and I will try to elaborate this in the following examples.

Hitesh sells Indian accessories imported from India in the flea market. Hitesh arrived in South Africa in the year 1999 from Surat. He works for an energy company SASOL on one of its gas stations during the weekdays, and on weekends, he trades in the flea market. He owns a space for a stall, made of two tables. Being Hindu, his appearance makes him look different in the Muslim-dominated flea market. His hair cut is in a "crew cut" style with some coloured brown tints on the sides. His right ear is pierced with a gold ring. He wears golden bracelets and finger rings on both hands. His right arm has a small tattoo invisible to the viewer. His clothing style appears more western than his Muslim counterparts. He wears Armani T-shirts and Diesel jeans; he changes his shoes often depending on the type of clothes he is wearing. If he has shirt and jeans on, then he wears leather shoes; if he is wearing T-shirt or a vest, he prefers wearing sports shoes,

or if it is cold, he wears boots. Every time I saw him, he had something new to show. If asked, he would continue talking about his new pair of shoes, necklace, or bracelets. And immediately he would refer to the person who is selling those. Needless to say, they were all fake brands, imported from the nearby China mall or the Ethiopian market in the town (chapter 6). He models for someone else's business in Fordsburg. Hitesh is a well-known personality among the traders of the flea market.

Whenever I saw him, he maintained a low profile and did not interact much with other people except his neighbours. He never lost an opportunity to brag about his high level diplomatic connections and channels. His 'brag talk' includes stories ranging from business success to internationally connected friendships. "*Apna connection Jooma (Zuma) ke office main bhi hain. Mere visa ki baat wahan tak chal rahi hain* (I have connections with Zuma's office as well. I am in the process of getting some confirmation on my visa)." Although his statements are vague and probably untrue, Hitesh is not worried about others' reactions or outcomes. Once, a neighbour was picking on Hitesh for his hyperbolic statements and mocking him for his behaviour. But this did not stop Hitesh from starting on another topic. Migrants in the 'lifestyle era' present themselves as being fearless and confident of their being in the host society, craving acknowledgement from others.

Hitesh always had something to contribute to discussions. During a conversation about my work experience in London, he said that his sister stayed near the Gatwick Airport. He said he would ask her to meet me once I go back to London. "Before departing to London please do see me. My sister is in London, I will give you her address, you can see her and her house as well." He wanted to emphasise that his sister is based in London and that she now owns a house. Talking about politics, he endorsed his connections with the local Fordsburg African National Congress

politician. His stall is situated at one of the entry points of the flea market, so he greets almost all the customers that enter the gate. He talks confidently and never underestimates his value. He is sure that he is a person whom you can get along with.

From the above narration, one thing to notice is his confidence in talking to recent acquaintances like me. He is successful in presenting his statements as true by the way he dresses and the way he talks. For example, in India, wearing a white starched shirt or kurta places one in a dominant position, since it suggests affiliations to political organisations. Similarly, in the trading space of Fordsburg, Indian migrants wear clothes that project prosperity. Hitesh displays his material status through gold rings on his ears and fingers. He wants the onlooker to notice him. Both his appearance and his way of conversing projects social dominance. This is often on display during discussions with his colleagues in the flea market. His appearance provides proof of his modern outlook and people think of him as superior because he is aware of many things happening around the world. Clothing here is a matter of dominance, placing someone in a high ranking order among labour migrants.

A second example is Bharat. Bharat arrived in South Africa on a tourist visa in September 2012. Bharat used to work as a barber in his village in Gujarat. He comes from the *maisuria*[68] caste which mostly engages in the barber profession. I was introduced to him by his colleague, Ashraf, when I went to get a haircut. From my Hindi accent, he guessed that I was from a region close to Mumbai (Maharashtra). He immediately started to recite the Marathi dialogues used in Hindi movies. He always talked to me in Hindi, unlike Shoaib who stressed the use of English. His appearance showed that he had just arrived from India. His ears were pierced; his hair style was a clone of Shahrukh Khan's new haircut from the Hindi movie, *Jab Tak Hai Jaan* (2013).[69] He

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[68] Also known as *Nai*, meaning barber. Maisuria caste appears in the middle ladder of Hindu caste system.
[69] Apart from haircut, clothing style is heavily influenced by the movie industry in India (Osella and Osella, 2007: 8).

dressed in a simple T-shirt (that had the name of his shop), blue jeans, and slippers. Talking with him, I discovered that he had arrived a month ago and was getting to know the locality.

Bharat was still a shy person; he rarely engaged with issues other than Mumbai, religious festivals, and club parties. I assumed from this that it was due to the fact that he had few other topics to engage with me apart from these, or that he did not want to talk about something he did not have knowledge of. He talked about Mumbai because he had been to Mumbai. About festivals, he would talk about Diwali and Holi, drawing a comparison between the Indian and South African way of celebration. Being a young man in his early twenties who wanted to enjoy South African life, like any other university student, he always engaged with me on issues of films, university life, clubs and tourism in South Africa. He would not talk about issues that he was not aware of, unlike Hitesh who could engage with you on any topic. Bharat once lied me that he was a married man. Later he revealed that he did not feel like telling the truth to a stranger, but over the course of time, when I become more familiar with him, he was more open and confident in discussing his personal life. He took his time to demonstrate trust and develop confidence. But for Hitesh, confidence was something he carried with him. Time and facts did not matter to him as much as it did to Bharat.

Bharat was still trying to adjust to the new environment. He did not speak English and preferred Hindi or Gujarati. He was obsessed with Hindi cinema, which is quite common among all Indian youth. He imitated his favourite actor's haircut. Over ten months, whenever I saw him he always had on a working apron to avoid contact with the hair that he cut. He had plans to stay only for three years in South Africa and then he wanted to go back. Therefore, there was no need

for him to adopt a persona and show his style to people whom he would not contact after three years. He just wants to work hard, accumulate wealth, and go back to India.[70]

The above illustrations of changing habits were observed in young migrants of diverse classes and religions. However, there is also a striking change visible in the clothing habits of older migrants. Most of the traders in flea market who are aged 30-plus wear traditional dress or simple shirt and pants. One can easily describe the class of a person based on their clothing habits. The workers in the shops wore low profile inexpensive shirts and pants, which were less shiny and bright; whereas owners wear more sophisticated shirts, sweaters, jackets, shoes, *attar* (perfume), or rich fabric kurta pyjamas. In this section, we have seen changing clothing habits among Indian migrants in South Africa. Previous works done on the Indian indentured immigration to South Africa and Indian labour immigration to East Africa show the way clothing has changed over the years (Oonk, 2009, 2013; Bharati, 1972). A survey of pictorial archives demonstrates remarkable change in the dressing habits of Indian immigrants in South Africa. A picture of the arrival of the first boat in South Africa and passengers disembarking from the boat highlights the changing circumstances of dressing habits among labour migrants. Desai and Vahed's (2010) work contains rich archival photographs that cover Hindu, Muslim, and Christian Indian immigrants during the nineteenth and twentieth century.[71] The poor, rural look of indentured labourer is seen in the photographs. Similarly, Oonk's (2013, 2009) work analysed the changing dressing habits of the Indian business class in East Africa. Pictures presented in the book help one to understand that dressing determined one's position and status in society and carried moral and social

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[70] Interview, Bharat, 15 February, 2013

[71] For more on this, see Desai and Vahed (2010) *Inside Indian Indenture.* A Muslim indenture who made fortunes after the termination of his contract is seen dressed in a typical rich Ismaili bohra style with cap, beard, and suit (p. 13). Similarly, for a Hindu migrant wearing turban, ears pierced with shaved beard and occasionally forehead 'bindi' marked the identity (p. 238). Another picture of Indian immigrants (coolies) arriving in South Africa at the port where all of them are seen wearing white shirt, dhoti and head covered with Turban (p. 59). Dressing amounted to represent one's religion and prestige in the society.

responsibility. Dress provided an opportunity for one to get away from past conditions and redefine oneself in a new culture (Desai and Vahed, 2010: 170–71, 194). Similarly, in the present era, exposure to foreign culture and the struggle within youth to maintain their traditional affiliations are best seen in their dressing habits. Young Muslim migrants present themselves as modern young Muslims, whereas for Hindu migrants, religion does not matter when it comes to clothing habits.

It must be understood that clothing provides a distinct identity and affiliation to a certain religion. It provides a shift from the Islamic idioms of modesty to Hindu idioms of free styling (Osella and Osella, 2007). There are no special requirements to maintain their appearance for Hindus, but many Muslims need to be in the traditional space and do not want to appear too Westernised. Muslims are warned against getting westernised through community policing which is not a direct threat but takes the form of indirect disciplining. Clothing is an invitation for further discussion about the lifestyle of a person. Therefore, a young Muslim migrant follows his own style of compromise between religion and modernism, what Osella and Osella (2007) called a negotiation between "decency and desire for fashion" among young Indian men. Apart from religious affiliations, the amount of time spent outside India, and choice of profession matter for a person to distinguish himself from others with modern clothing. Clothing in this context is a gesture of a person's activities, his past and future. And very modestly, it is demonstrated by every actor of the flea market.

Figure 19. One of the migrants, who runs a stall in the Flea Market. He is wearing PRADA sunglasses, DIESEL waist belt, ALL STAR CONVERSE shoes, Chinos and a branded shirt (Source: Author's photograph, November 2013)

Food habits

Let us now investigate what happens with food habits which are dependent on caste and religion of the person. Most Muslims are strict followers of Islamic dietary practices. Fordsburg is a Muslim-dominated area and one can easily find *Halaal* food. No pork produce is sold. In this section, I will briefly explore food habits among migrants and argue that food habits have not

changed among migrants. Firstly, it is because Fordsburg is an Indian area where it is possible to find all the dishes of Indian cuisine at an affordable rate. Secondly, take-aways, which are mostly western food, have little attraction for migrants in Fordsburg. I also saw that alcohol consumption among young migrants was visible despite the opposition among the trading community. There is only one liquor shop (beer bar) near the trading space of Fordsburg and the flea market. On the other hand; Fordsburg accommodates twenty-five to thirty restaurants providing different dishes of sub-continent cuisine, providing a wide fare to Indian migrants. Migrant labourers prefer cooking for themselves at least once a day, usually for dinner. One night I was invited to a 'boarding' residence of Ghoolam's friend.[72] On entering, I saw one person was cooking rice in a big pot for ten people, and on the other stove, dal was being cooked. If the boarding is shared by Muslim migrants, then they usually eat meat twice a week. The person responsible for cooking in the boarding house buys groceries, vegetables, meat, and snacks from Fordsburg market. A roster is prepared and the food is cooked by the residents who take turns depending on their availability.

A visit to Fordsburg during weekends is bound to surprise a visitor who has only been there during weekdays. The environment of Fordsburg is entirely different on the weekends. It is overcrowded; people struggle to find parking space for cars. Even walking on the streets is a difficult task, since the sidewalks are crowded with people and hawkers. The crowd is mostly due to people going to the restaurants. People come with their families and children to spend some time shopping and eating. There are different restaurants providing different tastes of India. Dosa Hut is famous for South Indian cuisine; Bay Leaf, has *Biryani* from Bangladesh; the Karachi restaurant sells Pakistani *kebabs*. Additionally, some restaurants like Kaashif's Fusion have

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[72] Boarding is a house that accommodates at least 10-12 immigrants in two rooms. They have one bathroom and kitchen. It is shared according to each one's shift. One of the migrant rents the house on his account, then he invites people to stay with him. Sometimes, they sleep on the floor with mattresses or sometime they have their own bed. The person who wants to stay in the boarding has to pay certain amount which covers his accommodation, food, electricity and gas bills.

Indian-European mixture: a base of creamy sauce with hot curries that accommodates variant, newly discovered food needs. Restaurants like Swaruchi put up signs saying "strictly vegetarian" to attract Hindus. Additionally, apart from the South Asian restaurants, there are various Western franchise food chains like KFC, Steers, Nando's, and Chicken Licken, Ocean Basket which offer contemporary Western style food. Apart from the posh restaurants, there are stalls that serve street food. It is mostly take-away food that targets poor labour migrants working in Fordsburg, who find this a reasonably cheap option.

Fordsburg is like a vast food plaza where you can eat, parcel food, buy the spices, groceries and almost all kinds of Indian—South Asian food. Food is the centre of attraction for customers coming to Fordsburg (Fig. 20). The workers that work in the restaurants tend to have their food in the restaurant itself and the ones who are working elsewhere either bring their food from home or eat in nearby restaurants. Mostly workers do not go to restaurants and prefer to eat their lunch in the shop. An important thing to note here is that nobody thinks of changing their dietary tastes and habits as they do with clothing. Among the Muslims, they only eat *Halaal* food and avoid going to the restaurants where non-*Halaal* food is served. I could not spot any Muslim migrant eating non-*Halaal* food; they generally bring lunch cooked at home, which is usually the leftover of the previous night's dinner.

Figure 20. Food and clothing dominates the flea market trade. In this picture we can see the food court runs parallel to the clothing stalls (Source: Author's photograph, March 2013)

Among Hindu migrants, there were both meat eaters and vegetarians. This could mean that migrants coming to Fordsburg were from different castes or that they had adopted different dietary habits. Bharat, for example, comes from the traditional "*maisuria*" caste which is predominately barbers. Likewise, Ashraf and Ghoolam come from an artisan caste, and Hitesh is a Brahmin. It is difficult to determine caste status accurately, as it was an uncomfortable discussion for the migrants. It is because some of them come from castes considered to be of lower status and they avoid discussing caste. Migrants like Hitesh were comfortable talking about their caste, as they belonged to the Brahmin caste, which is a privileged caste. Hitesh mentioned that he is a Brahmin,

emphasising his belief in the Hindu gods and weekly visits to the temple. He could not determine my caste, and hence did not investigate it.

Regarding eating preferences, whenever I saw Hindu migrants eating, it was either some snack like *chaat* (Fig. 21)[73] or samosa, which means either that they do not eat meat in public or that they practice vegetarianism. Hitesh often offered *chaat* whenever I visited his stall. He once invited me to have drink and food at his place, but refused to consume meat due to his caste practices. He said, "I am pure vegetarian. I am not allowed to eat the meat. How can I eat meat? It is not permissible." But when it came to drinking habits, they were free in discussing it. Hitesh told me, "We can go and have some alcohol, eat good food, but no meat. I do not eat meat." Bharat also said the same: "We can spend some time during the weekends, there is a bar around the corner but let's not think about meat." This might be because he wanted to show me that he was from a caste that practices vegetarianism, mostly upper castes. I could not get access to the personal eating habits of migrants. I suspect some of them, who have come in the last ten years, eat beef as well. It is because of local and African friend's networks and the easier availability of beef in South Africa than in India. It is also as cheap as chicken, and with more nutrition. Apart from having African friends, they are surrounded by Muslim colleagues, friends, partners, and employers. Their eating habits might have influenced them as well. Oonk (2013: 115), refers to it as "vegetarians in a meat-eating society," i.e. the Hindus living in East Africa.

There is another possibility that cannot be denied, about Hindu migrants not eating beef at all: it might be due to the reproduction of religious identity in the dominantly Muslim neighbourhood. Sometimes eating habits help them to represent their religion and caste identity. This is seen with dressing habits, when a Hindu migrant represents himself differently from the

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[73] *Chaat* is a typical Gujarati savoury dish made from flour and which can be eaten with boiled potatoes and sweet and sour tamarind juice.

Muslim in his dressing style and maintains that differentiation. But to what extent a Hindu migrant practices different eating habits is unclear. It is unclear due to the fact that, Hindu religion comprises of different castes, and it is the caste that determines eating habits, rather than the religion per se. Some of these practices are determined by the deity that they follow. A Shiva follower will avoid eating meat on Monday; if he believes in Sai, then he avoids eating meat on Thursday. Each day is dedicated to a particular god. Therefore, observing someone eating meat on a day will not answer the absolute question of food habits. Some might say, as it is said in India, "We are vegetarian except Sundays." This means that, people want to stress their vegetarianism, inclining towards a higher, ideal Hinduism which prohibits meat eating, but nevertheless their caste allows them to consume meat occasionally. However, what I could observe was that Hindu migrants practice vegetarianism in public and also respect religious festivals. If they do respect these festivals, then it does not necessarily mean that they practice vegetarianism.

Figure 21. Chaat being served at the Flea Market (Source: Author's photograph, March 2013)

Hindus and Muslims in Fordsburg are not homogenous when it comes to food habits on meat and alcohol consumption. However, an important thing to note is that nobody has shifted towards the South African habit of eating Boerewors rolls, steak, pap, or chicken fries and chips. During my field work, I have never seen a migrant going to KFC or Steers. All either ate the food made at home or prefer an Indian restaurant, because, as mentioned earlier, there is an availability of different Indian cuisines at affordable rates.

To sum up, this discussion concludes providing the changing habits of food and clothing among Indian labour migrants, who are becoming part of cultural process, of "acculturation." Changing habits of food also depend on the liberty of an individual. Since transactions carried out in the space of acquaintances have some limitations, which, according Faist (2000: 193), "curtails

the freedom of individual involved in significant ways." This can be elaborated with the example where some young migrants want to try food of African or other cultures, but they are not able to do that because of the constant community surveillance in the Fordsburg area, which prevents them from practicing certain habits. References like this open up the possibilities of respect and fear among young migrants, which restricts their freedom of individual choice in significant ways. During my casual interactions with Muslim migrants in Fordsburg, the young migrants expressed their desire to drink. Ghoolam looks around when talking about alcohol. He is cautious and does not want anyone to hear. He prefers to avoid a discussion on alcohol in public. He has a guilty facial expression when it comes to discussions on alcohol. Iqbal, a Bangladeshi waiter on the other hand wants to have drinks if I would offer him. "*Aap lekar jaoge toh kyun nahin, bilkul jayenge* (If you take me to drink then why not, sure)," says Iqbal shaking his head towards the right direction hinting to the alcohol without mentioning about it. For him it is an adventure and way to socialise with other people apart from his countrymen.

Changing habits of food and clothing give an understanding of the life of new migrants from India to Africa. The life stories and personal experiences of migrants provide useful insights on the contemporary situation of labour migrants' changing habits in the new work space. Based on food and clothing habits, one can see how a community disciplines itself. Disciplining comes from the norm that has been practiced by the community now relocated in a new space. Migrant labour has to adapt to the new rules made by the host community, and this is how they discipline themselves in order to gain access to the host community. This might be voluntarily or by force, but one cannot challenge the settled rules of the host community. If someone challenges or behaves contrarily, then he runs the risk of being ostracised by the community and thereby losing his livelihood and reputation.

The adaptation of English language

Chiswick and Miller (1995) in their study of the relationship between language and earnings explain the importance of language fluency in the life of labour migrants. Fluency helps a migrant in getting access to economic incentives, efficiency, and exposure. In this section, I will continue with the discussion on language and study its role as a part of cultural process among the labour migrant community in Fordsburg. Studying the language becomes important to understand the overall motivation towards cultural interaction and process of integration. Language is the process that explains migrants' motives and intentions in the receiving country for settlement. Dustmann (1999) in her work discusses the impact of language in the temporary migration process and sees it as a form of social capital for migrant workers.

The issue of language among migration studies becomes important because it allows for interdisciplinary research (cf. Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995). Regarding migrant communities, adoption of language has become a crucial factor for settlement, job, survival and business possibilities. I will however, present a picture of current migrants in Fordsburg who are using language not only for communication but also for developing close contacts with natives, building networks, and expanding their possibilities in various ventures and adapting to the new cultures. Adaptation of language is part of the cultural integration process. It is one of the criteria to enter smoothly into the receiving society (Dion and Dion, 2001). Among migrants, the question of language is a matter of thorough debate and I argue that native language is not necessarily an important aspect in migrant's life. It depends upon the nature of interaction, future plans and work place.

Language for most people in Fordsburg is a way of expressing their ties towards each other. If you as a customer start communicating with the shop owner in their native language, they seem

to be politer and humble in response to your requests. A brief conversation that starts with a "*kem che*"[74] can extend to a lengthy discussion which might end up with the exchanging of phone numbers. Language can be problematic as well; for example, when I talked to Imaan in Hindi, he was not willing to entertain me. His allegations against Mumbaikars[75] derived from his past experience. Taking into consideration these two trajectories, I will further my argument to explain how language becomes important to not only develop close ties or friendships; but also it becomes a way of dissociating from some ties: regional, national or religious. Differing accents, dialects and the use of slang from Hindi, Marathi and Gujarati betrays one's origin. Some migrants do not want to get rid of their original accent, which is a mark of respect for their culture and an affirmation of traditional ties. Whereas, some want to reject the accent and everything that it represents about their past. The flea market is a very diverse congregation of cultures. A person might notice variations in tones, ways of speaking and subtle differences in dialects.

Speaking in Gujarati or trying to speak in Gujarati with some Gujarati speaking traders irrespective of his caste, religion and region invites attention. Almost all the Gujarati traders whether Muslim or Hindu speak in Gujarati. In most instances, they employ a person who can speak in Gujarati. In case they cannot find a Gujarati speaking person, they will teach the person their language. Ghoolam's case is one such example. Ghoolam comes from Mumbai, works for a Gujarati and deals with English speaking customers. When he first arrived he says, he could only understand a little Gujarati but could not communicate. After two years now, he only speaks in Gujarati with his employer. When I go to see him, he attempts to speak in Marathi and he speaks in English with my South African or European friends. Now he is attempting to learn Zulu. His growing interest in learning new languages is evident with his career prospects. He did not want

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[74] *Kem Che* means, "How are you?" in Gujarati dialect.
[75] Referred to people coming from Mumbai.

to lose the job so he started learning Gujarati to communicate with his employer. He then learned English so as not to limit his career prospects. After learning Zulu, he will be confident enough to start a business in Zulu speaking areas, or partner with Zulu speaking South Africans. Language here is more of an expression of capabilities. In the competitive world, migrant workers do not want to get left behind because of a language barrier. With Ghoolam's plans to learn languages, one can easily surmise his future plans. He is not only looking for job prospects, or business opportunities, but has bigger dreams of settling down in South Africa. If he happens to fall in love with a black South African, he might get married as well.[76] There is a case of a South Indian getting married to a Congolese woman. His interest in marrying a Congolese African woman would have involved learning French initially. Therefore, it is possible that languages have a broader context.

Is English language important?

Moving on to adaptation of English language, it is not necessary for a migrant worker to learn English if s/he wants to trade/work in the flea market. There is a difference between learning a language and knowing the language. Indians with at least a primary school education from almost all the classes, castes and religions do have a minimal knowledge of English. Therefore, many if not most Indians who have been to school can attempt to speak and understand English. The migrants being discussed here are the migrants who have been educated at least till the seventh grade. When a migrant wants to deal with an English speaking customer he learns basic English words of interaction relating to his commodity. Imaan who sells jeans and t-shirts speaks in English with a "minimum of verbal exchange" (Richmond 1988a: 116) with his customer. Richmond

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[76] Regarding marrying a black South African, I have been told by the informants that Indians / South Asian immigrants do get married with a black Africans for the sake of visas and permits. It was reported in the work of Munshi (2013) where Bangladeshi migrants in South Africa marry African women. I have personally seen such couples at the Home Affairs during regular visits from 2012 – 2014 who came to get South African residence papers. Additionally, I was told by the civil societies that, Indians do not prefer marrying black Africans as their first choice. Hence, South African Indians are selected as an alternative option for marriage which in turn offers VISA, more like a contract marriage (Stella, 25 October, 2013).

(1988a) has defined the co-relation of language and adaptability of a migrant in his essay. His reference was related to the Greek community in the US which carried out its business effectively in spite of the minimum knowledge of English. All they could do was to, have a "minimum of verbal exchange."

Going back to Imaan, if he is asked to speak English, apart from a minimum vocabulary in English, he struggles to speak. This means he has learned enough English to sell his products to English speaking customers. If there are Gujarati, Kutchi, Hindi speaking customers he talks to them with equal confidence as he communicates with his English speaking customers. In this scenario we can see the language being instrumental in creating friendship and community. Sometimes there is also a fear of being mocked. If one of them starts speaking English fluently, fellow colleagues mimic the migrant for "being a white man" (Fanon, 1970: 15, 16).[77] Therefore to avoid humiliation by colleagues, English is avoided in personal discussions. The adaptation of language also depends on the intention of the migrant population. If the migrant is a returnee, then he has no reason to learn the local language since he has to go back to his home country. In Chiswick and Miller's (1993) study of Mexican migrant communities in the USA it was found that among the Mexican migrants in the USA language acquisition was less successful and it was due to their intention to return (Dustmann, 1999).

Influence of vernaculars

Some migrants like Shoaib who speak South African English and use typical dialects and accents to assimilate in the local culture have different motivations. He might just want to be part of the group of local South Africans. His network might be more than the colleagues of the flea market;

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[77] Fanon in his *Black Skin White Masks* explains the idea of language among the Martinique Negros. If one speaks French in Martinique, he is mocked as Whiteman. On the other hand, there is a sense of superiority among the non-white speakers who speak the language of whites.

he might have friend circles coming from local South African communities. But there are also some examples like Ali who has been in South Africa for the past 20 years and is married to a local South African Indian woman. Ali does not speak much English and instead prefers Gujarati or Hindi. His wife, who is of Gujarati Indian origin, struggles to speak in Gujarati but speaks excellent English. I was curious to see in what language these couples interact with each other. Ali speaks in Gujarati while she attempts to reply in fluent Gujarati, if she fails she answers in English. When this couple is together, Ali talks to me in Hindi and when I join the discussion with his wife, she is hesitant about answering in Hindi but instead answers in English or Gujarati. Talking to Ali in English does not give me an access to his personal space but joking in Hindi does. Whereas, talking with his wife in English puts me in a different space than when talking to her in Hindi. This interaction is interesting to understand the way language becomes part of cultural interaction. All of us are come from different cultural settings and apart from language there is little difference among us. But language identifies us as different.

Ali's children are South African born and they go to Islamic school. It is because they could have access to the Arabic literature along with Gujarati and English. Vahed (2000) classifies the schooling system among Indian Muslim communities in South Africa as: 1. Secular 2. Religious and Secular, and 3. Only religious education. Schooling in a religious school is mostly due to the influence of the active Jamaat movement. It focuses on the younger generation and parents are asked to ensure that their children receive the right education (Islamic). The propagation of Islamic education started in 1909 through the Durban Anjuman Islam School, attached to the West Street Mosque that had male and female representation (Vahed, 2000: 54). This continued with other Muslim schools established during the later years of apartheid that restricted Indians from attending certain schools. Hence, a majority of Indian Muslims from that period were taught in

Muslim schools. Therefore, Ali's wife who comes from Natal was also perhaps influenced under the Islamic education system. Hence, she thought of admitting her children to the Islamic school because there is widespread belief that such education disciplines and protects the children from drugs, crime, other anti-Islamic practices (Vahed, 2000: 54-57). Similarly, Imaan's wife too reiterated that once her son grows up she would admit him to Islamic school until he qualifies to attend medical school.[78] Attending Islamic school not only gives the parent the status of a pious Muslim but also this exposure makes their children multi-lingual in English, Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu and Arabic. However, interaction with their children is often in English, as more than 90% young Indian Muslims consider English as their first language (Vahed, 2000).

The Urdu language in India and in South Africa emerged as a symbolic identity for Muslims during the early and mid-twentieth century movements in India—Khilafat in 1920s and Muslim nationalism during 1940s (Hansen, 2014: 201, 242). This became part of an emotional attachment to prove 'Muslim-ness' among Indian Muslims of South Africa. Association with any other Indian language (Gujarati) was seen as an association with the Hindu ideology. Hence, the approach to linguistic exchanges, based on identity, made Urdu a medium of communication. A population survey in the 1990s showed that more than half of the Indian Muslim population regarded Urdu as their second language (Vahed, 2000: 44-45) and had a significant impact on the performance of social and religious attachments. The sermons in the Mosque were in Urdu, books and texts were read in Urdu, but it did not occupy the space of prestige in reading or talking in Urdu, argues Hansen (2012: 242-243). Therefore, in the present day context apart from the older generation of Indian Muslim communities in Johannesburg very few people are comfortable speaking Urdu. Often the conversation is either in Gujarati or in English sprinkled with simple

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[78] Imraan's wife, 02nd May, 2014

words like "*jee*" (yes), "*nai*" (no).[79] The remnant of these Urdu language identity debates is distanced from the younger generation. The teaching of languages is still carried out by social organisations in Islamic schools and Friday gatherings. Khalid, a Nepali migrant, is a teacher in an Islamic school, part of his job is to teach Qur'an and other Arabic literature but additionally, he is required to teach Urdu to the children attending school. It is in response to the growing influence of Pakistani influence of migrants who take pride in Urdu along with other Indians who want their children to learn Urdu as an additional advantage that has little to do with the 1940s Urdu-Muslim nationalism sentiments.

Finally, to sum up the discussion, in this section, I demonstrated how language plays a different role in different dimensions in different people's lives. Language has always been an interesting concept of study to understand its consequences on migration as part of a growing cultural process. In Fordsburg, language is as important as identity and one's representation of culture. For some it is a means of reproducing culture, for some it is just a way of expression whereas for some it is more than communication, it is to align with the local interests. English is indeed a universal language but for the flea market there is no single universal language, it differs and changes as we start walking through the stalls and shops. The accent, slang and language itself changes as we move between among the stalls. It is a typical representation of Indian linguistic diversity in the small space of 500 square feet where language changes according to the stall owners. Effective usage of different languages with different accents, and dialects introduces the idea of migration of a language. Dyen (1956) in his classical work on the issue of language and migration theory has explained the way migration of language takes place. It is through the reproduction of cultural idioms and usage of home language among the migrants in the host

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[79] Participant observation, Samina, Ziyad, Ismel, Nadiya, 2013, 2014

society. In the case of Fordsburg it can be seen that, migration of language is taking place among the migrant labour class. It often depends on the speakers who tend to use the language. Usage of Gujarati or Hindi language among the Indian traders and workers answers the question raised by Dyen (1956), "if a language is said to migrate, the question whether its speakers have migrated in significant numbers is left to be determined" (613). In this case, language migration is effectively taking place with the equal representation of its speakers. Language in the context of international migration has always been an important entry point for an immigrant in receiving countries. It is due to the effective chain migration where urban ethnic spaces offer opportunities to work and mingle.

Oonk (2008) demonstrates the inter-relations of language, nationalism, lingual superiority, tradition and religion. In his study across generations of Lohana migrants in East Africa, Oonk presents the conflicting position of Indians in East Africa concerning language. For some it is a way to hold on to 'Indianness' and to claim the rich Indian historical heritage that language carries with it. In particular, the Brahmin priests who want the community to engage with the Gujarati or Hindi vernacular. It can be seen that the Brahmin superiority claims to represent (authentic) Indian religious identity. This is similar to other minority diasporic religious groups who hold on to religious background as an entrepreneurial ethic, similar to the Protestants (the Weberian model is explained by Oonk, 2006: 5). However, on the other hand the succeeding generation of Indians in East Africa adopted English language to have an 'international' outlook. This intermixing of language criss-crosses with cultural appropriations of group identity and the Lohana communities in East Africa have "developed a unique, self-determined combination of Swahili, European, and South Asian elements" (Oonk, 2008: 82). The tendency of this unique combination can be found

among the contemporary migrants in Fordsburg as well, who navigate their language barriers by developing English as a bridge to re-frame their diasporic identity.

Studies show that, language had been the "major barrier to the adaptation" of local culture (Appleyard, 1988). This does not strictly apply to the migrant labour of Fordsburg. It is because, in the cultural adaptability process, Curry and Koczberski (1988 in Rigg, 2007: 128) argue that a migrant supposedly never leaves his village, "spiritually and culturally." A migrant always rebuilds and reconstructs his identity in the host society according to his cultural norms. A destination site (host) becomes an extension of home, where an individual need not necessarily change his cultural habits of food, language and clothes to accommodate the needs of host societies. Indian migration is always seen as a powerful social component that reproduces culture. It is seen as an "extension of village life." Osella and Osella (2000: 120) in their study discovered that Indian migrants in the Gulf countries join the communities mostly connected to their villages and areas nearby, watch Indian TV channels and cinema via satellite, read local newspapers, and go to see local artists' performances. The Indian migrant always maintains familiar social relations. This is a common norm observed in the peripheries of the Global South. This picture is qualified in my argument by thinking about the question of lifestyle and the part reproduction of 'village life.' It also resonates with Jonathan Parry's (2003) observation of internal Indian rural migration to an industrial town in Bhilai. He argues that long distance migration is not just the matter of crossing miles but it is also a 'conscious' travel. Migrants "travel long way in attitudes, outlook and style of life" thereby becoming modern migrant workers involving "transformation of self" (Parry, 2003: 221).

Conclusion

Cultural process is an on-going phenomenon in a migrant labourer's life. In this chapter, I have shown how modern day identity markers have an impact on the migrant identification process and imagine themselves as being the part of a global space that is not confined to a certain region or race. The Indian migrant in Johannesburg helps us to theorise the reproduction of identity that gives her/him the self-assurance within alien cultural spaces. Nurturing of belief in the self is dependent on prosthetic items such as cell phones that are symbols of modernity (Laplanche and Pontalis (1985) in Hall, 2003: 3). The status symbol in having a smartphone is another manifestation of traditional markers of identity, wherein status and hierarchy is augmented in social relations. The status of owning a certain kind of smartphone irrespective of the cultural and material value of the smartphone suggests that modernity has brought in other forms of hegemony into these public spaces.

The social role of the individual possessing the smartphone is at the core analysis of this chapter. Katz and Aakhus (2002) suggested these possibilities even before the advent of the smartphone, when it was just a mobile phone. They argued how this device is evolving different forms of social diameters mainly "the struggles for hierarchy and status" (Katz and Aakhus, 2002: 301). They observe shifting of such social parameters to a new space wherein competition to have the "smallest and classiest looking mobile device" among the users has generated the race for social prestige (Ibid.). However, they limit the critique of such hierarchies to the privacy debate only. Technology is changing abstrusely. A decade ago it was the smallest and classiest and now it is the brightest and smartest. The size of the screen is ever increasing. Often the differentiators among the many brands - iPhone 6 and iPhone 6s, Samsung Galaxy 6 and Samsung Galaxy 7 – is the size of their screens. In Ghoolam's testimony for example, the traditional modes of caste-class

supremacy are reproduced by the feudal landlord who determines his control and influence when he flashes his latest device. The mobile phone therefore harbours social recognition among the users.

I will now examine the way culture plays an important role in the life of a labour migrant, simultaneously influencing the working space of Fordsburg and the flea market. Lifestyle, food and clothing habits and the adaptation of English language help us to picture the life of Indian labour migrants. The way a young migrant sees himself in the trading milieu of South Africa and how he responds to the on-going process was an interesting aside. There were many cases which challenged the existing theories of labour migration, partly arising from the change in the classical modes of migration. Migrants coming to South Africa are the products of an engagement with advanced technology and improved ways of communication (Castles and Miller, 2009: 2-3). Many factors influence the present day migration that should help us to qualify the traditional approach to migration. The findings speak on a broader scale of south-south migration and are in conversation with existing theories and academic literatures on Indian labour migration. This chapter argued that labour migration is influenced by the advancements of technology within a new world order of migration. We have seen that cultural habits influence migrant's appearance, eating, and speaking habits. However, an interesting question arises as to how these migrants manage to continue their lifestyle in the competitive market and how do they respond to the economic challenges. These and other related questions of economic factors will be answered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4
NATURE OF BUSINESS ACTIVITY AND REASONS FOR SELECTING AFRICA

Economic reasons are generally seen as an important reason for labour migration. Historically, migration from South Asia to Africa, South Africa in particular was governed by the economic interests of various actors – the labourers, colonisers, plantation owners, and businessmen. The history of Indian migration to South Africa whether of indentured labourers or 'passenger' Indians in the late nineteenth century reflects the search for an opportunity to earn a better living than back home in India. Many also migrated to escape unfavourable social conditions imposed by caste rules (Bhana and Brain, 1990). In this chapter, I argue that the contemporary migration from India to South Africa especially among the youth is for more than economic gain; it reflects an aspiration to becoming individuals, to live a free and independent life without a parent's continuous observation, to explore the opportunities the world offers, make new connections; and become world citizens. Additionally, I will use personal life stories to explore how regionally inspired trade-based networks effectively govern the trading options in Fordsburg. I will also underscore the importance of Africa in Indian immigrant's employment choices. Why do Indian labour migrants select South Africa as a potential destination as opposed to other regions, especially the

West? This debate is conditioned by migrant labour networks and the perception of job prospects that help to determine their choices in Africa. Finally, this chapter looks at the complex interaction between black and Indian migrant labourers in the working space of Fordsburg.

Rationale

I draw on field work among migrant workers, Indian street vendors, stall and shop owners in the flea market and Fordsburg to understand business activities among migrant workers, characterised by shared spaces and ethnic–regional affinities. I expand on the concept of immigrant entrepreneurial skill and argue that this goes beyond inter-personal networks and ethnic ties. I draw upon Harney's (2004) work on the entrepreneurial activities of Bangladeshi immigrants in south Italy who engage with multiple forms of work in order to secure their future. Entrepreneurially minded migrants ensure that their way of doing business gives them definite returns and future security in the host economy. Drawing from the case studies in one of the sections, I will elaborate on this aspect of inter-connectedness of the flea market businesses which is the result of growing consciousness of shared space among new migrants.

The idea of migration and transnational border crossing has both psychic and economic dimensions. Borjas (1989) in a well-known essay argues that the economic theory of (im) migration has to do with three important questions: 1. What factors determine the size and skill composition of immigrant flows? What kind of individuals become immigrants and what is the causality of population flows? 2. How do immigrants adapt to the host country's economy? 3. What is the impact of immigrants on the host country's economy? In this chapter, I aim to address the first question within the parameters of economic empirical theories of migration.

More than economic aspects

In this section, I will explain the reasons why labour migration is seen not only as an opportunity limited to economic benefits. Spear (1974 in Adepoju, 1998) suggests that labour migration is not solely inspired by economic reasons; political factors are more important than the economic ones. Richmond (1988a) stresses that the motivations for migrant (labourers) may also derive from the "desire for travel and adventure." Hanging out with young Indian labour migrants in Fordsburg I became aware of the growing interest of Indian youth in becoming world citizens and reinventing their identities. Migration according to Rigg (2007) is linked to social identities. Therefore, there is always a reproduction of identities among migrants in the host societies even as they see themselves as part of a larger global community. Parnwell (1993) has rightly pointed out that the decision to migrate among the 'third world citizens' is not solely related to the economic factors but social, cultural, political and environment factors too.

Indian labour migrants work in a sector of their choice where they can manage their lifestyle and also enjoy the job. Most young migrants working in Fordsburg or the flea market have a different approach towards work and life. They tend to balance work and life, and never let one override the other. The notable aspect is that back in India, many of these young migrants were looked after by their parents, and lived with them, even after marriage. They were always under their parents' influence right from their childhood and throughout their life. Even when they started working, their parents had the right to ask about their salary and interfere in the monthly expenses. In this stressful situation, many young workers want to escape the surveillance-like situations. They look out for opportunities to work away from their hometown. Even after their migration to other towns, the surveillance does not stop. Parents ask some relative or acquaintance in the town to watch over their children. This means that a young worker cannot escape the eyes of parents.

There is growing frustration among the migrants, and a desire for personal space in the lives of young working men. Therefore, they seek opportunities to escape the Indian scenario and find a job elsewhere in foreign countries. Most young migrants in Fordsburg share the same feeling and being away from home gave them a sense of living their own lives. Sultan confirmed this to me one day after work. He blew cigarette smoke in the air, looking up into the dark sky glittering with stars. After a brief pause, he turned his head towards me and said in soft tone,

> *"Yahaan koi tension nahin, koi problem nahin. Gharwale ghar main, apan idhar. Life main koi magajmari nahin."* Here there is no tension and neither problem. Parents are at home and I am here. Life has no extra problems.[80]

Ghassan Hage (2005) recorded similar testimonies in the study of Lebanese migrants in Venezuela. One of the young respondents expressed his satisfaction in the host society despite being in an extremely deprived socio-economic condition. The young migrant's response to Hage about being satisfied far away from home was because "I am not living with my parents; that is good. I can do what I like" Hage (2005: 473). The need to be away from parents among young migrants appears to be a common one among adventurous young migrants of the global south.

However, for young Indian migrants staying away from parents does not necessarily mean there is no social surveillance in South Africa. Indian society works in a way that puts an indirect responsibility on the elders to look after younger ones. The Indian family system seeks to protect youngsters from the 'bad' habits of the outside world like drugs, alcohol, prostitution, etc. Literature on the parenting attitudes of such families in India emphasise the authoritarian nature of parents (Kakar, 1978; Roopnarine, 1992). This upbringing creates a constant pressure on the child to follow the orders of their parents and elders, however painful it might be. This evokes the desire in the young to migrate (Wakil et al., 1981). Moreover, with my personal experience of growing

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[80] Sultan, 11 June, 2013

up in both rural and urban areas, I think parents instil a sense of burden in the minds of children, especially male. Of my group in the high school we all aspired to not becoming a 'mamma's boy;' an insult to a man's dignity and strength. The strength and dignity here implies the notion of being a man of abilities who can do things on his own. There is an emphasis on 'masculinity' among young boys who demonstrate their capability by being independent and acting as a 'provider' to the family. Migration becomes a symbolic representation of an individual's progress towards 'manhood' (Osella and Osella, 2000). Many young migrants who have come to South Africa brag about their independent life to their friends back home in India. They mostly provide positive inputs of their lives in South Africa. Freedom can be seen as autonomy and economic independence, especially for young migrants, which enables them to reinvent their identity.

In Thailand notions of autonomy and independence are key for migrant youth. Esara (2004: 200) has illustrated the situation of a migrant youth in Thailand as,

> "Each time *Goy* sojourned Bangkok, the spatial distance from parental authority and the lack of family supervision further intensified the autonomy and economic independence by which she made her own decisions regarding where she would work and live and how she would manage her own income."

Also working and living away from family gave these youths the ability and confidence to challenge traditional norms which are forced on them by society (Rigg, 2007: 64). The Thai migrant has similar aspirations to the migrants from India to South Africa. The sense of autonomy and economic viability has inspired the younger class to migrate and remake their own identity and economic independence.

Interdependency of migrant relations

Generally, in the Indian family setting, there is an inter-dependent relation between a child and his parents. On becoming adolescents, they think of moving away from their parents to demonstrate their capabilities. Moving away from the place of origin lies at the crux of the migration process.

Having settled in the host country poses no obligation or desire to cut off contacts with those back home. There is always some reason for a migrant to maintain connections with the home country. Home for migrants in Fordsburg is a land that has family, friends and relatives. It is also a place that is anchor of past, present and future Home carries different meanings for different migrants. For the young migrants discussed in this chapter, they escape from home to enjoy themselves and live life as they please. Many migrants look back towards their home as a measure of how far they have come. Home is a space of nostalgia; many think about it but do not dwell on it in the work place. Upon asking migrants about home, all of them responded by saying a few words "*haan sab theek hain*" (Yes, it is all ok), or "*dua hain upar wale ki*" (God's grace), or just by nodding. It seemed that young male migrants do not want to show that they are still 'mamma's boy, crying for the family' because it is not a good sign for a 'brave and courageous migrant.' Female migrants whenever they talked about family extended the discussion to give details of their parents and siblings in India. Female migrants demonstrated that they are more connected with their family as it is considered good behaviour among their peers. The gender divides demonstrated in missing or not missing the family among males and females carries its own significance. For females to be in touch with the family and caring towards relatives is a sign of an honourable woman and for males to be carefree is a sign of being a mature grown up man. In spite of these differences, home retains its importance in the process and experience of migration.

Ho (2006) shows how the migrant communities of *Hadramawt* in Yemen constantly keep in touch with their home in spite of their migration to different countries in the Indian Ocean over many centuries. His interest lies in understanding what anchors the Hadrami communities within an idea of home, and what factors reproduce the affection towards home in the new land. There are different places that act as anchors and it is found that religious shrines become centres of

affiliation for Hadrami diaspora. The Moroccan city of Fez attracts religious migrants from sub-Saharan Africa and the Tijani brotherhood hosts migrants visiting the burial site of one of the prominent saints (Bakewell, 2009: 27-28). Hence, we see the anchor for some migrant communities is the religious practice. In case of Indian labour migrants there are certain things that act as an anchor to their home. It varies but mostly it is, either for marriage, family, parents, post-migration plans to settle in India and so on. However, a prominent factor among the migrant community is the place of worship and spiritual site congregation. Mosques in Fordsburg cater to people from different regions of South Asia. It becomes an anchor in sustaining community networks among migrants in South Africa.

Salim's experience of young migrants in Fordsburg appears somewhat different to that of Sultan's mentioned earlier. He has seen many migrants returning home. Apart from making money, migrants longed for the comforts of home.

> "Some people come from good background. They're used to a good life. Here after arrival they have to cook, wash own clothes, iron them and then look after for every small need. Many themselves are not used to it and find it difficult to cope with the situation. Hence, they prefer returning home. As they have some business or opportunity or job, they are comfortable going back. The important factor is, one would like to be in a place where there is family and one's needs are attended to. Young guys do not get that in South Africa. Therefore, they return."[81]

This is in contrast to the story of Sultan's where he sought a life in South Africa to be independent. Many young migrants coming from well-to-do backgrounds and old migrants confirmed that if there was a possibility they would like to live with their family on account of their easy access to the necessities of life and familial support. The nature of their work barely gives migrants any time to relax as most of them work overtime. After working for the whole day and more than five days a week, migrants still have to cook, purchase necessities, wash, dry and

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[81] Salim, 08 November, 2014

iron the clothes, manage the accounts, take out time for leisure, and live according to the roommate's conditions. These are some of the facts which some migrants find unbearable. Hence, they look towards home where their hard work is acknowledged. Some determined migrants like Sultan maintain a silence on this matter. When asked about his life in South Africa especially his personal life, he said:

> "Yes, I understand that it is not good. We all at our accommodation (also called boarding) are too much in one house. But it's fine now, we can't complain. I am almost used to it now and we all share the responsibilities of house. So it's better, I know the people they are my friends, we even watch movies and go out together on the weekends. *Theek hai abhi idhar* (It is good for the time being)."[82]

Sultan did not exhibit any interest in discussing problems. Instead he decided to invite me to his place which was a rental flat of two rooms including the kitchen. Each room was shared by eight fellow migrants, mostly Muslims from Gujarat. There was only one bed and the rest of them delighted in sleeping on mattresses on the floor. The mattresses were joined together in order to occupy minimum space and accommodate more migrants. It was a crowded place this didn't bother them.

Tacit relationships

Today's youth coming from India are more ambitious regarding their career and are very aware of their abilities. They are not limited to South Africa but might go to other places for a good job. The hunt for another job with better pay and lifestyle never stops. This is visible in the way migrants communicate with customers and people visiting Fordsburg. Every communication is part of building a friendship or acquaintance. Migrants do not forget the name of the person they interacted with, and next time they call the person by his/her name just to show that the relationship is more than just business. Often they exchange numbers and develop contacts. After the exchange

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[82] Sultan, March 2013

of numbers, customers from distant areas willing to visit Fordsburg might give a call to the migrants and ask in advance about the condition of Fordsburg, the timings and availability of goods. This way the relation between a customer and migrant worker develops on a personal level. During holidays or after work hours, they meet and interact with each other. This interaction sometime leads to further possibilities of business opportunities among themselves or some work prospects elsewhere. This is how some of the migrants who left Fordsburg and migrated elsewhere have used their contacts to develop business of own. Imaan was enthusiastic about establishing connections with traders in Mumbai. He wanted me to mediate the "trust-factor" with traders in Mumbai; if not he wanted me to at least put him in touch with other businessmen anywhere in South Africa.

> *"Suraj bhai, Bombay main aapke pehchan wale log honge toh mere contact main rakho na. Main sidha Bombay se export karana chahta hoon. Tum dekho kuch help kar sakte toh. Chahiye toh main apna details aur passport details deta hoon, par kuch help hoti hain toh karo."* Brother Suraj, if you have any acquaintances in Bombay can you please connect me with them. I want to export straight from Bombay. Please see if you could help in anyway. If you need I can give you all my details including passport, and we can fix the trade.[83]

This means migrants like Imaan are interested in making new contacts and experimenting in new businesses. Another example comes from an elderly barber Ashraf who works in Fordsburg. During the conversation he said he was open to other opportunities. He is flexible about working anywhere depending on the salary and perks.[84] He discussed the same issues with other customers and visitors that know him.

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[83] Imaan, 10 December, 2012
[84] Arif, 10 February, 2013

Globetrotting

Apart from connections, young migrants look for available options elsewhere in the world. Adepoju (1998: 389) on writing about migration in the African continent observes that migration occurs largely because people are "unable to satisfy their aspirations within the existing opportunity structure in their locality or country." Migrants are not in a hurry to quickly settle in South Africa. South Africa might be one of the possible destinations, but they are not sure if they want to settle in South Africa and remain flexible about going to other parts of the world, mostly to the West. Most of them planned to migrate to the West as their first choice but ended up coming to South Africa. This has not stopped them from looking for opportunities in the West. They can even move to other parts of Africa if they find suitable jobs. Migrants like Sultan, stressed their desire to travel elsewhere in the world where opportunities are good:

> "I would like to go anywhere, you know. The other day I was asked to work in Lesotho for a short term contract I thought this was a good opportunity but later I realised that it was just a few days' delivery job and not a contract, but I would have loved to explore the opportunities in Lesotho. I have a few friends working in Swaziland. I can go anywhere in Africa or in that case anywhere in the world. South Africa is not a permanent destination as of now, I will go somewhere else you will see."[85]

Young migrants desire more than what they have at present. They are of the opinion that their skills and capabilities are in demand elsewhere and they deserve more. This confidence and positive outlook towards their career makes them explore possibilities not just in South Africa and India. They have friends in the Middle East, the Americas and Europe. They have relatives in South Africa, and also have family in India. They are in constant touch with friends, families and relatives. They share their experiences of being in Africa, while taking note of happenings in Europe and the Americas.

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[85] Sultan, 23 March, 2015

This relates to the growing trend of lifestyle migration that is the result of technology and easy/cheap travel discussed in chapter 3. Benson and O'Reilly (2009a, 2009b) expound the idea of migration as a lifestyle phenomenon where migrants move to enjoy the perks of life and are not necessarily escaping the contemporary financial crisis (O'Reilly, 2000). For example, British migrants to French rural areas in the study of Benson (2010) are motivated by the desire and satisfaction of an imagined, valued lifestyle. British lifestyle migrants, mostly retired and early retirees seek a better lifestyle than in Britain. Migration to rural areas in another country becomes an escape from the rigorous life of Britain. This migration in the lifestyle context in Europe is conceptualised also within the domain of cultural comforts. Hayes argues that apart from the suitable climate the local lifestyle is relatively similar to the migrant's lifestyle back home (Hayes, 2014: 1955). However, here in Fordsburg's context migrants seek to escape their situation hunting for better lifestyle—not necessarily to a rural area of the northern country. The issue of Lifestyle raises class and regional differences, as lifestyle for a person of the north differs to that of the south. For people from the south it is to have better opportunities in the north in spite of the accompanying hardships and suffering. Because for them lifestyle is something that will follow the prosperous economic returns. Once wealth is acquired the entailment of a lifestyle follows. It can be argued that the idea of lifestyle migration can be extended to the migrants from India to SA.

The idea that migration from south-north is for economic reasons alone arises from the assumption that developed societies offer economic security and valuable returns — foreign exchange being one. Stuart Hall describes this as "one of the largest and most sustained periods of 'unplanned' migration in recent history" creating multiple cultural interactions and identity formations in the western (host) society (Hall, 1992: 306). Hayes (2014) on the other hand points

to similarities with north-south migration. According to his findings present day working or middle class North American retired lifestyle migrants migrating to the south — Ecuador in particular — have exactly the same economic motivation as south-north migrants. It can be seen that migrants from wealthy countries also migrate to the south because of extreme financial crisis at home. The post-2008 economic situation encouraged many migrants to seek economic refugee in the relatively cheap and affordable spaces of the south. Hayes draws attention to the much discussed aspect of lifestyle migration from and within the northern countries. He argues that economic reasons for migration among northern lifestyle migrants is an under-theorised concept. His interviews show how migration is an escape. Many individuals interviewed speak about their limited pensions and job crises that forced them to escape the unbearable situation of high-costs back home. Many confirmed that they would like to return but they cannot do so because they cannot afford it. With the same amount of money, they are relatively well off and could also afford to keep maids, employ people and dine out every day (Hayes, 2014: 1962). This appears similar to what the migrants in Fordsburg envision - 'to escape.' As Ikraar a waiter in a Bangladeshi restaurant says, referring to the situation of South Africa, *"bhaagna hain abhi yahaan se"* (Got to run from this place now), to another place in the north that would help him live the desired life with relatively good savings. The similarity between migration compulsions whether from south to north/or vice versa brings in interesting dimensions to the economic aspects of migration. Although the desire and need may vary there is a common aspiration to escape to something unpredictable but better from an existing unsatisfactory condition.

Ikraar also told me that he is frequently in contact with his friends in Europe. They update each other regularly. He along with his colleague Riz is desperately looking an opportunity to visit Europe. Ikraar wants a better lifestyle than in South Africa. Riz hesitated to stay on in South Africa.

He said with a sarcastic laugh, *"yahaan kucch nahin hain, ab nikalneka yahaan se jald se jald"* (There is nothing in South Africa better to leave this place as soon as possible). In order to stay in touch with the situation in Europe, Riz told me that they make use of smartphones and smartphone applications like TANGO, Skype, Viber which allows them to video chat at an affordable rate.[86] They know how the life is for immigrants in Europe, the weather and the exchange rate. This is the result of the smartphone age (chapter 3) which has offered these new age migrants the feeling of being in Europe via their friends (Yengde, 2013). They talk to each other almost every week.[87] This international interaction between four continents and different time zones make them citizens of the technological world. The sharing of information and providing capital to relatives and kin is part of the regular migration process where the first settler acts as a guide and point of contact. In this case too, young migrants' who are capable of looking after themselves form social networks for new arrivals. They create a nest of networks that accommodates potential migrants. These migrated groups regroup into new locations in the host society reconstructing their (ethnic) identity (Appadurai, 1996).

In light of the above discussion, we have seen how the needs of a migrant change according to individual interests. Economic factors have been core to labour migration. But there are also other factors that are responsible for present day labour migration that range across social, cultural, political and familial reasons. Young Indian migrants have a sense of attachment and responsibility towards their community and society. For example, Bharat who is the eldest among his siblings has to work to support his family, siblings and older parents. The responsibility increases when a person like Bharat works overseas, because the expectations start to increase. Bharat was sent

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[86] Tango is a free app available for the smartphones working in Android, IOS and Windows Phone. Apart from video calling, it also offers free voice calling, texting and photo sharing using data network or Wi-Fi.

[87] Riz and Ikraar, 24 February, 2015

overseas using the family savings. He not only has to repay the family but also contribute towards his younger brother's education, his sister's marriage, and building a good house in his village. He has to work hard, and without fuss, to achieve this. During this phase of hard work, a migrant labourer tries hard to focus on his personal life as well. Many migrants said that their family duties and responsibilities make them restless. On the other hand, it is also equally true that they do this in order to receive the social status of a man earning abroad that could help them in getting a good bride back home. Many of the immigrants think that they would rather get married back home and look for a marriage proposal from good families who can pay them a handsome dowry to start a new business of their own. Of all the generational changes that are seen in migrants, one thing remains unchanged. That is getting a bride from India. They do not want 'modern' women from South Africa. One such example is Abhishek, who refuses to marry a local South African woman and instead prefers an Indian girl with a modest background from a 'not so urban area'.[88] When asked about marrying his local girlfriend whom he is dating for 3 years, he replies immediately:

> "No, no, married life is something else than the current life. It comes with a lot more responsibilities. It has many problems and it is a serious business. You cannot really count on the modern girls; they might leave you anytime. I am happy with her but cannot think of marriage".[89]

Armaan, a waiter in an Indian restaurant reiterated the same opinion:

> "*Yahaan ki ladkiyan aur apne yahaan ki ladkiyon main farak hain. Main yahaan kucch ladkiyon ko date kiya par yaar kharcha itna hua ki, bus maine soch liya iske baad ab nahin. Aur woh cultural difference bhi hain, waise hain toh Indian par hai local. Unke culture main kaafi openness hain sab khula hain, apne yahaan nahin jamega. Ammi ne kaha hain do saal ke baad shaadi bana denge.*" There is a difference between the girls here and girls in India. I dated a few girls but I end up spending much so decided that never again. Also there is a cultural difference, their culture is quite open, even though they are Indian but they are local. Here relationships are open. This cannot work in India. That is why I will return to home after two years. Mom asked to come back for marriage.[90]

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[88] Abhishek, 13 March, 2013
[89] Abhishek, 18 July, 2014
[90] Armaan, 11 May 2015

Interdependency of businesses

In this section, I will discuss how business is conducted by migrants to Fordsburg. Hitesh was dressed in skin tight blue jeans and a Nike t-shirt. His tattoo on his right arm and golden earrings attracted my attention. When I enquired about his lifestyle; he avoided eye contact as if he did not care much about me. It seemed that he was well known in the area. As discussed earlier in chapter 3 when Hitesh was describing his clothes he immediately referred to the stall that sold the clothes. This reference to a stall owner by another stall owner reveals intra-connected networks that work for the business development of the flea market. Walking through the stalls in the flea market one can easily spot the varieties of products being sold in each stall. This can confuse a consumer as to what the trader actually sells and what his main business may be? Investigating into this, I found that stall owners accommodated others' business products as well for the payment of a commission. For example, Imaan primarily sells clothes but his stall also accommodates cosmetic products like shampoo, hair gel, and facial cream. He does this to allow Latish an indirect access to the flea market area. Latish places his products in the flea market to advertise them so that customers can visit his shop located on the outskirts of the flea market. If Imaan is able to sell those products, he gets a commission from Latish. Similarly, if any customer visits Latish's shop and intends to buy the clothes from the flea market Latish recommends Imaan in the flea market. The flea market and Fordsburg businesses are separated and yet interestingly function together. A network of people creates a network of businesses.

How it works

When visiting a barber shop for a haircut, one cannot miss the music and movies being played on the DVD set. Usually, a person spends a minimum of 15-20 minutes in a barber shop. During this time the person is often introduced to new Bollywood music or the classic 1960s songs by famous

singers like Mohammad Rafi, Mukesh, and Kishore Kumar. During the brief time spent on the haircut; it is highly possible that the customer may develop an interest in the movie or the music and asks the barber where s/he can find these. They are immediately directed to the shop that sells the DVDs. On one visit to the barbershop one of the customers was having a head massage while romantic songs of the 1960s played in the background. He asked Bharat, the barber who was massaging "Where did you get these songs?" Bharat replied by explaining the varieties of songs the DVD has and how much he likes the songs. "If you like them I can even sell the DVD right away," Bharat told the customer. Out of curiosity, I asked Bharat, how much he pays for a DVD as opposed to normal customers like me, and he said he pays nothing. The business strategy works this way: the DVD stall owner regularly visits Bharat's shop for a haircut or a quick head massage. He does not pay for the services but instead offers the DVDs demanded by Bharat and his colleagues in exchange (quid pro quo). The DVD stall owner keeps a couple of extra copies in the shop. In case any customer likes the DVD and is not willing to visit the flea market to buy the DVDs they have the possibility of purchasing those DVDs right in the barber shop.[91]

Bharat gets a commission depending on the sales. This way of doing business is new in the flea market and has been introduced by the South Asian migrants. Growing trade relations between the flea market and Fordsburg area has an effect on the trade practices of the Indian migrant labourers. Bharat is just one of the workers working in the barber shop, but he sees the possibility of making more money by selling different products. Bharat does not need to focus on all of these trades; he treats various products and services as part of a portfolio which establishes relations with other shop owners. A network of migrants provides access to the trading space of Fordsburg

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[91] Bharat, 10 February, 2013

market. A trader is not limited to the small space of a stall or a shop; he is flexible and has many options to make profits.

These businesses are built on relationships that have been cultivated over time. Faith and trust matters in expanding business. In case any help is needed, there is no hesitation in reaching out to others within these interdependent networks. Trade thrives because of personal relationships and the creation of strong bonds and solidarity amongst migrants. Harney (2004) speaks of the sociality of street economy and the idea of knowledge production and distribution among migrant street workers sharing common ethnic backgrounds in Naples, Italy. Information about the threats of immigration checks at certain points of city; helping to connect with other businessmen; and providing access to wholesalers are among the ways of sharing knowledge. Although the businesses are independent, there is an inter-connectedness based on mutual sharing of knowledge.

The DVD business engaged in by migrants/asylum seekers is a case in point. Harney (2007, 2013) studies African asylum seekers in Italy who are engaged in this trade. The idea of investing in the DVD is a response to the growing demand for music and movies in the grey market from customers. It is the durability, I argue, and the easy accessibility of a 'one bag business' that makes this viable and mobile. It does not attract much attention from the immigration authorities in Fordsburg. Additionally, this business can help to raise profits which eventually can contribute towards larger operations and investment. In South Africa the DVD business has expanded to stalls and individual sellers in various markets and at traffic signals, railway stations, and festivals. It is mostly dominated by migrants from Congo, Mozambique, India, Pakistan, South Africa, Nigeria, and other West African countries. A Mozambican DVD stall owner in downtown Central Business District (CBD) area told me that, he started with one table outside the Home Affairs office area on the Harrison street in Johannesburg. In a few years' time, he collaborated with fellow

Mozambicans and now they have 5 people working for them on various locations of the CBD making a handsome profit of approximately 100-300 Rand every day. This way he is now planning to rent a stall on one of the busy streets of the Gandhi Square area eventually spreading the web of DVD selling through individual 'one hand bag business' that counts on good profits due to the nature of undocumented informal business status. He told me that, he is in constant touch with the traders and the DVD wholesalers of Fordsburg. His plan of getting his own space like the traders of the flea market to sell the DVDs was inspired by the South Asian DVD market.

This type of interdependency of businesses makes the flea market and Fordsburg a thriving business centre. New innovative ways of trading in Fordsburg brought in and developed by the newly arriving immigrants from South Asia are travelling to other ethnic spaces of Johannesburg as well. Advertising and selling is done without spending any extra capital. Mutual arrangements and interdependency based on different trades are the key. A food stall owner will not develop connections with another food stall owner; it is because of the similar nature of business. Hence, it would be hard to see a restaurant owner in Fordsburg area advertising or marketing for food stall owner in Fordsburg. But referrals are made; in case someone needs vegetarian food then they are referred to the restaurants that cater vegetarian food only. This kind of business practice is only limited to certain kinds of people and their trade. In their capacity as business owners, regional and religion networks seem to matter less than connecting with people who can draw benefits from each other. When Hitesh refers a customer to the stall owner who sells clothes, his sole intention is to get the things sold on his behalf. He is not concerned whether the seller is from his region – Gujarat – or his religion – Hindu. Although, initial contacts are built upon religion and regional ties but they are not considered strictly if there is interdependency of business. Such trade practices also help to develop a sense of solidarity among migrants. If a trader wants to extend his business

capacity and needs a partner to start a business, his first approach will be towards the person with whom he is doing business.

Why Africa?

Why do labour migrants select Africa as a possible destination to work, live and invest? If money was the only reason, then why did they select South Africa which is still a developing country and has no adequate facilities to fully cater to the needs of Indian labour migrants. Laws are still stringent and unwelcoming of labour migrants.[92] In spite of all these limitations they still migrate to a place which is not top of mind by their parents and immediate family. Hence, my aim was to find the motivations of labour migrants who travel to South Africa. This investigation provided me an opportunity to engage with the personal lives of migrants. As the journey begins from India to South Africa it is always anxiety that clouds the minds of migrant labourers. Of all the migrants that I interviewed, the one thing they had in common was to explore economic opportunities and exploit all available options in South Africa. There were different reasons that led to their migration to South Africa. Most of my sources were from the state of Gujarat. They had established contacts already in Fordsburg that helped them to choose South Africa as a potential destination. Often it was due to the influence of agents in India who motivated them to migrate in South Africa. The currency exchange value was also seen as a factor enabling them to send money back home. For some it was the job guarantee that attracted them to South Africa. And for some it was the assurance of state protection in receiving the asylum upon arrival. It is in this context I will explain the reasons for labour migrants in selecting Africa as a possible destination. Based on interviews and personal discussions I have framed the following categories.

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[92] Recently in 2014 South African Government introduced immigration rules to control the international inward migration. This was heavily criticised by civil society but government did not change its plans and continued with imposed restrictions http://allafrica.com/stories/201407150336.html

a) Established networks

Migration theorists have always been interested in studying the impact of established networks on labour migration. Massey et al. (1993) have elaborated the basis of migrant networks which is through "ties, kinship, friendship, or shared community of origin." Indian labour migration to South Africa too has similar implications. There are some forms of active networks that dominate migrant identities. These are kinship ties, profession, religion, and regional ties. In order to understand which type of networks work more effectively, one has to engage with the life stories of migrants. Most of the migrants that came to Africa had already established networks of some kind. In some instances, it was personal, in some it was distant relatives, or for some it was professional networks that assisted them in migrating to South Africa. Most of them had an assurance of some kind that would help them in adjusting to the new life of South Africa. For Nadim, it was his elder brother Khadim who came to South Africa four years ago to settle in South Africa. After seeing the opportunities available, his brother thought of inviting Nadim to explore working prospects in South Africa. Upon his suggestions, Nadim left India to South Africa. When Nadim arrived, he had a home to stay in, food to eat and someone to help him in familiarising himself with the new environment. Having someone to count on in an alien land prevented homesickness.[93]   Zuberi and Sibanda (2004) explain the role of kin and already settled communities who offer the comforts of home by providing shelter, food and job security in the host country. Such assurances were one of the major reasons for most of the migrants that migrated to South Africa. As Nadim and Imaan said to me they would have never dared to come to South Africa on their own and would have preferred Europe, the Middle East or North America where they also have established social networks as well as stories about job security.

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[93] Nadim, 22 May, 2013

However, in other cases, it was professional networks that worked effectively. Bharat, who came to work in a barbershop, was invited by an acquaintance who was also working in the barbershop. The employer required an Indian barber. Although Bharat had kinship (caste) support in South Africa, it was mostly his professional network that helped him to survive in South Africa. Regarding religious ties, it seems like it does not work as effectively as it used to during the first arrivals in the Johannesburg area. Initially, it was religious networks that worked effectively for labour migration (Hansen, 2012), but presently it is not visible on a large scale, as, Bharat himself is working in a shop owned by a non-Hindu. More than religious networks; it is professional and in some cases regional ties, that work effectively. These ties are more important than religion, because though religion may differ, region plays an important factor in a migrant's life. Ashraf knew a few people from his village in Gujarat and prior to his departure he had contacted them. On his arrival he was offered accommodation for a couple of days until he found a job and house to stay. Finding the job and house was also helped by the people that belonged to his region. They all communicated in the same vernacular and knew each other's interests and needs. This helped Ashraf to settle without much difficulty in South Africa. Hence, it is seen that established networks was one of the strong reasons for migrant labourers to leave India for South Africa. These networks provided access to jobs, assured accommodation and food and more importantly comforted them with emotional support.

b) No possibility in the West

It can be argued that migration to South Africa was encouraged due to the halt of European, American and the Middle Eastern work permits. As mentioned earlier, Ashraf had to travel to South Africa because he was not granted work permit in the Middle East. On asking him why he chose South Africa he replied,

> "I did not want to come here. I wanted to go to the Middle East, but they do not like us anymore. It is because we are already too much there. So my agent suggested that I should go to South Africa, because we had a job here and better money than India though not as good as the Middle East."

In this case, we can see that for some migrants South Africa was not their first choice. It eventually became so due to lack of options and other possibilities. The people coming in this category are the people who do not fall into the category of kinship networks. Migrants traveling to South Africa in this category are the ones who have tried the Middle East, Europe and the West for couple of years. Finally, after failing to receive the permit they decided go with the unanticipated plan of South Africa. Rejection from other countries led them to select South Africa as the last option. Observations of Madhavan and Landau (2011: 479) in Johannesburg show that migrants see their lives in South Africa as a temporary stay. Many tend to return home, while others move elsewhere. Johannesburg is considered a transit point for migrants. Those that remain in the city hope to resettle sometime in the future in the high-income countries, either in Europe or North America. Johannesburg is a migrant's space, where less than 50% of Gauteng's population was born in the region and the rest come from elsewhere. (Palmary et al., 2015). Palmary et al. (2015) in their study on Johannesburg found that many migrants living in Johannesburg do not see Johannesburg as home; instead they look forward to living elsewhere. "And so people's connection to the city (becomes) ambivalent" (Palmary et al., 2015: 5). It is because of reasons like these that migrants living in the 'city do not completely become part of it, even if they claim a sort of entitlement to the city' (Ibid). However, there are instances where migrants end up staying in the city more than the anticipated time eventually settling in Johannesburg which is discussed in the next chapter.

Riz and Ikraar are trying to enter Europe. Riz even learned French at a private coaching institution. Riz says there is no future in South Africa; since the currency value is declining

compared to India. Initially, when he arrived two years ago the exchange rate between Indian rupee and South African rand was approximately 7: 1. Now it has gone down to 5 rupees per rand (2015). Riz along with Ikraar, is applying for the Schengen visa. Ikraar's application for a Schengen visa was recently rejected from the French embassy. He showed his rejection letter which mentioned that his reasons to enter Schengen areas were not credible and that his plans to return were unclear. Both, Riz and Ikraar are planning to leave South Africa.

> "*Idhar ki situation abhi thik nahin hain. Nikalne ka hain abhi idhar se, bahot ho gaya. Do saal reh liya abhi aage jana hain. India main jaane ki bajaye main Europe main jana chahunga. Koshish jaari hain dekhtein hain kya hota hain aage.*" (The situation is not good in South Africa. I am planning on leaving this place now, it is too much. I have stayed here for two years now want to go ahead. Instead of going to India I want to go to Europe. I am working hard towards it lets see what happens.).[94]

Urva, an Indian female migrant in her mid-20s applied for the American and South African permits at the same time. After receiving the South African permit, she was advised to work in South Africa until her US permit was granted which would take another year or two. Therefore, she came to South Africa and started working in a barbershop expecting to receive the work permit for USA in a year's time. After spending one year she was invited for an interview at the American embassy in Mumbai. She immediately left the country on self-deportation. Sunil, her colleague was narrating her story. I asked him if she was denied the American visa, would she not lose everything. Sunil replied in a tired tone with low pitch, "Umm, well, she will not lose anything particularly; she still can return to South Africa." I asked how is it possible because she has deported herself; and he replied the same way she came earlier ("*Jaise pahele aayi thi waise hi*"), by jumping the border. This means immigrants who have self-deported still see South Africa as an alternative option. If Urva fails in the interview for the USA work permit she can still come back to South Africa with the available option of 'jumping the border' possibly with a new passport. Arif for

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example left South Africa on self-deportation. Six months later I spotted him in Fordsburg again. Prior to his departure he told me that he would relinquish the asylum benefits of staying in the country and working. But he had to come back because, "family condition was not as good as I had expected so I had to come back to South Africa."[95] This time he applied for a new passport with a different name and received a visitor's permit.

On the other hand, it was interesting to notice how migrants perceived South Africa. The answer was differing according to the perception of migrants. For some it was a shock to find South Africa such a developed nation as opposed to other countries of Africa. Khadim said,

> "It is a rich country. You can make good money and send back home. I never imagined South Africa, as I had no imagination of an African country. I thought it was a place with lots of poverty, dark and jungle. Regarding South Africa this is not the case, but this is true in Swaziland."[96]

He mentions Swaziland because he entered South Africa via Swaziland. There were different opinions concerning South Africa depending on the age difference, region, and religion of the migrant. Ashraf who is in his 50s has nothing much to expect but to accept the situation as it is, work hard, send money, and one-day leave permanently to India.

In addition to the halting of European American work permits; there are other reasons that help us to understand the reason for selecting Africa and that is the assurance of asylum permits. In most countries in the above mentioned regions, it is becoming difficult for a migrant to enter the countries to work. If ever they do, then it is extremely difficult to claim refugee/asylum status. It is due to the growing pressure on the government authorities to formulate refugee policies for "economic refugees." Whereas, in case of South Africa, an Indian migrant labour can claim for an asylum and s/he is guaranteed that they will be granted the permit. An undocumented migrant

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[95] Arif, March 2015
[96] Khadim, November 2013

labourer is assured by the agents in advance that s/he will receive valid documents of stay after their arrival in the country (chapter 5). Such assurances help migrants in making the decision to select South Africa as a possible destination to work. These kinds of advance assurances are offered to migrants who are yet to make a decision about South Africa, which works as a kind of motivation.

c) Job Security

The most important reason for migrating to South Africa is job security. Migrant networks work effectively providing jobs for migrants. It reduces the probability of unemployment among the migrant labourers because of the direct access to the labour market (Zhao, 2003: 500). The labour market comprises of established networks that help in providing jobs and welfare benefits. Access to the labour market is part of the active migrant network that facilitates the interaction between a labourer and networks. This interaction happens only after the migrant reaches the destination, but prior to that there are several factors that help a migrant in making the decision and one of them is the role of an agent. The role of agents in India becomes important because they offer assurance of jobs in Fordsburg market. Agents play a pivotal role in encouraging migrants to select South Africa as jobs were guaranteed. A professional recruiting agent in Baroda, Gujarat claimed that the flow of labour migrants to South Africa is due to the failure of options elsewhere. His overseas recruiting company recruits professional workers to work in Africa. He did not want to deal with labour migrants because he says,

> "There is a legality issue, and a non-trustworthy business. There are many illegal agents who do this around Gujarat and they mostly target semi-urban areas. It has a good market in Gujarat because the west has stopped labour immigration and Gujaratis have a tendency of migrating. Hence these so called agents make good use of that offering Africa, South Africa in particular as a preferable destination."[97]

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[97] Interview, Karan Singh, Baroda, Gujarat, 3rd January, 2015

It is also true that after failure of work permits in other parts of the developed world, South Africa becomes an affordable option. Agents chime in to glorify South Africa as part of the developing world with good currency value. Nadim who first went to Kenya said he did not want to continue staying in Kenya due to the currency value. The exchange rate between Kenyan Shillings and Indian Rupees was almost the same and it made no difference for him to work in a foreign country when he is earning the same as in India. So he decided to shift to South Africa because Rand provided higher currency value as compared to the Rupee. He told me,

> "Even if we make 3000 Rand it is almost 15,000 Indian Rupees. This is a decent amount which is at least five times more. But in Kenya if I made 3000 Shillings it was the same as Indian Rupees and I was not happy with that exchange value so I decided to move to South Africa."[98]

It was the same with Armaan. He first went to Malawi to join his uncle's poultry business. After staying there for three months he found that Malawi was not exciting and therefore decided to move to South Africa. He said,

> "First I went to Malawi. It is full of jungles and a bit remote. All I did during my stay is to eat some Nsima (staple food of Malawi) and drink coconut juice. I was tired of those coconuts. The life was also bit expensive because I was staying in a faraway area. This made it difficult for transportation. If I felt like going to eat at an Indian restaurant I had to pay 10000 Malawian Kwachas (275 Rand) alone for the transport, imagine. This was becoming miserable and I expressed it to my uncle that I do not want to stay in Malawi anymore so he organised to come to South Africa. South Africa is better than Malawi. I get a good salary and I can save as well."[99]

Armaan likes driving motorbikes. He and his group of friends in Mumbai have planned to travel to Jammu in the north of India on bikes.

> "We are saving money. And I am able to save at least 1000 rand per month. In about a year's time I would be able to go to Mumbai, buy a new bike and cross the country on the motorbike."

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[98] Interview with Nadim, 22 May, 2013
[99] Armaan, 18 May 2015

He said he could continue saving in South Africa because the exchange rate was good as compared to Malawi.

Light (1984 in Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990: 125) argues that immigrants are more satisfied in the host economy than native-workers. It is because of the wage differences between the two countries – their country of origin and destination country. Additionally, it is the lucrative exchange rate with country of significant exchange value that encourages this mobility. In Nadim's and Armaan's narration we can see there are two factors that helped them in making the decision to move to South Africa. First was the role of an agent in offering the jobs and the second is the currency value. In this section, I have shown why an Indian labour migrant selects South Africa as his destination instead of elsewhere in Africa. The reasons may vary according to the differences in age, region and profession. But the ultimate cause for their travel is to engage in a new environment that promises new opportunities and to use their talent and skills which is better remunerated than in India. Nadim lauds the benefits of being in Africa,

> "Although the life is tough, but we get better pay than India, and there is development here. You have any skill you will be appreciated in Fordsburg. The development now is focussed in Africa and that is why we are here."[100]

Although Nadim's narration might not reflect the actual situation of South Africa; but one thing he is confident about is the future. He sees his future in the developing economy of Fordsburg which keeps him motivated to work hard. His dreams might have little relation to the present economic situation but he sees South Africa's future as his own.

Presence of black working force

Fordsburg is shared by international migrants of different races and nationalities. This comprises labour migrants from South Asia and southern Africa. This adds to the diversity of economic

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[100] Interview with Nadim, 22 May, 2013

endeavours in the space of Fordsburg. The characteristics of urban African migration mentioned in Madhavan and Landau's (2011) work specifies the sharing of urban spaces especially Johannesburg among domestic and international migrants. This contention stands contrary to the working space of Fordsburg. Fordsburg being a residential as well as working space caters to mostly international migrants with a very limited presence of domestic migrants.[101]

Fordsburg is a multi-racial destination with a growing presence of black African working force alongside a minuscule number of Turks and Arabs – Lebanese, Syrian, Egyptian, Palestinian, and Jordanian. I argue that it is a multi-racial space only in the context of employing cheap black labour and out of the fear of respecting laws that promote black involvement in working sector. Black Africans are employed in the lower rungs as janitorial staff or waiters or as the back door staff. Most of the black workers are from the neighbouring African countries with a few South Africans. Black South Africans were not visible in the business sector in Fordsburg, however, instances of hawking were increasingly visible outside the flea market and Oriental Plaza. It is due to the fact that it being an Indian area, blacks tend to avoid involving themselves in business, preferring to work instead.[102] There is a class tension among blacks that is clearly visible in Fordsburg. Poor blacks work in the shops and stalls owned by South Asians but do not have their own enterprise. Growing Somali dominance on Church Street, which is the neighbouring street of Fordsburg, has created a challenge to the Fordsburg business milieu. Black entrepreneurs have been successful in creating an impact on Fordsburg. However, the black labourers are targets of discrimination by South Asians in Fordsburg and this is visible with growing tensions among two races on petty issues.

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[101] Domestic migrants here are the migrants who travel from rural areas to the urban space. This elaboration is taken from Madhavan and Landau's (2011) work.

[102] In the context of failure of Indian capital in the East Africa. Oonk (2006) offers explanations for the Indian success and African slow development. Along with the socio-economic factors, Oonk observes business education as one of the deciding factors.

Figure 22. Black labourers employed in the flea market (Source: Author's photograph, February 2015)

Racial tension

One Saturday morning in the flea market, a loud argument began between an Indian Gujarati trader Ajay and a black African young boy. The boy was crying loudly to convince people that Ajay had not paid him for his work, while Ajay was harsh and countered the allegation. The scene attracted the attention of everyone in the flea market, every trader got involved. There was a strong display of solidarity among the Indians. Latish who was talking to me, immediately ran to the location, and he along with other traders intervened to put an end to the conflict. Many traders were fearful of losing the reputation of the flea market, which was a place of familial shopping. Hence, we see it became common responsibility of all to consider the issues affecting traders of the flea market.

It is also true that Ajay was confident about rebutting the allegations of the African boy because of the boy's illegal status. If the matter went to the police, Ajay knew that the African would be questioned about his illegal presence in the country. Ajay, like other traders of the flea market, has established a good rapport with the city council and police administration. Almost every day in Fordsburg black Africans have to be wary escaping the attention of police and

immigration authorities due to the fear of deportation. South Africa is well known for the deportation cases in the region. Vigneswaran (2013) claims that, "a hyperactive immigration enforcement regime, has made South Africa one of the world's most prolific deporters of foreign nationals in the world" (117). Segatti and Landau's (2011) findings from 2005-2008 reveal high numbers of deportations from South Africa mostly from the African countries.

Another reason that Ajay could resist was because there is an existence of strong informal unions among the south Asian traders in the flea market. They are ready to unite and fight against what they see as external aggression. The unions lobby with local community leaders to get their problems addressed by the Johannesburg Municipal authorities. The above incident suggests that traders are fearlessly working without worries. They have formed an unwritten and undocumented union amongst themselves which works on the terms of mutual benefit. This union crosses nationalities, religion, caste, and ethnic boundaries. It is supported by local community leaders and ward councillor who mostly felicitate the interest of local traders and the flea market business area. This does not mean the internal conflict is non-existent. Existence of internal conflicts and tensions arising out of different nationalities is visible. Talking about the solidarity among traders of the flea market, one aspect is obvious that these traders work on a principle of mutual self-help. Inter-dependency of trade also governs the common interest of traders. For example, if Ajay sells DVDs, there are 10 different traders selling the DVDs. These DVDs come from one or two wholesalers; therefore, Ajay might ask one of the DVD owners to get the stock for him while he is away doing some other work and vice-versa. Since, these traders are engaged in multi-trade activities, they are dependent on each other to felicitate the trade. In order to continue the multi-business activity, they have to keep respecting each other's interest. Hence, the growing solidarity is out of the fear of other ethnic group's presence.

However, besides above reasons, there is strong sense of racial consciousness among migrants in Fordsburg. Black Africans are cheap labour and generally "lazy and do not have a sense of money"; this is a common rhetoric among the traders/workers in the ethnic neighbourhood. As much as caste dynamics informs the discriminatory practices, it further translates into racial aspects. Walidin, a Pakistani mobile phone repairer expresses his disbelief in the African workers referring to them as ignorant. "If there is any small issue they make a heck of a noise and they want you to do everything for you. These blacks are like this," Walidin says in Urdu in presence of his black customers.

Figure 23. Migrant black labourers working on the streets of Fordsburg market (Source: Author's photograph, November 2013)

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen the way economic aspects influence Indian labour migrant's life in South Africa. Economics of migration is a vague theme to define the migration of Indian labourers. Migration for young migrants is more than economic aspects, they desire broader goals. The

economic aspects tend to work in favour of young migrants who live an independent life, gain international working experience and make good money to afford the lifestyle that they desire. Apart from making money for savings, young migrants aspire to engage in some business in South Africa. Along with this we have also seen the reason for selecting Africa – it is the outcome of networks, job security and out of the failed attempts to work in the west. Black labour force is an immutable aspect that makes Fordsburg a multi-ethnic working space. The diversity of trade interests of different races argues for the economic prosperity of the area. However, the differences in the future plans and aspirations differed among migrants due to their current permit status in the country. Discussion on the undocumented migrant's life and the importance of valid work permits will be discussed in the next chapter in light of the existing refugee laws that protect immigrants in South Africa.

CHAPTER 5

"WE DON'T CARE ABOUT PERMITS": THE EXPERIENCE OF MIGRATION

> "I came to South Africa 12 years ago on a visitor's visa. I had my relatives who helped me get a job immediately. I worked in different fields and survived. During this time, I tried to get a work permit but unfortunately I never got one. I tried several times with no success. Anyway even today I do not have a work permit…I care about it, but not as much now. It doesn't make much difference, but on the other hand I really need it so that I can go to India and be more mobile." – Hitesh, 22 July, 2013[103]

While doing ethnographic research in Fordsburg Hitesh's story provoked me to investigate more about the meanings of work permits among contemporary Indian labour migrants. In this chapter, I study mostly undocumented migrants who navigate their residence status in South Africa according to their future plans and current working conditions. Migration from the developing world is often conceived as a uniform process which is often inspired by economic reasons (Statham, 2003; Appleyard, 1991). In the case of Africa, studies argue that apart from genuine political displacements, there are many economic migrants who move to settle in a country that offers better opportunities, often in the North (Crisp, 2003; Ratha and Shaw, 2007a, 2007b). The

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[103] Hitesh, 22 July, 2013

use of the term "economic migrants" is problematic.[104] In this chapter, I argue that migrating to the north in the context of asylum protection by "abusing" the permit is not always the case (cf. Nicholson, 2002). Migration from India to South Africa (SA) offers a new paradigm of migration within the global South. I would like to look at the idea of country of transit, an aspect not discussed as much as the idea of migration from one country to another permanently. I offer a critique of migration literature based on what I call "northern assumptions" by providing empirical data from southern movements, i.e. experiences that contradicts the northern literature. These 'experiences' stand in contrast to the 'assumptions' within northern literature.

The broader argument that runs through this chapter relates the theories of the north that generalise the concept of migration as a common denominator without adequately taking into account peripheral experiences. I refer to some of the classical theories which engage with the southern experience of migration that offer merely empirical knowledge of the migration phenomenon (cf. Castles and Miller, 2009; Parnwell, 1993; Todaro, 1976b). When we discuss undocumented immigration the state is placed in a hegemonic position in relation to the future of migrants in the host country. In the south-north migration context, this is significant as the state extends social welfare benefits to migrants as part of their responsibility. South-south inter-regional migration from India to South Africa offers a different understanding of state control over immigrant's choices in the host country. In this case, it is seen that migrants themselves decide about their plans future rather than relying entirely on the state machinery. The migrants that I

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[104] I credit Nicholson (2002) for her work on the economic migration and asylum. She clarifies the usage of term work permit as opposed to the economic migrant because, according to Nicholson economic migrants carry negative stereotype of being someone that is enjoying the "fruits of others labour" (6). Whereas work migrant are someone who migrate to earn the money by working. This according to Nicholson has discredited both the people entering as genuine asylum seekers and to those who are economic migrants. According to her, economic migrants are also someone who would like to settle in the destination country. Work migrants on the other hand would one day return to the home country. This might be problematic in generalising. However, for the arguments sake I would rely on the work migration phenomenon but would be cautious in using economic migrants drawing a defining line as we read through the chapter. Also see, *The Economist*, "How to manage the migrant crisis," Feb 6th - 12th 2016

study in this chapter are undocumented migrants who enter the complex system of asylum protection. Once asylum is granted they decide their own strategies of work in South Africa without engaging with the state. This is a new angle to asylum permit stories in which the state's responsibility to the migrant is minimum.

Most Indian migrants in Johannesburg are migrants in transit who do not necessarily see Johannesburg as a permanent destination but treat it instead as a port of entry into other countries; predominantly in the US or the Europe.[105] However, in this place of transit, the state as well as employers play an important role in determining migrant's choices. These choices however are not solely dependent on the external factors but have as much to do with personal choices. Interesting questions arise as to how a migrant arrives at the position of not relying on the state but is able to make their own choices. In the traditional view of migration studies supported by historical evidence it was often the state (colonial Africa[106]/apartheid South Africa) that decided the life of migrants giving minimum or no chance to a migrant to decide for themselves. But in the contemporary era of the "smartphone" age there have been profound changes in the power dynamics of migration[107] (Yengde, 2014). The case studies discussed here show the variety of experiences of Indian migrants to Johannesburg and their response to the growing state hostility towards immigration. Migrants have a well worked out plan which is usually to wait until a permit is granted. If not, they leave the country with the savings acquired over two to three years. For a migrant getting a work permit is important but if they do not get one, they do not see it as a crisis. They are not overly concerned regarding their future in South Africa. Some prefer to stay on and

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[105] General information collected from interviews.

[106] To put it in a broader context of native subjectivity in the colonial administration, Mbembe (2015) offers particular insights on the commandments which governed the interest over colonized peoples. It was an ordain of a European metropolis that decided the fate of colonized populace. It was bureaucraticised or especially privileged by the order of the king of the queen in the right to make laws according to the governing's will (see chapter 1).

[107] The contemporary migration from the Middle East to Europe is marked as a crisis situation. A whole new website supported by the EU demonstrates the gravity of situation http://syrianrefugees.eu/

work, whereas others do not care for work permits. In some instances, they treat it as a fun experience rather than driven by economic necessity.

This chapter deals with, issues of identity consciousness among contemporary Indian labour migrants to South Africa, and the success or failure of migrants in getting work permits. The labour migrant regime need not be the common denominator that defines the complex contours of migrant identity. Theories that engage with the migration experience often talk of the state-migrant relationship alone (cf. Castles and Miller, 2009; Parnwell, 1993; Todaro, 1976a). Neither state framed arguments nor economic models of migration are sufficient to address contemporary migration (Massey et al., 1993). This for me is not a complete picture of migrant choices.

Assumptions of the northern discourse on migrants (asylum seekers)

In order to understand the power dynamics of permits, I focus my analysis on asylum seekers. According to the South African law an asylum seeker is someone, "who has fled his or her country of origin and is seeking recognition and protection as a refugee in the Republic of South Africa, and whose application is still under consideration" (Refugees Act no. 130 of 1998). However, for migrants in Fordsburg an asylum permit is merely something that gives them access to the social and economic space of South Africa. They can work without worrying about police harassment and also keep their options open regarding the work permit if they ever decide to have one. They have not fled their country of origin seeking state protection in South Africa. They have entered the South African working space as work migrants using asylum as a platform.

Often in studies of migration it is assumed that asylum seekers are temporary migrants who eventually become permanent in the host country (Hansen, 2003; cf. Appleyard, 1991). Neo-classical economic theories advocate this contention; people move abroad permanently and for a

lifetime. The "new economics of labour migration" argues the contrary; they contend that the movement is temporary to overcome market deficiencies at home and once the problem is sorted out, people return (cf. Constant and Massey, 2002). It is in the spirit of "new economics of labour migration" theory I argue against the neo-classical models that often override and differ with empirical evidence from elsewhere, in this case South Africa. Studies based on northern experience often talk about immigration to Europe and the emergence of its border protection regime since world wars. Hostility towards migrants who are asylum seekers is a growing phenomenon in Europe (Statham, 2003) partly because asylum seekers carry the stigma of belonging to countries defined by the international discourse of war, poverty, etc. (Geddes, 2003). This argument is substantiated in the recent incidents on the Italian shores where thousands arriving from North Africa and the Middle East are rescued. These immigrants - as empirical research says - await asylum protection in Europe and hope that one day they will become part of the host country's social welfare benefits (Journeyman Pictures, 2014).

The case study of Indian labour migration to South Africa presents a somewhat different picture than the above discussed perceptions of migration. Asylum seeking is often taken as a convenient route to enter South Africa without having a valid work permit. But it is not completely true that asylum seekers seek to become permanent residents. In fact, there is a distinct category whom I refer to as the "don't care" category which is less concerned about their asylum document and its future implications. They are comfortable with the idea that they would stay in South Africa as a temporary "economic" migrant who would within a time span of a few years accumulate enough capital to return to India. These migrants fall into the category of "sojourners" who are inspired by short-term moves (Bailey, 2001: 415). The story of Indian labour migration to South Africa offers new interpretation of migrant experiences and helps us to contextualise the

distinctiveness of migrant aspirations in the contemporary era. I contend that clubbing asylum seekers together into one category fails to access or explain the experiential differences that migration offers. Issues concerning asylum and its relation to socio-economic development tends to be largely concerned with the experience of the north (Castles and Wise, 2007).

The experience in southern quarters

This thesis looks at the migration concept within the region of the developing south. Placing India-South Africa migration in the context of south-south migration or migration within developing countries (Ratha and Shaw, 2007b) is important because it helps nuance the picture of an undefined South. Following on from Bakewell (2009: 9) defining the movement from India to South Africa as south-south migration fits into the given definitions of various stakeholders: UN (developing region); World Bank (income) and UNDP (human development context).

South-north migration dominates discourses in the study of migration studies over the last three decades and has focussed on low-skilled hard working labour migrants. Castles and Miller (2007) contend that this negligence has "distorted" the very idea of development and migration. It does not consider societies which represent the largest share in development. The analysis framed within the dominant discourses of the northern groups leaves us with fragmented and unclear data empirically. Bakewell (2009: 40) presents us with the issue of the different themes in the literature that divide the North and the South. According to him, the northern debates on migration have more to do with the policies of immigration control and the issue of settlement of migrants predominantly coming from the south. In contrast, the literature/policy documents of the south deal more with the emigration of human resource especially to the north and discussions focus on remittances and their impact on the country of origin. This divide at times is not considered in the academic understanding of diverse phenomenon of migration. It has in a way contributed to our

understanding of the politics of policies which I call *politicy*. This fact has led to the stereotyped imagination of migration in the south. I contend that scholars have not paid enough attention to understanding the role of asylum seekers within the southern context.

I draw upon the radical approach of southern theories proposed by Connell (2007). Her work intends to challenge the hegemonic intellectual enterprise in the global north which seeks to "mine" the resources of the south with a Eurocentric persuasion. For Connell it is a debate between "them" (north) and the rest of the world where knowledge production tends to flow in one direction. Furthermore, Comaroff and Comaroff (2011, 2012) place Africa in the centre of global finance and knowledge production and remove it conceptually from a peripheral location. The Comaroffs argue for the inversion of the world order to make it Africa centric. Mobility in the form of immigration of Europeans in Africa in the midst of recessionary turmoil in Europe and America suggest an alternative picture to the normative south-north dependence.

Comaroff and Comaroff (2011) question this drive towards the south which is unclear if it is for the "good or bad." The issue of immigration in Africa has to be understood in a deep conversation with southern experiences. It becomes the responsibility of scholars based in this part of the world to analyse and react against entire geographies being treated merely as "raw materials" to be later placed in global arguments. This does not help the growing social science order. As observed in this chapter, migrants choose to settle or not to settle in the destination country depending on the economic and social dynamics of migrant's lives.

Theoretical framework and the southern experience

I will underscore the importance of 'refugee movement' in the context of Indian labour migration to South Africa in contemporary era and investigate how the idea of 'refugee movement' applies to Indian labour migration. Labour migration constitutes the major share of global migration (Kok

et. al, 2006). This migration comprises 'work' migrants who are mostly from the developing country that constitute a major share in global migration.

In the classical theories of migration there are two types of labour migration: circular migration and return migration (Parnwell, 1993). Circular migration refers to those movements that take between places of origin and a distant destination which involves crossing international boundaries. In case of return migration, a migrant leaves the host destination and returns back to the home country. Whereas, in case of circular migration it involves at least a minimum one of cycle of outward and inward movement. Migration in the context of labour movement is one of those complex theories as mentioned by Lee (1966: 50) that "we can never specify the exact set of factors which implies or prohibits migration for a given person, we can in general, only set forth a few which seem of special importance and not the general and actual reaction of a given group." The imagination of labour migration lacks the actual application of a specific theory of migration. King (1985) explains various typologies of population movements such as commuting, oscillation, circulation, return migration, counter-stream migration, refugees, evacuees, people displaced by ecological disasters, step migration and permanent migration.

Talking about refugee movements, Nicholson (2002: 8) says, "asylum seekers are reluctant migrants who generally want to return home." This might apply to the Indian migrants in discussion here who seek asylum in South Africa. These migrants look forward to returning home as soon as they accumulate a certain amount of wealth. So they do not even wait until a refugee permit is granted and survive with the asylum document they have. Regarding undocumented (illegal) migration as mentioned by Nicholson (2002: 4) this is the most 'risk taking' category of migration. In this case, the migrant is part of an illegal workforce present in a country who risks the daily wage which they might lose in their home country; but they are sure of the fact that they

will definitely lose if they do not migrate. Others have argued that undocumented immigration is a part of a social process, where the immigrant's sole purpose is to peacefully find the work (Meneses, 2003). It is observed that they are the most vulnerable and victimised groups in migration process.

Migration theory and political migrants

Difficulties associated with migration may be offset by the risks arising from staying on: socio-economic conditions, wars, natural disasters and internal problems of the society. "Illegal labour migration" is not unique to the contemporary Indian labour migration to South Africa. McKeown (2011) in his work discusses the migration of illegal Asian workers to North America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Labour migration becomes illegal when a migrant crosses the border of another country without having an adequate permit or permission to work. It was visible especially after the Second World War when the industrialised world required labour force for their development. For example, in South East Asia, workers from Thailand, Philippines, and the Eastern Malaysia migrated to Singapore and Indonesia. In Latin America too, labourers from Columbia, Ecuador and other Caribbean states migrated to Venezuela and Argentina. In the Middle East, and in Libya a massive number of illegal labourers from neighbouring northern African and south Asian countries helped support the economic boom (cf. Ratha and Shaw, 2007a). It must be noted that modern migratory movements have been influenced by a colonial legacy of movement within the colonised world (cf. Hall, 1992). The movement has not changed but the laws that govern this are now governed by the idea of the nation state and national identity that has put restrictions on movements by creating new borders. Torpey (2000) in his landmark work helps to understand the challenges imposed by the international regulations for contemporary human movement within the modern states. He argues that modern state formation has relied on

conserving and preserving the labour force in the country. This has led to a "monopolisation of the legitimate 'means of movement'" of individuals – the subjects of the state (Torpey, 2000: 4-18). The idea of state is constituted on the role of state's authority in regulating the means of movement which effectively forms its 'state-ness' (Torpey, 2000: 6). This has led to a generalised norm that regulates movements leading to the emergence of passport regimes to monitor and control the free movement of individuals.

In the South African case, it seems like most of the migrants are temporary immigrants who come for a short (specific) amount of time, as happened during the nineteenth century Indian indentured migration to South Africa. The development of agriculture, mines, and industrial sectors in South Africa required labour force to participate in the development of its economy. With effect to that, invitations were sent to India recruiting to work on plantation in the cane fields. Some of these immigrants as Desai & Vahed (2010) have shown, stayed for longer, some decided to make South Africa their home and in this way we see one phase of indentures who became permanent settlers in the South African scenario.[108] This notion is defined by Stahl (1988) as 'overstayed' which means the ones who came on a short visit and continued staying longer finally becoming part of the local census. Similarly, we can see immigrants who belonged to the category of 'overstaying' in the present day context too. Most of those who 'overstayed' entered South Africa on a short stay "Visitor Visa" that is issued for holiday, business, conferences, or study, medical treatment, academic sabbatical and voluntary or charitable activities, sport events and

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[108] To counter this 'problem' various legislations were introduced in Natal, Transvaal, and Orange Free State to control the movement of free indentures. Law No 14 of 1859, Law No 3 of 1885, The Immigration Restriction Act, Natal, 1891, 1897, Law 15 of 1898, Immigration Restriction Act, 1903, The Immigration Restriction Act (Transvaal)1905, The Immigration Act, No.15 (Transvaal), 1907, Immigration Regulation Act, 1913 was aimed to curb the problem of growing influx of Indian indentures. This problem was mainly rooted with economic advancements. From 1850 to 1948 there were about 150 laws passed of which most of them were addressing the growing fears against Indian capital expansion. However, post 1948 after the introduction of Apartheid regime there were few laws passed targeting Indians. It was more anti-black sentiment.

research. (home-affairs.gov.za). These categories permit entry into South Africa with a condition of not exceeding three months of stay.

Most of the Indian immigrants come to South Africa on a visitor's visa, mentioning holiday as a reason (Statistics South Africa, 2012). However, after their arrival they violate their legal status by overstaying. This fearless attitude among immigrants compels us to understand the motivations behind violating international legal standards. What do they gain by overstaying? If found guilty, they are supposed to be deported according to the law. Then the question arises, why did they think of violating the law? Or was the violation of law their first option? Is it the circle of friends and working environment of Fordsburg that encouraged them to choose this option?

The role of agents in recruiting labourers is significant here. Most of the time agents prep the labourers to overstay irrespective of the legal consequences. South Africa is one of the new countries in Africa and has immigration laws which protect vulnerable categories such as refugees and asylum seekers. It is also well known that regulations are not strictly enforced which gives migrants an easy chance to evade the existing law (Conde, 1979 in Adepoju, 1988).

This in return results in the victimisation of labourers who pay around 100,000 – 200,000 thousand Indian rupees ($ 1500 - 3000) to the agent in India for a work permit. Most of the times, the recruitment of labourers from India does not fit the South African policy requirements; and the agents use this ambiguity to misinform them, assuring them that there are no potential threats or problems in finding work.

Employment among Indian migrants – a unique southern experience

This section will provide the empirical data detailing the different categories of migrants. As discussed earlier, most of the people working in the flea market work elsewhere during the week. Some had two jobs during weekdays; one during the daytime and the other starting in the evening

and ending late at night. Working for long hours, extra hours or less hours depends on the availability of work. Most of the jobs that do not require special skills - like working in a grocery shop, restaurant, salesmen, don't need any training or are taught by the employer. Jobs that require skills - like tailors, barbers, cooks, IT specialists - are of a permanent nature, as they require full time employment with one employer. It is also possible that a skilled migrant would work in an unskilled sector, as most of the skilled jobs are already taken by earlier migrants. During festivals like New Year and other holidays, the need for more manpower increases and this results in employment for the unemployed work force in Fordsburg. In some cases, black Africans from nearby areas are also employed on a temporary basis. Working for long hours and in different jobs during weekdays and weekends is similar to the experience of early arrivals in the early twentieth century. Carrim (2013) records the memories of his grandfather who was employed in different jobs during weekends and weekdays. The nature of jobs, hard working conditions, and uncertain future plans make migrants restless. This is a continuing struggle among Indian immigrants to South Africa.

There are reported cases of success stories as well as failures in gaining permits. Some have applied and are awaiting the outcome; while some do not care if they are granted work permits. Based on these two facts, I will explore the condition of labourers in each situation. It has always been a matter of interest among scholars of migration studies to understand the politics of movement of labour. Migrants leaving their country of origin have always seen a significant shift in their lives. Various studies have put forward the concept of rural-urban migration within Africa which speaks to the growing tendency of internal migration (cf. Gugler, 1969; Todaro, 1971) or in other words "international migration in Africa" (Adepoju, 2007). Scholars have argued that, flourishing economy and job guarantees elsewhere distances a migrant from his/her place of origin.

It is not only lifestyle (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009a) but also the security of family and children that determines the domicile of labour migrant permanently. The growing interest of labour migrants in resettling in the place of origin, means that labour migrants see their workplace as a temporary station. Ferguson's (1992) challenging critique has provoked debates among the scholars working on African historiography. His analysis presents the contrary situation of labour migrant who return to their place of origin after the termination of a job in the city. Giving the evidence of Zambian migrant workers in the copper belt, Ferguson argues that the colonial adjustment of the copper belt was done in such a way as to prevent migrant workers from settling in the area. However, he also observed that migrant workers were reluctant to settle far away from home, and looked forward to return. I observe potential attitudes of Indian labour migrants too and question if they really want to settle, do they want to return, or do they see themselves as being in transit? Or are they those who fall into the category of what Paul (2011) would call as "stepping stone migration"?

Contemporary undocumented migration has to be theorised in relation both to the length of stay and as well as future plans. Migration studies have to be understood with the artefacts of present and future conditions. Hence, to explore the debate on work permits, I will present the case studies of migrants in two categories below who determine their undocumented status within the spectre of legal bindings.

Awaiting the outcome of work permits

This section considers the question of why a work permit becomes an important document in a migrant's life. Among the immigrants that I met, the younger ones were the most enthusiastic about applying for work permits. Older immigrants do not appear to consider the possibility of applying. Reasons vary also according to people's intentions and reasons for staying. Ashraf for

example, did not want to apply because he was afraid of getting caught by the immigration authorities and being deported for overstaying. Another reason was the family circumstances, which I will address in detail in the next section. It is obvious that the ones who applied for work permits have a relationship of trust with their employer. I found no applicants who applied for work permit on their own and were successful. The procedure for applying for a permit is interesting to study: first, suggestions are taken from fellow migrants employed in Fordsburg and the flea market. The next step is to request the employer for help in providing the necessary documents for work permit. At the third stage required documents are collected to apply via an agent who has contacts in the Home Office. The agent employed is not necessarily registered with the Home Affairs office approved Association of Immigration Practitioners of South Africa (AIPSA). However, there are some authorised consultants and migrants preferred to hire them than the unregistered ones. The agent guarantees an asylum seeker permit as a first step based on the quality and appropriateness.[109]

After appearing before the Refugee Status Determination Officer the asylum seekers permit can be converted into a refugee status document. Indian migrants see this process as cumbersome and complicated. There is a period of six months to two years within which a refugee permit is granted. Migrants preferred to hire agents who would charge them 3500-5000 Rand in order to get the permit quickly.

> "Agents have contact in the office. We have to wake up at 4 and then go to Pretoria, believe me this is very problematic. But when we are with the agent it is a bit easy. He takes us in his car to Pretoria. He has inside contacts with the office and it is managed. When we appear before the officer he does not ask difficult questions and it is bit easy to get otherwise day by day it is getting difficult",[110] said Armaan who had the experience of applying for the refugee permit.

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[109] In the years of my fieldwork I have noticed an increased number of migrants applying for the asylum seekers permit without any agent's assistance.

[110] Armaan, 11 May 2015

If the applicant qualifies under the scarce skills and work permit quotas which lists 35 000 positions across 53 categories, then the outcome is expected within 6 to 8 weeks. The asylum seeker is allowed to stay in the country until a final decision on his/her application is made. It is not sure until the very last moment even after getting the assurance from agent if the work permit will be granted. Therefore, it is sometimes seen as a matter of "*naseeb* (luck)." Lucky ones get the permit to stay; however unlucky ones stay on without a permit.

Identifying qualities for success

Having no knowledge of political and legal regimes, the migrant from India undertakes a considerable risk. There is a commonly shared-sentiment: "*dekhte hain kya hota hain* (let's see what happens)." This does not mean that migrants do not fear the outcome but their confidence is based on what they know of migration cycles since the year 2000. Most of the immigrants from Gujarat are believed to have stayed on in South Africa without having valid work permits. Hence, this acts as a strong motivation (pull factor) for incoming migrants to take a risk and embark on this journey. Many informants whom I interviewed were expecting to get their work permit in a year's time. Some even got the permit; Sultan's is one such example. He came two years ago on a visitor's permit. He had already established connections in Fordsburg. He got a job in the shop of one of his relatives. After he had worked for two years, his employer decided to give him the necessary documents for a visa. When he received the work permit it was a matter of envy among his colleagues who are still waiting to hear from the Home Affairs Office. Ajay's example however is a contrasting case. Ajay came to South Africa on a visitor's visa fifteen years ago. He was unsure if he would stay longer in South Africa but he thought of taking a chance. Therefore, he took his wife along with him to tour South Africa. Having already established kinship networks he was

offered a job in one of the garages. He worked hard for a year to gain the trust of his employer who prepared the documents for his work permit and sponsored him.

Once a migrant gains the confidence of his employer, it is very likely that he will receive the work permit. The group of migrants who have received the work permit become the community's source of knowledge. According to their suggestions, migrants approach the agents and lawyers who ensure that the documents are in order. Many migrants in Fordsburg tend to work for the same employer for long so as to gain their trust for the work permit. In order to get the work permit a migrant has to pay charges, varying from 13000 to 21000 Rand.[111] Ajay got his permit in a short time as compared to other migrants. Now he has a South African born daughter who goes to South African schools. Ajay is still on a work permit and visits India every five years to maintain contacts back home. He is now awaiting his promotion to the position of manager in the same garage. Now that he has served with the garage company for long and has a work permit, he is qualified to be promoted as per his job rules and guidelines.

Surya came from Gujarat to South Africa two years ago. On arrival he had no job so he had to hunt for a job for two months using his Gujarati contacts. In time he established some contacts. During the course of his job, he applied for a work permit and he was immediately granted the visa. Surya is a cricketer, who manages to play cricket very often. His skills helped him to enrol in the one of the local cricket clubs. He regularly plays for the club during tournaments and also works for the sports stadium management during international cricket matches. On the weekends, he sells Gujarati *chaat* a typical snack for Indian food lovers. He brags about his achievements in cricket to his colleagues in Fordsburg. His mobile phone has photographs with

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[111] During the interviews with different migrants it was observed that migrants had to pay a certain amount to their employer for the work permit. Among the interviews the minimum amount paid by a migrant to his employer for the work permit document was 13,000 Rands. But again this price differed depending upon the relations with the employer.

cricket stars from around the world who have played in or for South Africa; ranging from Sachin Tendulkar, M S Dhoni, A B DeVilliers, Matthew Hayden and to Brett Lee. His presence in Fordsburg market is a sense of pride among the Fordsburgians. One of his colleagues, Hitesh who has a stall opposite to his introduced me to Surya by emphasising that he is a good cricketer and has played with cricket stars. Eating the Gujarati *chaat* that Hitesh ordered for us he talked about business and calibre of people working in Fordsburg. As he was telling me, he rolled his sleeves upwards displaying his fancy coloured wrist bands, perhaps to show that they are cool guys and not the old fashioned poor looking migrants and encouraged me to engage with Surya.

> *"Tum Surya ko nahin mile kya? Aarey bahot famous cricketer hain. Uske photo Sachin se lekar sabke saath hain. Surya ko photo dikhane ke liye bolo*." (Didn't you meet Surya? He is a famous cricketer. His photographs are with Sachin (Tendulkar) and other cricketers. Ask him to show his photographs).

Surya is an example of a young Indian aspiring immigrant who understands his abilities and is prepared to become a citizen of the world. Usage of the term "world citizen" to refer to Fordsburgians might contradict with Oonk's (2013: 220) notion of world citizen where he refers to the South Asian-African migrants who were born in one country, educated in another and lived in a third. This "triple heritage" according to Oonk makes them world citizens. But in this case, we see a migrant in the process of becoming a world citizen, born in one country, working in another and who might well end up living in another, since Johannesburg is a place of transit for most migrants.

On the idea of being in a transit space, Indian labour migrants in Fordsburg imagine their positioning in Johannesburg as temporary: the "temporary" varying from 1 year to 15 years or longer. When they initially departed for Johannesburg many of those interviewed in this study did not intend "Joburg as their final destination." As the waiting period for receiving the permits

(refugee, work, permanent residence) took time their stay automatically increased. Migrants on receiving certain permits sought better permits. I call this *permits adventure* where migrants seek advantage even through the bureaucratic process. The desire to get better permits involves multiple actions – to plan their future, seek a job, look for an agent, try to raise the money and then navigate their dreams towards better opportunities. The time spent in seeking better opportunities entails their staying on in Johannesburg sometimes for over a decade. For example, Hitesh ended up staying for 13 years while dreaming of leaving South Africa to migrate to the west and simultaneously looking for better permits in South Africa. Sultan's case is a good example. He has a work permit. Initially, he was on an asylum permit. He followed the procedure of getting a refugee permit, later aiming for the work permit. By now Sultan has stayed in South Africa for more than 7 years. He says,

> "*paanch saal aur kaam karunga aur phir permanent residency ko apply karunga. Ek bar permanent document mil jati hain na, toh phir apna khud ka business shuru karunga.*" I will work for five more years and will apply for permanent residence. Once I receive a permanent document then I will start my own business.

He planned for the future based on his stay in South Africa and he navigated the duration of his stay according to the length of the permits. While explaining his plans to me he was sure that South Africa was not his future. Examples like this suggest that adjusting in a space has implications for the time spent in the host society. Many end up staying for more time than they had intended ultimately making it difficult for them to move on to another country. They eventually end up engaging with the host society by starting their own business or working for well-paid jobs.

Importance of a Work Permit

Young recently arrived migrants seek work permits because they want to continue staying in South Africa on a "legal basis." The decision to continue living in South Africa varies according to their future plan and interest. Some simply want the work permit to establish a business of their own.

After getting the necessary work permit, a person can enter into a partnership with a fellow South African to start a business. Starting a business of their own is one of the prime missions of young immigrants. They have worked enough in Fordsburg and the flea market to get an idea of the area and working environment. After getting acquainted with the locals, they are now confident of making an independent start. The incentive to invest the capital in the host country depends upon the intended length of stay (Dustmann, 1999). Settlement is one of the reasons for entering into a business venture. Studies done elsewhere, predominantly in the global north, show that often temporary migrants settle permanently and "return migration is not uncommon among those expected to settle" Richmond (1988a: 119). After starting a small business of their own and making some profits; the migrant is in a better position to take a big leap by establishing an independent business on a larger scale, either in retailing sector or starting a restaurant in partnership or investing in the skilled business sector like a barbershop.

Business commences with renting a stall in the flea market, then working towards owning it. If successful they continue with more investment in that space; and look for some other opportunity outside Fordsburg. Flea market stalls in Fordsburg are the "trial and error" part of the business, which traditionally has been Indian way of doing business in Africa (Oonk, 2013). A business is tested in the flea market with a small capital investment as a trial ground before investing further capital. If successful, then more investments are made either by buying the space or entering into partnerships and expanding the nature of trading.

The increasing interest among young male migrants in getting the work permit helps to understand their tactics of survival in South Africa. The important thing to note here is, after getting the permit it is not necessary that a migrant should start a business. S/he might continue working with the employer; if not they might try to go elsewhere and try their luck either in another country

or back in India. Having a work permit provides the opportunity to return to South Africa if the migrant fails elsewhere. A legal document has a very important value in migrant's life. It not only helps them to work in South Africa but also creates a strong ground for a migrant to become a capital owner running their own businesses in the near future.

In Hitesh's case he has a small business, works for a company, and has good life. Then why does he need a work permit? This question led me to an interesting investigation to understand Hitesh's desire to have a work permit. First was the question of his status in the country; second, he needed a legitimate permit to work at a higher level; third to partner with overseas businessmen he needs a status. It is important for a person living in a country for more than a decade to claim certain rights, or he is deprived of what an individual in South Africa has access to. Though Hitesh has been working in a company for quite a while now, he has not been promoted to a higher level. His work experience qualifies him for promotions and an increment in pay but he is not able to grab the benefits even though he qualifies to get them. Finally, if Hitesh has to do a transnational business with his contacts in Dubai or in Mumbai, he needs to have a valid work permit. Currently, Hitesh has to use someone else's name to import goods from India or Dubai, and the person assisting him in bringing those goods can command a hefty commission. The commission could vary depending upon the risks one has to undergo in bringing certain kinds of consumer goods he is ordering. It is a generic percentage that is negotiated over the potential of future businesses. A special economy of social relations works in Fordsburg where economic transactions continue to happen despite a migrant's legal status. Apart from business, sending and receiving the money in someone else's name as a remittance is also visible. Hitesh has to pay unnecessary commission and tax on the products he is importing which is an additional cost to the regular government cess. Moreover, there is a risk of betrayal and loss of all his investments and profits.

When Hitesh arrived in South Africa in 1999, he had recently married in Gujarat. He thought of getting a work permit in South Africa and then bringing his wife to stay with him. But he didn't get the work permit and was forced to stay on in South Africa. Seeing that his return was doubtful, his wife divorced him. He has a daughter whom he has not met in person. Recently, when his mother died in 2013, he could not return to his home. He said he was desperate to go but he was afraid; if he leaves then everything he has been doing so far in South Africa and future plans will be jeopardised. He was frustrated about his life in South Africa. His desire to have a work permit or even residence documents has personal, social and economic reasons. It is to claim his property rights in India and in South Africa and to meet his family and daughter.

Although, he wouldn't mind getting a South African residence permit he does not see that as the ultimate goal. Permanent residence is offered to a foreigner "who [has] been residing in South Africa on the basis of their work permits for a minimum period of five years" (home-affairs.gov.za). Citizenship is offered to a permanent resident among other qualifications, "(if the applicant) [has] an additional 4 years of physical (actual) residence in the RSA during the eight years before the application for naturalisation (excluding the year of ordinary residence)" (Ibid.). It has become easy for an asylum seeker or a refugee permit holder to apply for the resident permit without surrendering their asylum documents. Initially prior to the 2003 judgement of the High Court the asylum seekers or the refugees were not allowed to apply for the permit until they give up their asylum or refugee permit. However, in the *Dabone and others versus the Minister of Home Affairs and another (case number 7526/03)* judgement, asylum seekers or refugees were granted the permission to apply whilst they await the outcome of the resident permit. Also, initial requirement prior to the case was that asylum seekers or refugees had to possess a passport. Now it is no longer a prerequisite for processing residence application. That is why we see individual

migrants are offered a legal concession, which is a relief. Therefore, migrants with temporary plans or economic needs do not have to dedicate their complete attention to get a residence application; it comes along once the committee makes a decision.

Many questions follow from this about what happens after receiving the work permit. Labour migrants seek to apply for a permanent residency after five years of the work permit. This means a labour migrant has to go through five years of work life in South Africa without acquiring a criminal record and possessing sound economic standing. Faist (2000) has attempted to elaborate the political consequences of an immigrant who assimilates to the cultural and behavioural environment of the receiving country. The expansion of social networks and strong economic standing gives the immigrant a chance to hold dual state membership to avail rights and duties of both countries. Holding economic rights in both the countries is validated only if a migrant has a permanent residency which defines him as, 'Denizen' (Faist, 2000). Denizen is a person who holds all set of rights in the host country except voting rights, while he continues to have mobile ties with the country of origin (Faist, 2000: 206-7). These sets of rights recognise the social and economic contribution of the immigrant. Recent migrants do not want to surrender their original identity and hence they retain Indian passport along with the South African ID. This dual state membership becomes clearer when they carry a permanent residency in South Africa.[112]

In most cases, migrants who marry local South Africans or have an opportunity to acquire a South African passport did not want to get one. It was due to the fact that most of them did not want to lose their Indian identity; moreover, holding Indian passport was a strong affirmation of their belief of being Indian, besides their continuing economic interests in their home country. Latish a grocery store owner is married to a South African Indian and has two children. He invited

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[112] In 2011, a total of 744 Indians were successful in securing the permanent residence almost ten times less than the temporary residence permits (Budlender, 2013: 62)

his parents to stay with him in South Africa permanently. Everyone in his immediate family is living in South Africa but he still retains his Indian passport. When asked why he needs an Indian passport when his wife, children and parents are all with him permanently settled in South Africa, he answered that he did not want to lose his identity and that he loves India.

> "*main Indian passport rakhunga zindagi bhar. Apna India ka passport chahiye. I love India*. (I will retain Indian passport for the rest of my life. I want to have an Indian passport. I love India)"[113]

Apart from his emotional rhetoric there are more reasons that justify his attachment to India. Latish wants to keep in touch with his sisters and other immediate kin. He has some economic interests in India with land in Gujarat. It is also equally true that mere land does not play an important role, but "the livelihood, the culture and the identity provided by the village" too plays an important role in migrant's choice (Kuhn, 2004 in Rigg 2007: 21). As Latish expands his business in South Africa, he still has an eye towards India to look for further opportunities. He wants to take advantage of the economic situation by having dual nationalities in one house. His wife is a South African while he is an Indian. In the future his children and his family can look for the best available option. This scenario resonates with the Turkish immigrants in Germany who still keep in touch with their home country and pay short visits every year. This is to confirm their economic interests but also they do not want to leave the German welfare institution for the medical and health care it offers (Faist, 2000).

"I do not care for work permits"

This section challenges the stereotype of the migrants from the south who seeks asylum protection as a way of entering the host society in the north, then claiming state protection and entering the labour market. However, in the cases that I study here, individuals are ready to surrender their

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[113] Interview with Latish, 22 June, 2013

work permit and leave the host society for good while some do not bother to even apply for a work permit. It is seen that migrants are not overly worried about asylum prospects as is seen in the northern experiences Many Indians working in Fordsburg have either jumped the border or come on a tourist visa and have overstayed to work in the destination country.[114] After entering South Africa, labour migrants get a job and start working immediately. Many workers working in Fordsburg do not have valid work permits. Their immediate worry is not to apply for a work permit, but to get a job make some money, send some home and if something motivates them to stay then apply for a work permit. It is a normal thought among the migrants of this category who are not entirely motivated to get work permits. These migrants are the ones who plan a short stay in South Africa. Bharat, an Indian barber when interviewed in 2014 said that he plans to stay in South Africa until 2015. He has marked the day in his calendar to apply for a visa. Until then he will work hard to accumulate wealth and have some savings. If the visa (work permit) is granted, then he might stay; if not he is ready to go back and start a business of his own in his village in India. At this point he is in a good position to have some savings and make decisions regarding his life.[115] Time and finances to pay for the visa procedures if he decides to get work visa are crucial.

An asylum seekers permit is granted by the Refugee Reception Officer (RRO) under section 22 of the Refugees Act No 130 of 1998. Asylum seekers permit is also called, "section 22 permit." According to this section, the holder of section 22 permit has the "right to work and study in South Africa and is protected against deportation to his country of origin." This can be further extended up to a period of six months.[116] Before this permit expires, according to the law; the

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[114] This is similar to the observations of Hugo (2007) who understands the general trends of overstaying in the Asia-Pacific migration. Similarly, Harney (2004) in his work studies the migrants in Italy who overstay their permits. He refers to them as "permit over stayers" which means the migrants that had permit to enter a country legally but later they violated their permit restrictions (308).

[115] Bharat, 02nd February, 2013

[116] This was granted in the case of Watchenuka and Another versus Minister of Home Affairs and Others (1486/02) ZAWC 64 (15 November 2002). In this case the court considered prohibiting asylum seekers to work and study whilst they await the decision

asylum seeker is given an appointment for a hearing with a Refugee Status Determination Officer who on the merit of an application makes a decision in granting Refugee permit which is also called "section 24 permit." This permit authorises a refugee to work and study for two years. Now let's stop here and calculate the time and energy spent by a migrant. The asylum permit is six months, which is renewed once which means it is one year on an asylum seekers permit. Then the migrant applies for Refugee Status which covers two years of stay (at times it is indefinite under certain circumstances). In total, a migrant is covered for three years with minimum energy and money spent on gaining other work permits. In these three years, migrants like Bharat make use of most of their time to gain certain amount of wealth and return to India without many legal constraints. Their status is valid in the eyes of law and they do not have to fear deportation or persecution. The calculation mentioned above is obviously a minimum and generalised understanding stated in the law. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the time spent in the permits adventure is far more than mentioned here.

Apart from migrants like Bharat, there are a few migrants who have a work permit and a stable job and yet they look forward to returning to India. Karthik, a manager at one of the food outlets in University of the Witwatersrand comes from Navsari, Gujarat. He arrived in South Africa in the year 2002. After working for three years as an assistant in the kitchen in one of the restaurant chains, his employer decided to grant him the work permit. Since he had not been brought over by the employer from India,

> "It was a bit complicated. If you are invited by the employer from India, then it becomes very easy. You just take the documents and apply. But since I was already here, I had to find some other way. It was easy; I arranged funds so that I could apply to a famous visa agent Mohammed. I gave him my documents and 8000 Rand. He arranged the work permit for me. However, today I am a manger and will be promoted to a higher position

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outcome is unconstitutional. Court ordered the Minister of Home Affairs to reconsider its regulation and amend the provisions of the Act.

responsible for a Johannesburg area, but I would like to go back to India in a few years' time."[117] says Karthik.

He does not want his children to grow up in the South African environment.

> "People here when they start school, start sniffing drugs. I do not want my child to be part of it. I told my wife; once everything sorts out we will return to India. At the end of the day India is the best. I will, after some savings go back and settle there."

People like Karthik offer interesting stories of refusing the possibility of staying in the host society. Issues of insecurity and responsibility need more analysis. Until he was married and had a child, he was comfortable in South Africa. Once he had a family, he has been thinking of going back to India. His work permit and permanent residency are not sufficient attraction for him to stay in South Africa for the rest of his life. His friends too want to return. Here we can see, migrants who have been working hard to get the work permit are now sacrificing it for the sake of their family and a secure future in India. This scenario brings another element wherein migrants do not want to struggle to claim the permanent residence/citizenship documents. It is like an experience on the résumé of a foreign returnee which is a common practice among his relatives and friends in the village. Bharat's father encouraged him to go to South Africa so that he could earn more in the time being and then resume his family responsibilities in Gujarat.[118] So either way for Bharat he does not care, because after some point he has to return to India. "*Agar ghar jana hi hain toh phir tension kaiko lene ka?*" (If going back to home is the plan, then why worry about all these issues of permits?) asks Bharat. But still he has an eye for the permit, perhaps to prove that he is also a qualified person for the work permit. The work permit is a matter of pride among migrants. Also migrants need a work permit because they can invite anyone from India on their work permit. Ghoolam is planning to invite his friend Akram on his permit "I can invite him easily because you

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[117] Karthik, 17th November, 2014
[118] Interview, Bharat, 20 August, 2013

know I have a permit and it is easy now. I just need to send some papers from here and it will work out well,"[119] he says with pride.

Migrants in this category seem to be more relaxed. There is less worry regarding visa and future, as compared to the migrants in other categories. Billal another Indian in his early 30s has similar plans like Bharat. He was an owner of a barber shop in Surat. He has job prospects back home.

> "I just came to get away from Indian environment for a while and I am looking to return to India in a few years' time. I will start my shop and resume work. It is not a big deal", said Billal.

He knows he is not here to "beg for a South African ID" and if asked to leave, he is ready. In this case, it is just the time factor which is more relevant to his worries; rest is "really not a big issue to him (*koi zyaada fikr nahin*)."[120] He does not worry much about his future as he has made up his mind to go back and start a new life as soon as he has some capital to invest. In most cases it is seen that the barbers who worked here on daily wage, tend to start their own shop in India. It is the same with waiters or chefs who end up partnering in building a restaurant. As mentioned by Kok et. al (2006) most labour migrants want to return to the country of origin, possibly to use their accumulated assets and knowledge back home. This process in turn contributes to the overall economic advancement of the home country. Bharat was clear about his future plans; he decided to toil in South Africa for three–four years depending upon the working conditions and then return back home. His approach towards his present life seems more peaceful than other migrants who are unsure about their future. This does not mean that Bharat is at total peace, he has a target to achieve which is to make money in a short time. Therefore, he has to work extra hours and make the best out of the limited time he has in South Africa. I could spot Bharat every day of the week

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[119] Ghoolam, 14th March, 2015
[120] Bharat, 02nd February, 2013

in Fordsburg in his saffron colour t-shirt work attire. Sometimes I could see him wandering around the market place of Fordsburg, greeting friends, exchanging satirical remarks with his friends like, "It seems your wife is at peace now. Since, you are here." All the other listeners would grab the opportunity to laugh loud with an intention to mock the person more. In response his friend would reply, "*Bharat aaj tera divas hain, kal mera bhi aayega*" (Bharat today is your day to poke fun at me, but remember tomorrow will be mine)." When I asked Bharat for an interview date, he offered to come on any Tuesday due to less work pressure. Later he revealed that it was "*chutti*" (off day) but still wanted to work. Every Tuesday I saw him working, whereas some of his other colleagues preferred to take rest for the day.

Following the earlier discussion, there is an interesting question as to why migrants choose to return. Dustmann (1999) looks at the reasons for the return of migrants despite higher wages and a good life in the host country. The first reason is due to the fact that migrants enjoy living in their home countries than the host country. Living and consuming may differ with factors such as climate, language, friends, nostalgia of home, family, festivals and food (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009). Secondly, prices are higher in the host country. Therefore, if a migrant returns to his home country which has lower prices he can enjoy the benefits of higher wages earned in the host country. And third, "rates of human capital acquired in the host country are far higher in the home country labour market" (Dustmann, 1999: 299). This means wages are high in the host country compared to the lower prices at home. This gives a chance for labour migrant to return home with numerous benefits. Since return migration was already in the plan of labour migrant, s/he is now in a better position to go back and enjoy the benefits that s/he has gained in the host country. These types of migrants are also recognised as exiles. In the works of Faist (2000) temporary migrants who have already made up their mind to return home country can be called as exiles, since they

are "single-mindedly" drawn to their homeland (197). As discussed earlier migrants in this category are mostly work migrants who want to enter an economic space delimiting the possibilities of settlement. Since their aim is temporary mobility they would in either case aim to return to the home country to utilise their gained skills and accumulated resources. We have seen how work migrants shift within the possibilities of mutability navigating the inconstant state of life. It is often the work migrants who chose to return. Nicholson (2002) has shown this in her case study of Albanian work migrants in the west, where migrants from Albania who were mainly work migrants in the UK used asylum protection to only work in the destination country and chose to return after a specific amount of time rather settling.

Migration as a fun experience

Additionally, another reason that motivates migrants to return is the accessibility of job market and social security in the home country. Salim mentions that of the people he had seen leaving South Africa back to India are the ones who are from a "well to do background." Explaining his own story, he states the reason of returning to India and not worrying about the permits.

> "Now for example, look at me. I have a business back home and my family is well off. In my childhood I did not like school so I always found a way to do the things that were like living free. I left India with handful of money and my parents supported me from India while I was in South Africa for few months up to a year. I decided to stay and work. Today I have a work permit and I am happy. But prior to that, I was still relaxed I could go back. People like me or the ones who can look after self-do return India."[121]

Increment in salaries and a stable job with good money in India motivates migrants to settle in India and not worry about the South African permit. Salim added,

> "Many people who are in India, if they are making 100,000 rupees per month, then it is more than enough. Here in South Africa, it is certainly less than this. So migrants prefer staying home, making money and being happy."

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[121] Interview, Salim, November, 2014

Apart from Salim's testimony, there were many migrants who came from a wealthy background took South Africa as a fun journey. Ghoolam mentions his friend Akram who left for India and does not want to return.

> "He could not save, in fact started spending all the money he made. It was not making any sense, so he decided to go back. Today he is in India and does not hope to return. He is happy."

Similarly, Salim added a list of few other migrants who had come to South Africa for a matter of change.

> "In fact, many parents consider sending their lazy children to South Africa to experience hardships so that when they return they would realise the difficulties of life. Many migrants' parents have a good business, so there is always a job security. Also, in some cases migrants just want to come to South Africa for experiences sake to explore life and freedom."[122]

It is in this context we can see that migrants often think of home to avoid the regular everyday difficulties of food and leisure. Although, the important thing to notice is that migrants in this category are the ones who can afford to surrender their job and work permits for the sake of "convenience." Salim stressed,

> "If you are positive about your life, then you don't care about permits or other issues. For your life is a journey. You are happy to return home or stay here. If there is a choice after few years or months of stay in South Africa, you would like to go back and resume your duties or else continue with your business in India."

Many migrants who were willing to return were the ones who had a successful business or job back home. They were not happy to work for someone and secondly, to earn as much the same money or less as compared to their income in India.

> "It is like I am making in average the same money as in India and to that I employ people, I have my own shop. Why would I want to stay here, rather I'd rather leave in a few months' time", said one of the newly arrived migrants who owned hair cutting shop in Surat.

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[122] For example see the testimony of Sultan in chapter 5 who is in South Africa just to experience the free life without worrying and caring much about parents and family pressure.

It can be seen that these were the consequences that affected migrant's choices of permits and staying in South Africa as compared to the migrants in other categories mentioned. "You really are not worried as much as other migrants desperate to make their living in South Africa. Hence, we don't care about permits," said Salim smiling proudly.

Conclusion

Theories from the north argue that state is an important entity in the lives of young migrant asylum seekers who seek to document their presence in the country and legalise their identity. It is the state that governs the interest of migrant's lives. It has a final say on the situation and the working condition of labourers. However, in as much as state intervenes in deciding the fate of migrants in the north, there are cases in the south where migrants prefer to decide for themselves. It is due to the lack of state control over asylum seekers and the possibility of movement within the periphery. The permit regimes that migrant labourers brought to the fore make an interesting case study. The ones who want to have a work permit and the ones who do not, negotiate with the state in deciding their future. Without submitting to the state's overall control, migrants navigate through by-laws and regulations and use it for their long term benefit. In doing this, some migrants see the permit experience as a way to stand on-par with the state. The frustrations of bureaucracy and delayed responses are instead used for self-benefit and form as part of the plan where migrants after applying for the asylum and refugee permit use the waiting time to work and accumulate certain wealth. Once the results of their permit are out which is generally up to two-three years, migrants are in a position to decide if to work with the permit in SA or leave for good. These subjective experiences define modern migratory movement of the global south where definite positioning with the state is undefined.

CHAPTER 6
BUSINESS ATTITUDES OF SOUTH ASIAN TRADERS IN JOHANNESBURG

"*Khareedna hain kya? Faltu main itna time barbaad kiya, itne time main toh main dus mobile bechata tum saala itna sawaal poonch raha hain aur kucch bhi nahin khareedoge*" (Do you really want to buy? You just wasted my time; in the meanwhile, I would have sold at least ten mobile phones. You asked so many questions that I think you will buy neither of it)

It is the weekend of March of 2014 and the weather is sunny. Customers and shop owners want to grab this opportunity to enjoy their holiday time, the bright sun and clear sky. Scanning the streets of the flea Market, I walk toward Oriental Plaza taking Albertina Sisulu road. The barber shops, grocery stores, restaurants, and stationery shops on both sides of the streets invade public spaces by extending their business space onto the footpath. They do this either by placing the towels used by barbers to dry outside or by putting up a metal triangle shaped advertisement board. Sometimes they place a chair on the street outside their shop. Various means are used to attract attention of passers-by. This practice is visible all around the Fordsburg area and hawkers establish their business on footpaths (Fig. 24 & 25). Something similar was observed in Surat, Gujarat (see Fig. 26). Indian immigrant workers gaze at passer-by making them feel insecure. The *Ghoorna* (gaze) becomes habitual for an immigrant worker with the intention of taking the acquaintance of

prospective customer. Meanwhile, as I reach the east gate of the Plaza I am welcomed by the African street vendors selling DVDs, sunglasses, accessories for mobile phones, hats, African art, dress materials, bracelets, ear rings, etc. Some African young boys are trying to hand out pamphlet advertisements at the entrance gate. While on the streets, African males dressed in highly visible green jackets run behind cars to help visitors get their car parked in the busy Fordsburg. They earn a tip starting from 5 rand. Opposite the plaza there is a small shopping complex selling electronic items. This busy space is like a carnival where people are dressed differently: wearing traditional clothes; overalls; torn jeans and duplicate Converse All Stars shoes that they have purchased from Fordsburg. Customers go in and out of the shops, salespersons hustle their products. Fordsburg is a unique space balancing the everyday innovations of the shop owners with the desire for branded novelty among consumers. It is a space of commerce and of social interaction.

Figure 24. Traders on the footpath of the Mint Street outside the flea market accumulating maximum space (Source: Author's photograph, March 2015)

Figure 25. Traders on the footpath in Fordsburg accumulating maximum space (Source: Author's photograph, March 2015)

Figure 26. Workers invading the pedestrian space in central Surat. This way of business practice is visible in the regular markets across Surat (Source: Author's photograph, January 2015)

Rationale

South Asian immigrant enclaves in metro cities are neighbourhoods that attract visitors from around the world. These are spaces of experiments as much as the continuance of traditional practices by immigrant entrepreneurs. Aldrich and Waldinger (1990: 112) observed in their work that entrepreneurship among immigrants is not something new and radical alone. It is also about replicating and reproducing older forms. Indian businesses in Fordsburg provide a familiar space that is fertile ground for immigrant entrepreneurs to continue working within the same code of conduct as in India, replicating the old models. The area is dominated by people of similar ethnic, national or regional origin. Workers and most customers come from similar backgrounds of trading practices and they tend to accommodate each other mutually. The entrepreneurs who arrive from India to start a business of their own have limited opportunities to change their trading style. They are aware that their continuing of certain trading practices might not suit the commercial atmosphere of the host country besides being legally punishable. The immigrant entrepreneurs studied in this chapter are those who initially worked as labourers upon arrival in South Africa and later established their business. The migrants who dared to start their own business in a short time are the ones who could afford and risk investment because of familial support. The story of hard work and entrepreneurship must also be set alongside questions of networks of inheritance and social capital.

Spatiality creates entrepreneur[ity]

Fordsburg, like Zhejiangcun, a southern Beijing immigrant suburb reinforces the idea of ownership of an urban space by immigrants, and its emergence as a site of success of migrant communities (cf. Zhang, 2001). Zhang argues that the idea of having or owning a space in the urban metropolis of Beijing provides a space of control. Without this authority the immigrant communities would

not have developed and become immigrant entrepreneurs in the city, giving rise to the "informal privatisation of space" (Zhang, 2001: 179). This autonomy encourages them to create their own community governed by certain rules. Fordsburg too reinforces the idea of a community of business and trade ethic formation by the traders who occupy a space regulated by a set of informal rules practiced in commerce. This sense of their "own" space offers a mobility and flexibility for non-native traders to continue with a tradition of trading practices (Zhang, 2001). Immigrant entrepreneurs emerge within a special environment: with distinctive trade practices. I use the category of "entrepreneurs" here in the classic anthropological sense of someone who owns, operates or manages a business (see for example Greenfield, Stickon and Aubey, 1979). Aldrich and Waldinger (1990: 117) contend that ethnic owners are "truly entrepreneurs" because they "assume higher risk" through managing potential uncertainties.

Building on studies of social identity and communicative behaviours, I address the entrepreneurial performance of immigrants in Johannesburg's Indian neighbourhood, Fordsburg. I work with the notion of entrepreneurial behaviour developed by Gonzalez-Gonzalez and Bretones (2013) to understand and interpret the social language of entrepreneurs in their day to day business activities. Furthermore, I argue that day to day conflict and changing behavioural attitudes are the result of shop owners who group among themselves to protect the larger interest of their group, making customers feel vulnerable and isolated through verbal bullying. Belonging to a certain ethnic/regional group allows traders to protect their interests. It is also a political statement representing the idea of a unified group: an informal and disorganised platform where there is a strong sense of belonging not entirely determined by ethnicity or race (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). Groupism is a central category in this chapter, and I aim to elaborate further why it is a constituting requirement to forward the entrepreneurial interests of immigrants. This

chapter is divided into two overarching themes to understand the dynamics of trading in Fordsburg. The first section elaborates on the behaviour of entrepreneurs and details the theoretical imprint on the topic. The next section elaborates on identity politics juxtaposing social belonging as a strong reference for migrants. Under the broad themes this chapter looks at the meaning of an informal economy and enquires as to what activities qualify as informal trade.

I argue that in order to understand the on-ground behaviour among immigrant class, one has to undertake a thorough investigation of immigrant entrepreneur's behaviour and customer's reactions in everyday interactions on the field. My attempt is to reveal the nature of trading among Indian small scale traders (mostly informal) and argue that the nature of trading among Indian migrants has to do with their past experiences of trading in India (cf. Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). After arrival in South Africa little is changed with reference to the nature of business approaches.

Data collection

To understand the behaviour patterns, I conducted ethnographic field work from March 2013-July 2014 with occasional interviews in 2015 among traders and customers for this chapter. Interviews were conducted in Urdu, Hindi and English languages with Indian and Pakistani nationals, both shop owners and customers. Customers were interviewed after they left the shops; interactions ranged from 5 minutes to 15 minutes. My study primarily focussed on the mobile phone shops in Fordsburg and Oriental Plaza. Mobile phone shops were selected because they bring the most customers to Fordsburg, and also allowed easy accessibility to the store and to the shop owners and customers. Mobile phone shops are usually seen as a formal business enterprise. However, in my case study I observed that mobile phone shops also engage in informal economic activities. The selling of copies of branded phones that are not manufactured by the original company was one such activity. Another was unrecorded business activity such as selling accessories and spare

parts of phones for a cheaper price. There is no provision for getting a bill with VAT (value added tax); instead the sale amount is given on a paper that mentions only the name, date and model number without the registration number of the shop and the tax claims (Fig.27). Hence, mobile phone shops provide a firm ground to study and understand the behaviour of immigrant entrepreneurs who are engaged in the informal sector. Data collection methods included observing mobile phone shops for hours over the course of a few days per week, and especially on the weekends. During the weekdays I spent approximately three-four hours in Oriental Plaza observing mobile phone shops, and, on the weekends, I spent more time in the Fordsburg area. Interviews with owners and customers took place usually after their interactions with each other.

TAX INVOICE / BELASTINGFAKTUUR   46

From / Van

Date / Datum **18-03-14**

V.A.T. Reg. No./B.T.W. Gereg. Nr.

To / Aan

V.A.T. Reg. No.
B.T.W. Gereg. Nr.

Quantity Hoev.	Description Beskrywing	Unit Price Eenheidsprys	Amount Bedrag	
1	NOKIA Lumia 820 (Black + N.1) SMEI - 35410505435058	2800 -	2800 -	
		R-2800 -		

Sub Total / Subtotaal

V.A.T. inclusive / B.T.W. Ingesluit

TERMS / TERME

NO GUARANTEE
Delete as applicable
14 DAYS PHONES 2 MONTHS... werk nie van werking nie
ALL NEW PHONES CARRY 1 MONTH REPAIR WARRANTY
PLEASE... THAT WE WON'T CARRY LOCAL STOCK
WARRANTY YOU CAN CLAIM YOUR WARRANTY DIRECTLY
FROM THE MANUFACTURES.

TOTAL / TOTAAL

Figure 27. A standard receipt of a cell phone purchase given at one of the shops in Oriental Plaza. The VAT registration number is not mentioned along with the name of the buyer. It just indicates the SMEI number and the price paid. At the bottom there is a message in bold font that offers no guarantee to the phones that are '14 Days Phones.' 'All new phones carry 1-month warranty.' Also suggesting that, 'we won't carry local stock warranty. You can claim you warranty directly from the manufacturer.'

Studying ethnicity and entrepreneurship, Aldrich and Waldinger (1990: 132) suggest that there are gaps in our understanding of immigrant entrepreneurs' strategies since the available methods do not necessarily provide a complete understanding of the topic. The limitations concern the credibility of the data. According to them, information on the ethnic enterprise comes from three sources: government censuses, survey research and field studies.[123] Censuses lack credibility due to the government interference in dealing with the sensitive issues of religion and ethnicity. For example, in Great Britain and West Germany controversy was caused by questions of "ethnic origin" that limited an understanding of the demographic representation of ethnic minorities. Similarly, in the United States government sponsored surveys lack the complete information due to the limited definition of the "ethnic business." Getting a complete picture of the ethnic landscape is important to an understanding of ethnic business. They suggest that a new method and research design need to be employed to study immigrant business structures. In the South African context ethnic origin in the census do not have as much problem as in the immigration receiving countries of the north.

Social identity among immigrant groups

The desire for belonging to a certain group serves as insurance against external conflict and other potential threats. Bonacich (1973) contends that in-group solidarity often develops after an outside threat and hostility. Stein (1976) too suggests that group solidarity is the result of external fear. External conflict increases the chances of internal cohesion that in turn provides support to its members. The perceived threat could be from a customer or a person on the other side of the counter. There are instances when the shop owners form a group in the market. This is to create a

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[123] Ethnic enterprise is a term predominantly used in the migration business context. In his book Bolaffi, Bracalenti, Braham and Gindro (2003) offers various interpretations of ethnic enterprise. It is for example an enterprise which caters special needs of the immigrant community which is otherwise not available in the host society. It is also an intermediary source that offers mediation for certain products that are not necessarily ethnic, to enter the immigrant market.

sense of control through unity. The affirmation of unity creates a position of dominance without worrying about the consequences, because all of the traders have a common understanding of being within the law. The electronic products they deal with are not ICASA (Independent Communications Authority of South Africa) approved (which will be discussed in a short while), with a few exceptions. Rift in a conversation arises when a customer demands certain answers and the shop owners are not in position to give a fitting reply. This creates tension whereby conversations turn into humiliation of customers by the shop owners. This becomes possible because, it is the customer who is in 'their' space. At times customers try to dominate the encounter. In many cases each party feels the other has misbehaved in an inappropriate or insulting way (Bailey, 2000). I analyse the way shop owners and customers interact in the multi-cultural environment of Fordsburg. Negative comments by shopkeepers and customer demands that are often left unattended create a hostile and tense environment for the customer. Humiliations and insulting experiences create an unstable relationship between the shop owners and customers. I contend that shop owners often act as a group even though there is no prior formal arrangement. I use the theoretical models proposed by Bonacich (1973), Tajfel (1982) and Bailey's (2000) version of *communicative behaviour and conflict* to further my case.

Bailey's (2000) work tries to understand the growing hostility between the two racial groups of African American and Korean storeowners in Los Angeles, America (also see, Jo, 1992; Park, 1996). He observes that the differences between the two racial and social classes were the result of cultural and linguistic differences leaving interactions more prone to multiple interpretations (Bailey, 1997). Social inequality and social assumptions dominated in the discussion and interactions amongst each other. In my work the generation of a feeling of otherness and dislike towards the community of traders in Fordsburg arises from similar premises. A study

on Zambian views of Chinese presence by van Bracht (2012) aims to understand the attitude of natives towards foreign traders. It details the characteristic behaviour of Chinese in trade, employment, social life and economy. It concludes that Zambians as a group have mixed responses towards the Chinese businessmen. As a result, in their perception, the Chinese merge into one homogenised entity. Taking from the above arguments it becomes clear that entrepreneurs engage in group formation as much as the idea of being a cohesive group is thrust on them.

This chapter borrows from Tajfel (1982) to argue that attitudinal characteristics and rude behaviour among the Indian immigrant trading community is the result of "emergence of intergroup behaviour." Tajfel further argues that this assumes serious dimensions when there is "some outside consensus that the group exists." A group, in this case the shop owners, do not have a positive image of the other group (customers) and vice versa leading to the stereotyping. A customer is judged on the basis of whether s/he is easy to influence or if s/he is strong enough to resist. Based on the assumptions that are formed after two minutes of primary interaction, the tension between these two groups is visible, although the level of tension might vary. The idea of "belongingness" among certain social groups especially the immigrants is part of the social identity theory proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979). It elaborates in defining the objectives of immigrants clubbing into groups. This is because individuals seek to identify with certain groups in order to separate and differentiate themselves from other groups (also see, Gonzalez-Gonzalez and Bretones, 2013).

Characteristics of behaviour

In the day to day business of mobile shops in Fordsburg and Oriental Plaza there were occasions that evoked a sense of hostility and friction among groups. The friction among racial groups is part of a larger debate in the anthropological study of inter-ethnic ties and cultural differences

(Gumperz, 1982). However, Fordsburg it is not overtly racial but wider characteristics of inter-religious, regional and individual personal character that define relationships. The analysis framed in this chapter is consistent with Gumperzs' (1982) who shows that even the "most basic communicative exchanges rely on the assumptions and social cultural background of each person" (quoted in Bailey, 2000: 90). These assumptions proceed from preconceived ideas of each other that form an identity statement about one group which generalises the arguments every time there is an interaction.

Preconceived ideas lead to hostility between shop owners and customers while making it difficult to recall reasons for hostility. One reason could be, the nature of interactions being time specific which might not make immediate sense in the conversation. Hall (1973) observes that whenever there is a difficulty in intercultural communication and it becomes challenging for one to apprehend the other's communicative message both tend to blame each other for their "stupidity or craziness." A little gap in intercultural exchange can lead to a heated generalisation eventually ending up in abuse, which I elaborate in the second part of this chapter. However, in Fordsburg's case it is less to do with the cultural gap and more to do with individual attitude. Additionally, class and hierarchy allows shop owners to dominate the choices of customers. Racial differences also play a crucial role. These preconceived ideas of authority come from the rural and urban trade practices in India. A trader in a village lacks competition and is considered wealthy. Therefore, he enjoys the freedom of determining and often forcing his choices upon customers. Immigrant Indian entrepreneurs continue with inherited practices, which is possible due to the shared culture and regional practices between shop owners and some customers allowing two-way accessible communication.

The friction between the customer and shop owner arises from the lack of compromise in achieving one's own ends. Merritt (1976: 321) analyses the goal-oriented exchange of words in which "the satisfaction of the customer's presumed desire for some service and the server's obligation to provide that service" comes into conflict. A shopkeeper trying to assert authority is contrary to what the customer desires according to Merritt. If a compromise is not reached both parties may react in an unprofessional manner. In my observation it was shop owners who behaved in a rude way as opposed to the customers. In one instance a customer on account of his privileged position reacted strongly towards the shop owner's comments. I will explain later why this was possible. Bailey (2000) argues that it is the complex cultural context that creates friction among groups/communities. Korean shop owners consider it rude for a person to talk to an elder in certain fashion. For an African-American customer, greeting and exchanging words that are out of business context are the premise for getting to know each other on a personal level. Whereas, Korean shop owners limited their interaction to the business alone and did not engage in social conversation. In many cases they were inhibited by language skills. Cultural and linguistic differences led to continuous conflicts and the state of tension among the Korean shop owners and their African American customers. In Fordsburg's context cultural as well as racial identities bear on the situation of interaction. This led to communicative conflicts, where instead of accommodating the differences; shop owners and customers tend to intensify the differences.

The nature of the informal economy

Aldrich and Waldinger (1990: 115-6) argue that an ethnic population that is economically impoverished confronts a number of problems. Scarce job opportunities and impermanent flow of income force many immigrants to seek independent business options. Bolaffi et al. (2003) also contend that migrants struggle to keep up with the job market of the host society due to the

exclusionary measures imposed by the state. This leads to fewer jobs for migrants which "constitutes push factor inducing migrant workers to set up their own businesses" (Bolaffi et al., 2003: 90-91). In South Africa too, South Asian immigrants with few skills and minimum capital aim to establish their own business in the host society. But this does not come easily. Attitudinally, many Indians are brought up in a risk-averse environment, and a regular job is preferred to an entrepreneurial undertaking. Apart from that, starting a business requires finance and is time-consuming. Experience and skills are required to run a small business. Learning a language becomes mandatory; there has to be recruiting and training of labour; and they have to secure themselves against political tensions on ethnic and racial lines (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990: 130). Entrepreneurial immigrants in South Africa tend to engage more with the informal economy due to the nature of its operation. Gastrow and Amit (2013) in their study of Somali migrant traders in Western Cape explain the dynamics of being in an informal economy. According to them, a Somali migrant in South Africa faces numerous disadvantages such as funding, insecurity, racism and stereotypical responses. Rogerson's (1997) finding indicates similar results. Migrants in Johannesburg engaged in businesses had problems getting "access to finance and credit including difficulties opening bank accounts….and being targeted by criminals and gangs."

This can be related to similar experiences suffered by Indian nationals in Johannesburg. Ghoolam elaborates on the insecure environment in Fordsburg and nearby areas in Johannesburg. He narrated a story of an Indian immigrant getting mugged on his salary day at a gunpoint while on his way home.

> *Yahaan par jaan ko khatra toh hain na. Ek din hamare ilake ka ladka apne mahine ki pagaar lekar ghar ja raha tha aur usko udhar kucch logon ne bandook dikhakar uske paise le gaye. Bahot pareshan aur ghabraya hua tha, aise aur bhi bahot kisse hain. Choron ko malum hain ki month ending ko salary hoti hain toh barabar loot lete hain. Aur humko guarantee hain ki hum main se hi kucch rahenge, Pakistani hain kucch jo aisa karobar kartein hain.* (Obviously, there is threat to our life here. One day a boy from our area was

returning to his room after receiving his monthly salary. He was mugged at a gunpoint. He was worried and scared. There are many incidents like this. Thieves know that on the month end people in Fordsburg are paid their monthly salary, so they come at the right time to loot us. And I am sure there are people amongst us mostly Pakistanis who might be informants).[124]

Similar stories are reported in Fordsburg concerning inter/intra race crimes. Growing incidents of murders, robbery and extortion appear regularly in newspapers (Mooki, 2015). Fordsburg continues to attract the violent scenes of gunned robbery into the heart of business activities.[125] Park and Rugunanan (2010) also reported similar observations in Johannesburg. Their findings show that the growing crimes against Asian migrant groups were due to the competition between Africans and Indians as well as intra group tensions. In their study, South Asian migrants testified that they were subject to extortion by the Pakistani mafia who create uncertainty among migrant groups in Johannesburg engaging in illegal trade like pirating DVDs and selling drugs. Fordsburg is no exception. Similarly, there is an increase in the illegal activities of Chinese triads in the new Chinatown in Cyrildene area in Johannesburg who are engaged in "hijacking, extortion, and pirating of copyrighted materials" (Park and Rugunanan, 2010: 17).

In spite of the negative image of Johannesburg as being a criminal hub Rogerson's (1997) study suggested that immigrant entrepreneurs still consider Johannesburg as a preferred destination on account of "strong market potential and networks of family and friends." This applies to Indian immigrants in the contemporary context as well. Kinship and friend networks help them to enter Johannesburg's informal economy. There is a growing number of Indian owned/ run shops in the areas such as Central Business District, Braamfontein, Park station and other areas in central

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[124] Ghoolam, February, 2013

[125] Enca news, "WATCH: suspect killed in foiled Oriental Plaza ATM robbery," http://www.enca.com/south-africa/suspect-killed-oriental-plaza-foiled-atm-robbery accessed 09th July, 2015; enca new, "Shoot-out at Oriental Plaza," http://www.enca.com/south-africa/shootout-oriental-plaza accessed 03rd July, 2015

Johannesburg. Harney (2006) in his study of Bangladeshi migrants who work and trade on the streets of Naples, Italy observes the way laws, social responsibilities and political dilemmas are negotiated in the informal unregulated economy hosted by Bangladeshi migrants. He uses the term "underground economy" to identify the grey character of informal activities by migrants. For example, non-payment of tax and non-compliance with the state regulations or "heat and safety, environment rules" characterises the growing informal economy in Italy. This trade practices of undocumented migrants in Fordsburg bear distinct resemblances to this as also in case of attitudinal characteristics and rudeness in business practice as in India.

The strategy of becoming an entrepreneur helps immigrants achieve a certain degree of status, it offers a social and class identity. It helps immigrants to restore their pride and dignity and having a certain degree of self-respect and recognition (Gonzalez-Gonzalez and Bretones, 2013: 636, 638). However, in some instances this is not the case, especially among Indian immigrants. Indian immigrants who establish their own enterprise have already strategised their entrepreneurial future once they arrive in South Africa. Since immigration is the result of chain migration that consists of mainly lower-middle class entrepreneurs, they aim to climb a step higher by engaging in entrepreneurial activities in South Africa. However, it is also true that some immigrants come from a lesser skilled background wherein they tend to start their business at a low level. It is lack of human and capital resources that make them enter this competitive and unsecured business (Gonzalez-Gonzalez and Bretones, 2013: 636). Setting up their own business is one of the ways to escape their previous identity and to form an identity that affords them recognition, economic independence and responsibility.

South African practices

Growing studies on informal trading in South Africa has received little attention except for the works of Peberdy (1999, 2000); Peberdy & Crush (1998) Rogerson (1995) and a recent work by Gastrow and Amit (2012) on the spaza shop economy among Somalian community in the Western Cape Province. Informal trading has been accommodating migrant labourers actively. Most of the informal trade in Johannesburg is facilitated by the migrant labourers who engage in trading practices that are often unnoticed and unrecognised. This non-recognition gives migrant labour space to negotiate and at times violate the trading practices recognised by the state. The Customer Protection Act, 2008 that guides and regulates behaviour to customers almost has no existence in the trading practices of the migrant businesses. These trades are often kept informal even though there might be opportunities to scale up and to establish a retail shop. Their tenuous immigration status in the country restricts them from moving to independent trade. Despite state regulations that govern trade in South Africa, many Indian immigrant tradesmen evade the restrictions imposed upon the traders. The informal trading of migrants in Johannesburg contributes significantly to the country's overall economy (Mabin, 2007: 50). Mabin suggests that like most other countries of the global South the local economy of the city is evolved and seen as informal. Hence, the majority of uninformed and unrecognised work falls into the structure of sort-of-informal economy. Studies done on the informal sector and small-enterprise sector in Johannesburg suggest that non-South Africans play an important role in the country's economy (Rogerson, 1995).

Very few studies address actual trading practices of migrant labourers' especially Indian labourers in the present day context. Gastrow and Amit's (2012) survey referred to early analyses of Somalian immigrant entrepreneurs' activities in spaza market. They analyse the process of

Somali migrants starting a business amidst difficulties. Their research concludes that local market competition and the need for innovative business strategies, forces them to work with low-market profits. Competitiveness promotes inter-ethnic competition, so much so that Somali traders are seen as posing a business threat to the South African local businesses, which are hobbled by lack of skills, capital and increased prices of commodities (Gastrow and Amit, 2013: 29). Another study by Rogerson (1997) focuses on growing entrepreneurship among immigrants in South Africa through a study of 70 immigrant entrepreneurs who have established small business in Johannesburg from the SADC, non-SADC and other countries. Immigrant entrepreneurs from non-SADC countries perform well in the host country, by bringing in capital from their country of origin to start a business very like Indian immigrants.

Depending upon the government and research statistics data many studies argue that it is for the good of the country and within the spirit of the Constitution that the government should take note of informal trading practices and encourage the establishment of such enterprise. However, on the other side the treatment by migrant entrepreneurs of their customers is often not researched. The idea of trade for an entrepreneur Indian immigrant has little to do with the South African trade ethics and practices. Arguably, the SADC migrants have similar cultural norms and trading ethics with the South African customers. Indian traders in Fordsburg observed during my ethnographic study reveal a different set of attitudes.

Fordsburg: friction in consumer interaction

Informal trading by migrants occupies a grey area as it is largely undocumented. They can evade the law without much accountability; there is no accurate record of their presence apart from their asylum documents.

When I went to the shops selling cell phones as a researcher; dealers and retailers paid scant attention. I was perceived as an unnecessary nuisance during the working hours. When I went as an informed customer I was accorded the same treatment. However, when I posed as a person who has no idea about the cell phone industry; then I was welcomed with privileged attention. It put the shop owner in a dominant position as someone who could influence my choice. As I started raising questions about the mobile phone features and prices, they engaged with me proactively. Before that, the usual question they asked was "what kind of phone are you looking for?" I replied that I have no idea about the cell phone market, but would like a good one. Then they would ask, "Tell me how much your (price) range is?" I said, "I am not sure but can make a decision if you convince me about some phone." One of the shop owners replied in a way that other people in the shop could hear:

> *"Yahan convince karte baithne ke liye kiske pass time hain, tumhari pasand hain toh hum kyun convince kare. Hazaron phone hain yahan par, sou Rand se lekar dus hajar tak, kaun kaun sa batayein."* (Here no one has time to convince anyone else. It is your choice; why should we keep on convincing the customers? (Giving a sarcastic laugh he further went on to say) There are thousands of phone here, starting from one hundred Rand to ten thousand Rand. It is difficult to recommend any particular one (after saying this he continued to stare at me)).

As soon as the shop owner said this, a few people working in his shop gathered to check my reaction. It looked as if they want to make me feel ashamed about asking such naive questions and prevent me from persisting with my "useless" queries. A similar story was narrated to me earlier by one of the workers in another mobile shop in Oriental Plaza who told me that, "it is normally this kind of scenario that follows." In order to verify his statement, I followed his suggestions to ask a set of questions reflecting my lack of knowledge while buying the phone and I received a reply as expected. Shop owners react in a hostile way as they assume that the customers who visit their shops ask uncomfortable questions to expose their ignorance. The customer here is generally

treated as someone who has a potential of being a nuisance and who visits the shop as a 'time-pass' to waste the time of busy shop owners. This for the shop owners is unacceptable, as the conversation does not move towards business benefits.

Shop owners' business ethics

When a customer is rude to shop owners, they try to communicate politely. One of the customers returned to a shop after a week and enquired about a phone. Suddenly he reacted loudly to one of the seller's comments. He said:

> *"Chutiya samajh rakha hain kya? Saala pagal sawaal poonch raha hain, kharidne aaye uski hi baat karo."* (Do you think I am mad or something? Don't be a lunatic to ask me such questions. I came to buy a phone so talk to me about that alone).

As soon the customer reacted in anger, there were two other people working in the same shop who stopped working awaiting further reactions. Since the customer was angry and unhappy with the way the shop owner talked, the shop owner reacted in a calm tone. He said,

> Did I tell you that you were mad, you said you want phone right? Then this one is a good choice for you. You have to please explain me what kind of phone you are looking for.

This scenario invites more analysis of such behaviour. The shop owner was humbled by the customer perhaps because of the customer's personality. When I asked the customer as to why did he reacted in such a way? He replied,

> *Kutti da puttar* (son of a bitch) shouted out loud on the street (referring to the shop owner). I did not intend to be rude, but the way that guy was talking sounds like he was just making fun of me. I do not accept such treatment; they think customers are just nitwits.

Even though the personality of the customer was impressive, it was more than that. The racial and regional representation played its part. The shop owner in this case was a Gujarati migrant entrepreneur whereas the customer was a north Indian who came from the business class background and was used to dealing with people like the shop owners. This gave the north Indian

customer an understanding of the shop owner's practices. Moreover, by speaking in Hindi he was at an advantage over the Gujarati who knew little Hindi. He could not communicate as effectively as the north Indian. Hence the Gujarati shop owner tried to engage minimally. Secondly, there was the issue of race: "he was an Indian (South Asian) and not a black African." One of the shop owners that I engaged with, said,

> "People who come to buy here phone are the kind of blacks who have no idea as to how a modern cell phone works and they keep complaining that phone is not working, when in fact the phone is in very good condition."[126]

He was emphasising the fact that the black African customers whom he has seen over the years purchase phones without adequate knowledge. The shop owner presents his impressions through racial categories. Referring to the underground market of cell phones in South Africa in which phones are sold at a cheap price as compared to the regular market price. He said,

> *"Kaale pilon ko kuch nahin samajh aata, toh woh phone bechte rehte hain."* (The blacks and yellows do not know much so they keep selling their phones, that's why it is cheap).

According to him, "if a customer is not satisfied with a cell phone, he has a right to return and claim the money." Race and region plays an important role in the cell phone industry in Oriental Plaza. It is because; many black customers are immigrant workers in Fordsburg. They "do not have much knowledge about cell phones and other technical stuff," claims Ehsaan, the shop owner.

> They come from distant rural areas to get hold of cheap stuff, so they keep annoying us with many questions. Sometimes we get furious because we cannot answer every question.

This fraught engagement arises also form the fact that the non-South Asian customer speaks in English and recent arrivals have less command over the language. The black African customer according to them is also easily manipulated. The black customers that I observed during the field

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[126] Ehsaan, 11th March, 2014

work were South Africans coming from distant rural areas. These were internal migrants or the customers who came to Johannesburg for buying household items. For them buying in Johannesburg carried a certain value. Hence, Johannesburg was preferred as a shopping destination. They could not communicate well with the shop owners and hence they were subject to unprofessional treatment by the Indian shop owners.

The racially charged approach of the mobile phone shop owners towards black Africans stands in some contrast to their engagement with South Asian customers. My observations are based on my interaction with few Indian immigrant workers who bought cell phones recently to have a complete understanding of the issue. Bharat's colleague, Shyam owned a Samsung Galaxy 4. I asked him whether he managed to get an expensive phone as a result of earlier arrangement or on account of good relations with the shop owners. Shyam said, sometimes it works for him if there is a good cell phone in the market and it is sold second hand. He knows a few cell phone shop owners who come from his region. They ask him if he needs a phone, if not then it is sold to someone else. Usually, if there is a cell phone which is to be sold at cheap price, the news is circulated among the group of friends who are migrant workers because some might want it to send it home for someone or buy it for themselves. If no one needs it then it is kept in the shop for selling. However, Shyam warned that it is not the same treatment he gets from a non-Gujarati "especially Pakistani or Bangladeshi." He says it is not "out of animosity or something, it is just the way this system works."[127] After a while Shyam stopped talking to me about the phone and changed the topic; it appeared as if he did not want to brag. There could be another reason; he might have bought a stolen cell phone, which was sold to him at a cheaper price. Within Fordsburg the degree of hostility depends on nationality and race. Ashraf hints that it is not always

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[127] Shyam, 12th October, 2013

comfortable to deal with the mobile phone shop owners. Very often, they prefer to get a phone on a monthly contract basis. Shyam had another cell phone, which he had bought on someone else's name. He continues to pay the monthly contract tariff. Ghoolam too carried a phone on a similar arrangement.

Everyday interactions in the 'grey' market

At each shop I asked the owners a couple of questions. First, that I am in need of a cell phone, "which has a good camera and that's it, I need nothing more." They generally responded by showing different brands. After refusing their offer, I put more questions regarding phone's price and the specifications. Almost all of them except one reacted in a rather hostile and rude manner. To understand the reason, I interviewed customers—Indian migrant labourers who are frequent buyers of phones, and the shop owners themselves. All the shop owners interviewed were Muslims from India or Pakistan. Fordsburg is dominated by Muslims in retailing and wholesaling.

In the case of Indian shop owners, most of them were Gujarati Muslims. I entered as an uninformed customer pretending to "be technologically challenged." This gesture put the shop owners in a dominant position. They started cross questioning me as to why do I need a phone? I replied that "I have no idea but just want to get one because I want to be abreast of the age of technology." On hearing this, one shop owner showed me a Samsung Galaxy cell phone. I replied that I wanted a good phone which has a good camera. He then went through the range of models he had and showed me an *HTC* mobile phone claiming that it had a good camera. I enquired about the specifications. He said they were almost the same, "android, high processor, speed you get exactly what you need." When I enquired about the price difference, he said the Samsung galaxy is 2500 Rand whereas the HTC is 2100 Rand. I said, what the difference is, he replied hesitantly that it is company pricing. I was not convinced so I enquired as to why do these companies

maintain a price difference. He showed me other phones displayed in his shop saying, "this LG, Samsung and HTC are far cheaper than those." I asked how much they cost, to which he countered, "Do you really need one?"[128] I said I do, and then he asked me again as to how much was my (price) range. I said between 1000-2000, and then he showed me a Nokia Lumia 520 model. I asked what the price was, he replied, "I can give it to you for umm…1500 Rand." I said the market is selling for 1700 Rand. He said "we wholesale here, so that's why there is a price difference." Pretending to be unconvinced by his answer I posed another question, "can you please tell me why the prices vary?" He started to explain

> "Okay listen there are several qualities of phones here. They look the same and they may be same but their life warranty is not the same. Like look at this (pointing to a new phone in the display), I can give you this phone in 2100 Rand when the market rate is 2500 Rand because it is a Grey market model. It is coming from Dubai. Similarly, the one that I offered you for 1500 is a local stock, but the same phone is 1700 Rand in market, it is because of the company pricing."[129]

Let me clarify this in the next section.

Types of cell phones in Fordsburg

There are ideally three types of markets that deal with phones.

1. Local
2. Retailer phone
3. Grey

Local stock is the most expensive among the three, as it is company guaranteed and authorised phone. It is in a sealed box which has not been tampered with. The pricing of these phones works around the company's margin of profit. These phones are available in every major store in South Africa and have a sticker of approval from ICASA.[130] ICASA (Independent Communications

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[128] Babloo, 18th March, 2014
[129] Ibid.
[130] Shabir, 18th March, 2014

Authority of South Africa) is a regulatory body which oversees the South African communications and broadcasting services as also the postal services sector. It was established in 2000 under the mandate of Electronic Communication Act and is responsible for licensing and regulation of electronic communication related broadcasting services.[131] It is a statutory provision which is responsible for consumer services along with the protection of market from counterfeiting. So if it is a seal-pack phone then it has to be sold at a regular market price.[132] This phone comes with a company authorised warranty usually between 12-24 months (Fig. 28). However, phone dealers in Johannesburg have managed to get fabricated ICASA stickers on their phones to get validity for their products.

Hasan, a Bangladeshi mobile phone dealer told to me that he does not sell grey stock. Instead he prefers to sell the local stock with ICASA stickers. As he was telling me this, he opened the battery of a Samsung Galaxy S5 phone to show the ICASA sticker. One of his fellow business partners with whom I had a conversation a week before told that he sells both the local and as well as grey. He encouraged me to buy the grey stock as opposed to the local one, claiming that "this type (grey) of phones are in fact the same as locals it is just that they do not come with warranty and box and it is directly imported from Dubai." The next week he had a different story that contradicted the previous one. Hasan went on to say that if other mobile phone sellers were offering a cheaper price than his offer then there is definitely a problem which "customers cannot see." On asking what type of problem, he dialled *#0*# to show the specifications of the phone. On dialling *#0*# the Samsung phone displayed various options to check the LCD and functions of the phone that were software related—Sensor, Speaker, Vibration, Mega cam, Front cam, Touch, Sub key,

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[131] For more see, https://www.icasa.org.za/
[132] ICASA Media Clips, "Yilungelo Lakho",
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T24Dp10uz1U&list=PLLaBwx9RZ6NRmjJ8N1ZlMgrc9NTwAqMcb&index=1 accessed, 21st April, 2015

Low Frequency, Sleep, and so on. This is also called as LCD test (Fig. 29). These specifications

help one to check the quality of the phone according to the given options. Hasan took me through

the options of the phone and told that the ones that are claiming to be original phone must be lying

if the specifications do not function properly. Hasan further claimed,

> "These days the phone spare parts are easily available in the market. One can assemble the parts which look alike original but actually it is just the model which is unoriginal. And concerning the ICASA sticker, I am telling you an inside information. You can also get the ICASA sticker. That is why I am saying I sell for customer's satisfaction,[133] assuring me that he is offering the best cell phone product in the area."

Another trader in the Oriental Plaza also reiterated the same story about the assembling of mobile

phones. He said the traders who are offering cheap price –

> "must be definitely getting their LCD from somewhere else and the mother board from somewhere else. They assemble it and then sell it, these days it is not a difficult thing to get the phone parts and sell it."[134]

This indicates that there is no guarantee of authenticity. Many traders when they were told that

there was a difference of price in another shop, claimed that the trader who was selling at cheaper

price was selling either "refurbished phone" or a "used one." Ghoolam while discussing the phone

market business and mobile phone dealers of Fordsburg once said, "They all malign each other

just to promote their business. It is all the same, they import from the same market. It is just part

of a business strategy to sustain the competitive trading atmosphere of Fordsburg."

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[133] Hasan, 23 April, 2015
[134] Muttarrim, 25 April, 2015
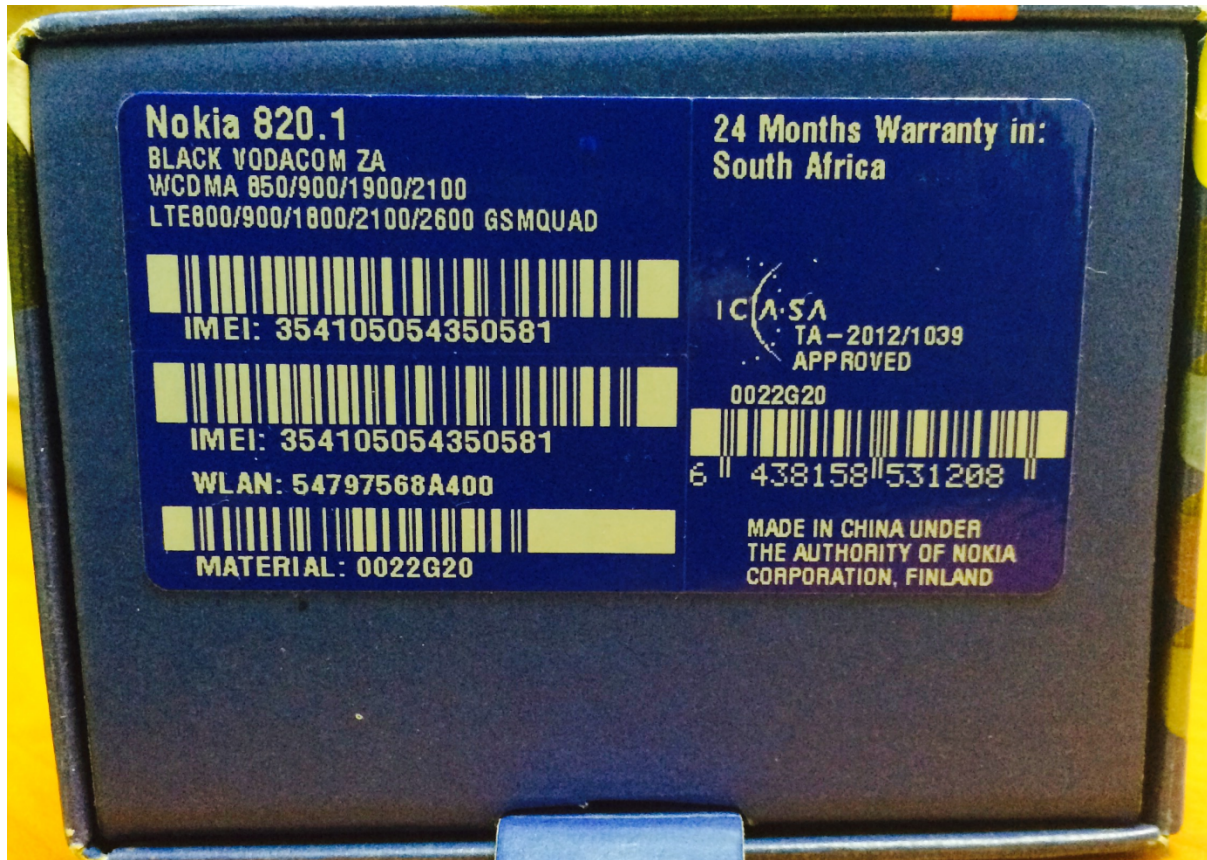
Figure 28. The ICASA approved phone which carries the sticker

Red	Green	Blue
Receiver	Vibration	Dimming
Mega cam	Sensor	Touch
Sleep	Speaker	Sub key
Front cam	LOW FREQUENCY	Black
HALL IC		

Figure 29. Screen grab of the Samsung smartphone specification – LCD test

Retailer's phone is something which comes from the retailing stock. Babloo, another shop

owner in Oriental Plaza explained,

> "…there is a law in South Africa that protects customers (referring to the Consumer
> Protection Act). Hence, if a customer is not satisfied he has the right to return the phone
> and reclaim the money. Usually from our experience phones have no problem; it is the
> user. Once phone is used, even in a good condition with box and all the accessories, the
> giants like Edgars, Woolworths, Shoprite cannot sell it easily. Therefore, they sell in the
> market which attracts wholesalers like us. Then we sell it to you. Now take for example
> this one: it is *HTC 8 one*. A good phone, original price is almost 2669 Rand, but I can give
> it to you in 2100 Rand. You can check the box and the accessories, also the price tag which
> has an Edgar's sticker."

When I wished to check the phone, he said he can allow me to switch on the phone and check. I

checked the phone which was in a good condition but the camera quality and speed appeared

suspicious. I asked if I could see other phones. He said no and stated that the phones (in this

255

category) can be checked not others. This means that these phones have already been operated and checked but not the Grey market ones. And the local stock cannot be opened due to the sealed packaging.

Retailers stock is also popularly known as 'demo stock.' A Pakistani electronics and mobile phone shop retailer, Farhan explained to me the tactic behind the affordable rates of such phones. He said these phones are originally the demo phones that are kept in display at various outlets around the country.

> "Once a new model arrives in the market the display model has to be replaced with a new one. Now the display stock which is a good quality phone goes out for auction. Many Indian or Pakistani dealers pick up the stock and it is circulated in the market." To simplify he explained with an example. Showing his stock displayed in the hard glass counter upon which he was resting his hand he went to explain, "Now for example look at this, you can see I have three Samsung tablets and phone on display at my counter. I have 10 of each but they are not on display. But for the display purpose I have kept single piece of each model that I have. As customer comes and decides to buy, I get him the stock which is kept not in display. The display ones are to sell but eventually demo phones at a cheaper price because usually the display (demo) ones you know are used by hundred people a day. People swipe around the phone and try to make sense of the product they are going to buy, clearly they are not going to buy those phones because it is not for sale, and it is a display model. These phones clearly have no problem and that is how the phone is available at a marginal price."[135]

Finally, the *Grey stock* is imported from Dubai. There is a chain of giant wholesalers who order this stock and the small wholesalers buy from them to sell it into the local market. Every weekday many shop owners from other areas around Johannesburg would flock to one of the wholesale shops in Fordsburg. They would buy mobile phones according to the customer demands, pay the cash and leave. I could see many shop owners buying 5-10 phones from the wholesaler and selling them at their shops with a narrow margin. There was no credit system working as such. However, it is also said that most of the "small" wholesalers like Babloo (a migrant from Gujarat

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[135] Farhan, 16 April, 2015

in Oriental Plaza) often have contacts in Dubai. Mostly, it is their relatives or friends who have migrated to Dubai and have set up this business. It is via this channel they get their stock of phones. I could not get any information about the smuggling of goods from Dubai. Many claim to import the Grey stock from Dubai. "Dubai is a big market, there you can get anything," says Babloo. There is a reason Dubai is often brought up as a place used to sell electronic and other goods. First, because of the bad reputation of the goods imported from China; and second, Dubai always "carries genuineness."[136] Goods imported from Dubai are seen as genuine. As Irfan proudly ascertains, "*Ye maal Dubai se import kiyela hain* (This good is imported from Dubai) referring to his goods." Thirdly, the target customers are either migrant workers (South Asian and African) or black Africans. There is a prevalent tendency among them for not using a local product. They want to purchase things which are imported from overseas, in this case Dubai so that they can proudly tell their peers and family, "*Yeh dubai ka maal hain*" (This is from Dubai).

"No one knows where it comes from," says one of the shop owners. Which means it is most likely that a portion of these goods might come from China but the aura of Dubai is often used during the trade dealing in order to sell the product. These phones are almost ZAR 500-600 cheaper than the local stock. People, mostly migrant workers want this kind of phone that "is cheaper and has good looks." Hence, Babloo says many people buy such phones. However, there is a down side to buying such phone. First it is unauthorised, second, it comes without the ICASA approval sticker and thirdly, it has no guarantee or warranty. The wholesalers who sell grey phones offer a three-month warranty from their side. Usually, a grey phone is designed to work well for the first few months. The wholesalers sell these phones offering their own warranty for three-months, because they can replace and send the phone back to "Dubai." When I asked about

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[136] Irfan, 13 March, 2013

guarantees for grey phones, the shop owners replied, "these days there is no guarantee of life, then what to say of phone."

Discussion on the warranty issue leads nowhere. I then asked what if I discover a problem after three months; he said he can fix it but I will have to pay additional money to fix it. This is another technique of trading in the business. A shop as stated earlier has two to four partners. One of them is in retailing; other is in servicing, while someone else deals with accessories. So if you buy a phone that has a problem (which usually has some problem or the other, says Shabir confidently[137]) then you have to take it to the shop where you purchased the phone. Then one of the partners who is servicing the phone has his share in the service he provides. Usually the business is designed in such a way that it can help all the partners. After buying a phone, the cell phone cover, and other accessories are sold in the same shop offered by different shop owners. This way the profits generated are shared or in some cases each one handles his own accounts. I was told that shop owners work on each case and distribute the profits equally. Having multiple partners helps to bear the costs of the rent, and it is the nature of the mobile phone business that it is usually inter-dependent. Grey market phones are in demand; one cannot spot a difference between the local (original) and grey stock. Ikraar went on to claim that generally the phones available with immigrants in Fordsburg are grey phones and that he trusts their quality. He has even sent some of them back home for his family. Ghoolam also mentioned that there was no point in buying the local stock over grey,

> "Taking into consideration the condition of Joburg (Johannesburg) where you are usually mugged. I would rather think of having a grey one, so even if it is stolen I do not have to worry as much. And also these phones are better, they usually don't have problem. I didn't have one so far."[138] "Look these (grey) phones have no problem; it is coming from the same company and same place. It is just that it is not coming with a warranty," interrupted one of the Bangladeshi cell phone traders in the flea market.

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[137] Shabir, 18 March, 2014
[138] Ghoolam, 17 April, 2015

When asked why the traders don't offer warranty from their side when the phone comes from the same place, "I assume it will be like the local phone, as you say, quality wise," I said. I got same reply from across all the traders in Fordsburg and Oriental Plaza, "because grey phone is cheap and that is why there is no warranty." The answer was vague so I asked the same question in different ways, "If the phone is coming from the same factory and has no problem then logically you should not be hesitant in offering the warranty, because it is the same engineering technology," I persisted. Everyone gave unclear and unconvincing answers. Shabir just nodded, avoiding eye contact. All the traders appeared uncomfortable and they tried to avoid the discussion by asking me to buy local stock instead, "Look if you want warranty then you go with local stock." This was the response to terminate further conversation about grey phones. I tried to get the actual reason for such pricing and the reality behind the grey stock, traders continued to maintain the secrecy of business.

Everyone claims that they import grey stock from Dubai which has a good reputation, customer base and validity of the growing trade as compared to the infamous China market. Irfan said, he would trade with anyone, be it Chinese, Ethiopian, Indian or Dubai. But "if you have an option, then why not go with Ethiopian instead of Chinese." Irfan usually wholesales the clothing stock from China market (chapter 2), but over the years he said he now deals with the Ethiopian dealers. When I enquired with the Ethiopian wholesale dealers in the central business district of Johannesburg I was told that growing Indian trader's interest in Ethiopian market is the result of diversity of products available in the market. Eyerusalem, an Ethiopian wholesale dealer told that they have started importing directly from China. They design and ask the manufacturers in China to manufacture. This way they link African choices with Chinese manufacturing leaving limited space to other middleman Chinese counterparts. Ethiopian business has grown enormously over

the last 5 years. This trade is run mostly by the Ethiopian immigrants who have established their own businesses. Local customers demand a product that is different from China market. Hence, an alternative to China market is seen toward Ethiopian market, which manufactures its own style; in case of mobile phone, it is Dubai.

Strategies of intra-group behaviours

Shop owners pressure consumers to buy a product from them. The idea is to make the consumer feel stressed and pressured when they engage with the shop owner for more than the "usual customer time." Usual customer time refers to the time taken by customers who come to enquire and then leave after getting the correct information. It also refers to customers who are less annoying and buy without asking many questions. A customer becomes "annoying" when s/he starts asking questions which s/he as a customer may think relevant but the shop owner does not. For example, if a customer enquires about the brand of mobile phone, its general specifications and price, s/he is entertained. When a customer enquires about mobile phones and price with additional information about the specifications that the shop owner is unaware of, then he becomes annoyed.

> "C'mon man you are here to buy a phone but you don't know what phones you are looking for? Usually when a customer arrives in our shop, he has done his research and comes to buy from us. He just asks us the phone model, we give, he pays and that's it!"

 When the shop owner says this, he is supported by the people working in his shop who are eager to hear your response and then to engage with you if you decide to participate in a conversation posing counter question. Usually, customers are confused when they select as there are many brands. One customer stated that he wanted a specific camera phone. The shop owner replied:

> *"Nahin hain"* (don't have). It is difficult to offer you something in your price range. You are asking some things which are impossible to get, unless you resort to spending more and then we can maybe talk.

The customer replied, "Yes I would not mind spending more, but I want to have more options." He was asked to how much his price range was. The customer said between 2000-3000 Rand. Shop owner started showing him six models of various companies. He said these are all the phones within the mentioned range, "good quality camera, advanced specifications, runs fast and is awesome." This way it saves his time and also confines customer's choices.

I often observed it was the perception of a customer's status that informs and disciplines the behaviour of the shop owner. On one of my trips to the market, a South African Indian parked his car in front of the mobile shop. Everyone in the shop looked at the car, and until the customer got to the shop and entered the door everyone was staring at him. He was dressed well appeared to be a Muslim with his beard and talked in a South African English accent. He greeted the shop owners and engaged in a communication about buying a phone. He was received with a friendly gesture. The shop owner was polite towards him. The customer did not bother to engage more and left in a short time. Although the customer did not buy anything there was no problem nor dissatisfaction from the shop owner's side. This situation allows for certain assumptions. First, the customer came from a class which the shop owners respect and aspire to belong to one day. His warm reception towards this customer arose from his desire to become part of his social class. Apart from that, the customer was a local South African with a strong sense of his own identity. The shop owner restrained himself from his usual brusque behaviour.

Questions of class and of the time interaction govern the manner of a shop owner. On one occasion I saw a shop owner getting into a loud argument with a customer. He was accusing the customer of being "confused and undecided." He furthermore added,

> "You cannot easily make a choice, can you? First decide on what you want then select, there is no point in talking with you unless you make a choice. You have been a very stressful customer. I personally do not want to engage with customers because of their

constant questions which is time-consuming, and it affects the trading, because of many customers visiting the shop."

After this incident when the customer was interviewed he told me that,

> "He (shop owner) is supposed to treat with us (customers) with respect and the choice of the customer has to be appreciated, he decides to buy or not. On the contrary regardless of whether it appeared here that the customer is not appreciated as much as he is neglected."

Why did they feel so antagonistic towards the customer? First, they have an understanding between the shop owners to be united against the customer if in case any situation arises, in spite of the cut-throat competition between them (Stein, 1976). Second, most of them know the way the trade is carried out. They know some of the goods they import come from the same wholesaler who deals with Grey stock. For example, Babloo is a wholesaler cum retailer who sells the phones to customers but mainly his target is retailers who frequently buy from him. Third, they claim that unwanted customers visit the shop to just "chat and enquire about the phone without ever buying one." They feel bothered by such customers says, Shahid one of the shop owners of the Oriental Plaza. When a customer enters the space of mobile phone shops in Oriental Plaza he is observed by almost all the shop owners and they stare at the people walking around. If a customer is interested then he is already forewarned by the intense observation that there is "no bullshitting but business only."[139] I asked one of them why they were treating customers badly and he replied rather vaguely,

> "We do not do this to everyone we meet, neither do we have any bad intention. We are businessmen we just want to do the business. Now I don't know what other shop owners do but if you ask me, we are here the whole day trying to sell the products and we do good business as well. But we do not want to have extra *magachmari* (stress)."

As he was talking he stopped to attend to another customer who came to buy airtime. The customer bought airtime, handed over the cash and left. Shahid referred to him saying,

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[139] Shahid, 18th April, 2013

"…see like this one, he came gave the money and left. It is not only the case that we like people who come to buy airtime. Some people come every ten minutes to buy airtime and we get slightly disturbed in our work so we tell them why don't you buy airtime all at once, we have to print the airtime voucher every time and I must say this is just time consuming and too much problem."

Shahid: some customers you know do it on purpose. I wonder whether why they do such things.

I (provocatively): perhaps you might have disrespected them sometime in the past and probably they are taking the revenge.

Shahid: Perhaps yes. Sometimes there are too many customers to remember (especially the blacks).[140]

These were some of the impressions that I got from the shop owners. Not all of them were open to talking, in fact most of them did not want to talk and preferred to sell their products and mind their own business. I was more interested in understanding how they sell their products to unwilling customers. To simply put it: how do they sell by force. For example, if you go to buy a phone and then decide not to buy the phone after making many enquiries they make you feel bad. This way of dealing can be observed in various electronic markets in Mumbai as well. The continuing of ethnic business tactics is still visible in the post-migration phase (cf. Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). It is easy for the shop owners to employ such tactics in South Africa, because their target customers are mostly Indians and Pakistanis who speak the same language. Language and the way of speaking is the most fertile ground to communicate direct messages without hesitation or using euphemisms. Additionally, shop owners come from a business background; they are well versed in business tactics. They share a common sense of expectation with Indian customers who enquire and "annoy" while not buying. The loss of trade is accompanied by abuse or mockery, a behaviour that does not startle Indian customers.

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[140] This conversation did not take place at the same time, but it is derived and compressed together in the order of communication.

Shop owners furthermore do not fear legal action because their target customers are mostly undocumented migrants who are evading the law and hiding from the police. The shop owners are confident about dealing with unfriendly customers by threatening to complain to the police or inform the home office about their activities. Although most of the migrant workers are on asylum permit, they still fear deportation to India if caught by the police. Hence, they wish not to engage in a controversy and attract attention. Rather they prefer subjecting themselves to such humiliating treatment and focusing on their work. On one occasion I saw a shop owner getting annoyed with a customer. Even after buying the phone, the Indian customer was enquiring few things about the phone which he was not sure of. The shop owner told him that he has asked him enough questions and that he was assaulting the tolerance of the shop-owner. He decided to get rid of the customer once and for all and told him in a way that everyone in the shop could hear, "*yahan mile abhi uppar mat milna. Bahot pareshan hain yahan par* (We met here, but please do not meet me in the afterlife as well. I am already pissed off)."

The customer appeared to be discomforted by this because other people in the shop also heard the rebuke. The customer immediately left without saying much. Everyone continued to stare after him. This was to make clear to the customer that if in future he comes with even a legitimate problem, he should think a few times before visiting the place or undergo another round of humiliations. I tried to talk to the customer and get his views. I asked him what he felt about the shop owner's attitude. The customer was suspicious of me, and said, "Never mind I have things to do, no one has the time to engage with them." I then asked him if he will visit the shop if he has any problem with the phone as the warranty was for 24 months. He said, "No it is the company that has given a warranty for the product and not him, I will rather go to the *Nokia care*." He was unwilling to visit the shop again even though he has the right to visit the shop in case his mobile

phone has problem. Another customer who was humiliated started abusing the shopkeeper and threatened to report them to the police and customer tribunal. In reply to his threat the shop owners asked him to do whatever he wanted, they did not care. The customer appeared to be dumbfounded and left. Shopkeepers are used to such threats. Shahid said without mentioning India,

> "We are not new to this scenario. We are often threatened but we have no time to engage with such customers. They come to bother you and most often we are already bothered with our work we can't handle their (customers) bothering anymore."[141]

The shop owners that were not polite to customers were mostly migrants who came to South Africa with Indian market experience, and were used to dealing with Indian customers. Since their target customers are also mostly South Asian migrants they understand each other's language and way of talking. Hence, it becomes easy for a shop owner to cross the line of seller-customer relationship to get personal with the customer; sometimes in a good manner and sometimes in a bad manner. Mostly, South Asian migrants have their preferences, it is either their relative who owns the shop, or a friend who works in the shop or an acquaintance who comes from the same region or the linguistic similarities. Due to already established contacts there are fewer incidents of tension between other customer and shop owner. However, this does not limit everyday scenes of aggressive verbal exchanges between other customers and shop owners.

Intra-group competition and its impacts on social behaviour

There is cut-throat competition, it is highly visible that shop owners are working on a very low margin of profit. In public, however, they appear as a strong union sympathising with each other, because of mutual interests and common religion. This refers to the group affiliation which is mentioned in the theories of social identities (Bailey, 2000; Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). I wanted to see if a public demonstration of unity is actually practiced in the middle of the trading

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[141] Shahid, 18th April, 2013

competition. I asked one of the shop owners next to Shahid's shop, what the difference is between his prices and those of his neighbours. The shop owner replied saying that there was no absolute difference, as they deal with the same stock. It is customer's choice if "they want to buy here or there." This is the common reply that they give to a customer. I then said that the same mobile that he is selling has 24 months' warranty in Shahid's shop while he is offering merely 12 months. He replied inserting a betel nut with index finger into his and mouth chewing it hard without much movement of lips. With a mouth full of red colour saliva produced after eating the betel nut, he said:

> *"Dekhiye* (look) if you want to have more warranty I can also give. But merely saying does not mean everything. People can say anything it is up to you as a smart customer to make a proper choice. Okay if you want 24 months' warranty I can also give, but you should bear in mind that it is not me, nor Shahid who is giving this guarantee. It is the company; we are just retailers who sell this. So if you need a phone that has 24 months' warranty then you will have to pay the company approved price. In my case I am giving you a phone cheaper than the company price which means it does not come with 24 months' warranty.

When I said that Shahid is offering the cheaper price with 24 months' warranty, he wanted to prove his point so he directed me towards the technical part of the mobile.

> …look what is the warranty all about? If you break your display, then even company is not going to replace it for free. Also usually the problem with these phones is about software, if you have a software problem you will have to pay to the company a service cost." For the same amount if "you buy a phone from me and you discover some of the above mentioned problems, then I can replace the display with cost cheaper than the market price (company price) and also address the software problem.

He said he could address those issues easily because, as described earlier, one mobile phone shop is owned by multiple partners and one of the partners is dealing with the accessories and mobile phone parts. The partnership business is coordinated effectively in such a way that the customer is guaranteed solution to every problem relating to the mobile phone under one roof.

Inter-group reactions

Speaking about trading experiences in Fordsburg, Salima, a 50-year-old South African Indian has no praise for the migrants in Fordsburg. Her experience in the migrants' shops has not been pleasing. While shopping in Oriental Plaza she asked some questions regarding the product that she was interested in buying. After checking the product, she realised that the product was not durable so she decided not to buy. The migrant from Gujarat shouted behind her back, "bhenchod," upon which, Salima asked the reason for his behaviour. The migrant, according to Salima, was under the impression that, Salima could not understand Gujarati, Hindi or Urdu so he abused her. But if there is a non-Gujarati or Hindi/Urdu customer who does not understand the language then s/he has to undergo being subjected to abuse. According to Salima's testimony, "customers are not treated with high regard and respect." Salima claims that when a customer is visiting a migrant's shop, the migrant is chauvinistic. There are no shops owned by female migrants. This makes female customers a target of the sexist behaviour.

> "It is the lack of education and maturity among these migrants. They have come with the same mentality as what they are brought up with and this affects every aspect of their behaviour in South Africa. These migrant shopkeepers think they are kings and the customers have no value. They undervalue you and your reputation forgetting that business is a two-way transaction."

She attributes the behaviour of shopkeepers and the way of dealing with customers to an Indian attitude of business and also because of the support of the local business community which would stand by them if needed. Salima after complaining about the migrant's way of doing business says, "…at the end even though their attitude is non-complimentary" still she would support them. She maintains,

"I do not get angry because, for him I may be asking too many questions and I may appear a fool but in the long term he has lost a regular customer. I will tell my acquaintances not to visit the shop. He needs to understand customer-shopkeeper relations."[142]

Similarly, another regular customer to Fordsburg expressed his displeasure over the behaviour of the shop owners and their treatment of customers. He narrated an incident with a DVD shop in the flea market. He bought a DVD which apparently was not working as told by the shopkeeper while selling. After testing at his home, he realised that it was not in a good condition; hence, he decided to return it. When he went to return, he was cross questioned as if he was being "interrogated by a police officer" in order to prove his contention.

They are useless people. A guy there talks to me as if I know nothing. And then tells me that he cannot accept it. It was rude behaviour when he was questioning me about the DVD. He almost challenged my integrity. I am not here to put up with the behaviour like this. He doesn't know that he has lost a regular customer. I will stop visiting his shop,[143] reiterated the customer.

If you visit a South Asian shop and enquire about the price of a certain product or service charge, then you revisit them and inform that their price is more than other shops; there is an immediate expression of anger.

"Toh phir udhar hi jana tha, idhar kyun aaye? Hamare pass dussare brand hain aur unke pass dussare. Hamare yahan main guarantee ke saath de raha hoon, poore market main aisi cheezein nahin milegi. (Then you should have bought from that shop, why did you come then? We have different brand and they have others. I sell the products with assured guarantee, so much so that you would not find similar products elsewhere).

This thought of revising the rate is unacceptable for a shop owner and a matter of disgrace among his colleagues. Their reputation is based on how fast one can sell their products without much hustle. So if something like this happens and the customer challenges one of them, they are shamed within their group. Often the mobile phone business is family run so the chance of being

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[142] Salima, 10th April 2014
[143] Customer K, 09 February 2015

stigmatised as an irresponsible and inferior salesman brings embarrassment. Hence, to avoid this they already caution you that when you buy from here, then do not think of complaining.

On the note of "cheating," the shop owners are cautious that they do not spoil their image in the market. "After all, it is the image that matters the most" noted one of the shop owner. He said that there is a tremendous competition and it grows day by day, so they have to stick to their regular customers. The rude behaviour of traders in Fordsburg is visible in other businesses as well. Grocery stores, perfume shops, clothes, footwear, mobile phone or any other retailing shop; a normal reply after a customer asks for more varieties is, "you can come back whenever you are ready. Now you may leave. There are thousands of products here and you can't ask about each one of them." The salesperson / shop owner would not bother much to engage with the customer anymore. At a perfume store, a customer was enquiring about the brand, after looking at three perfumes; the shop owner offered him a packed perfume. The customer could not smell the perfume to make his choice. He requested the shop owner to show, shop owner replied - "Unfortunately, it is packed and I cannot open it for you. But this is really splendid, I really like it, you can try it." The customer replied that he would want to see the ones that convince him so he was enquiring about other perfumes displayed in the glass coated shelf. As the customer began enquiring more, the shop owner immediately lost interest and went outside leaving him alone in the shop. The customer felt embarrassed and uncomfortable. He tried to have a conversation with the shop owner again but the shop owner refused to attend to the customer by avoiding eye contact and looking elsewhere. The shop owner replied, "You are wasting my time and yours. It is not helping us. Come back when you make up your mind and I will offer you a discount." The shop owner said this aloud in the presence of neighbouring shop owners so that the customer was intentionally humiliated.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen how group belonging becomes important for shop owners. The central argument that runs through this chapter is how the inherited tradition of business is translated into culture of trading among Indian migrant shop owners in Fordsburg. We saw how a commodity centred cell phone retail market reproduces old forms of cultural habits - the way to trade, negotiate and at times discredit the normative two-way retailing business interaction. Kenny (2015) argues complicates the simplistically placed operational methodology of retailing where a customer and seller are presented as two individuals. In Fordsburg, the complexity of retailing has to do with the entangled business chains that gives rise to the sensitivities of region and gender along with class dimensions.

Migrant business tactics move and evolve along with migrants who freely practice these techniques which might otherwise seem odd and contrary to the consumer rights. However, migrants do this, partly because of the South Asian neighbourhood and partly because of largely South Asian customer base. The lingual comfort and accepted norms of trading provide a protective micro-environment to continue with the behavioural dynamics of Fordsburg. Along with this, there is an overwhelming influence of class and race understanding among Indian migrant businessperson. The business class see South Asian migrant labourers in a dominating patronage without giving due consideration to the specificity and importance of owner-customer relationship. The same applies to the African customers who are taken for granted in the business exchange. This attitude has to do with the intra-grouping among shop owners who stand defensive in the everyday business conflicts. On the other hand, the relations of South Asian shop owners or workers with fellow South Asians differs according to one's class and regional status. The same applies to local South African Indian customers. It is usually the protected space wherein shop

owners exercise their domination over customers. Class is a significant factor in deciding the attitude of shop owners. As shown in the South African customer's case, it was the exterior visible influence of one's location in the caste-class network that invited favourable attention. Hence, we can see an intimidating group behaviour controls the new trading style of Fordsburg.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUDING THE DISCUSSION: WHAT'S LEFT BEHIND?

This thesis aimed to understand modern migratory movements through the establishment of ethnic spaces in southern metropoles. In understanding contemporary labour migration to South Africa, I have focused on the bustling Indian neighbourhood in Johannesburg. Chapters 1 and 2 provided an overview of existing arguments about the formation of an ethnic neighbourhood and discussed the importance of studying an Indian business district in Africa. Locating the history of a neighbourhood that dates back to the early years of formation of Johannesburg in the nineteenth century, I traced Indian presence in the ethnic neighbourhood. Confrontations with the colonial and apartheid regimes over discriminatory laws in the twentieth century and successive negotiations informs the historical imprint of the Indian connection to Fordsburg, Johannesburg and South Africa. I present the methodological challenges of a researcher who is not completely 'dissolved' into the community on the field even after a few years of regular presence. Existing literature lauds ethnographers as someone who eventually dissolves into the community. I argue this is not always the case; rather a researcher dealing with sensitive issues continues to be eyed

as an outsider and would rarely assume the position of an insider. Available research methods are not necessarily equipped to engage with complicated spatiality. Hence, I propose a 'hybrid ethnography' which employs diverse research methods and engages with space without being restricted to the graded polarities of designed methods. A researcher, I argue is the initiator of novel methods in his/her research that can become a unique contribution to the anthropology of ethnic studies.

In chapter 2, I undertook archival ethnography to understand the formation and clustering of ethnic space in Johannesburg. In detailing the history of the flea market, a mercantile space in Fordsburg, I explain the reasons for engaging with ethnic spaces in understanding the history of contemporary communities of the city space. Chapters from the first section of the thesis where the fight against colonialism, the emergence of an Indian identity, business affirmation and growing migration community revives the Indianness in Johannesburg are dealt with.

Chapter 3 engages with the idea of the cultural markers of an ethnic identity. In looking at existing literature on cultural identities among Indian communities in Africa, I added new conceptions of migrant identifiers in the e-communication era. Underlying the growing importance of communication technologies like smartphones, I argue that migration has to be theorised taking into account these modern day artefacts of southern migration. I refer to this as, "Smartphone migration" (2014). Along with this, there is a desire for a migrant to assimilate in the migration process and hence, learning new languages and changing clothing habits contribute to our understanding of acculturation process. However, food habits continue to be designated as exclusively non-changing due to the easy availability of home cuisine and continuing practice of religious belief.

In chapter 4, I argue that migration for the young Indian immigrant is for more than economic reasons. It is to live the ideal life – free from parental observation and possessing autonomy in an independent space. The business interests of migrants depended upon the permit they hold. The ones who applied for the work permit aimed to invest in South Africa by establishing a business of their own. After establishing the business, migrants import business techniques gained over the years of working in India. These business tactics are unique to the migrants who invent ways to expand business relations within the flea market and outside Fordsburg. Chapter 5 deals with the politics of permit nationalism. This section challenges the predominant argument about migrants from the south migrating to benefit from asylum protection using it as a passage to enter commercial space of the host society. There is, however, an emerging group of migrants who do not seek asylum to become a permanent citizen or to benefit from the long-term offerings of the host society. These migrants reject the possibilities of settlement and work creatively with the regime of permits. Building on this, chapter 6 highlights the business scenario of the flea market and Fordsburg area. By looking at the mobile phone shops, I understand the attitudinal characteristics of Indian migrants who become shopkeepers in South Africa. The behaviour of Indian migrants argues for the class and race dynamics that influence the behaviour. Apart from doing business in a familiar space among South Asians, their confidence in the ability to negotiate with customers shows the emergence of a contemporary business class among migrants in Fordsburg.

In this concluding chapter, I try to explore those issues that were not presented as part of this thesis – gender, sexuality, gift economy and masculinity. Additionally, I will present the dynamics of contemporary migration in the southern context and argue that the southern migration has to be thought throughout as a migration between different continents than regular movements

within identical spaces. I offer a critique to the theories of southern migration which only study the mobility within the South on a macro level rather than detailing the micro-structures of individual communities that form the crux of this migration. This thesis is an attempt to fill the understanding of migration within the South with case studies of individual migrants from India and Africa and how they fare in the larger debate of the south-south migration. Do migrants think they are important shapers of southern mobility or are they just part of a regular migration?

Thinking through the experiences of southern spaces

Migration has to be theorised and its process thought through, rather than causes and consequences of migration alone (cf. Greenwood, 1985). Distances and travel define migration patterns. Ratha and Shaw (2007) have shown us that it is the perception of distance that offers significant motivation in planning to migrate to the areas of the South. Migration is seen as an alternative to escape the temporary difficulties for migrant communities. Many communities who have been traditionally migrating consider mobility as an important aspect of their life. Mobility is an identity for individuals belonging to traditional migrant communities who migrate to different spaces to satisfy the community needs. The phenomenon of movement has eventually become international/cross-border migration due to the emergence of border control and passport regimes (Torpey, 2000; McKeown, 2011). Prior to the formation of the sovereign states, boundaries were porous, almost non-existing, which gave a chance to the communities within a particular land undivided by sea to move around the geographic area to satisfy their needs. Issa Shivji (2007: 4) in discussing Africa refers to this as "'natural' geographies" which were compartmentalised by the imperial state dividing the singular space.

Hence to study migration one has to understand theoretically the anthropological methods and ways used by the communities in migration. Resource-rich places naturally attract people

(labour) from less resource rich places who exploit the opportunity. Traditionally, African migration within a landlocked space in many cases is not easily comparable with the present day context. Distance is an immutable factor that determines one's reason to migrate. In the south-south context, there is generally migration within the region as Ratha and Shaw (2007) and Bakewell (2009) have argued for the Asian, African, Latin American migration. There are instances like India-Africa where traditionally there has been migration across the sea. Before the formation of nation states and the expansion of empire, the presence of Indian trade and labour within the common connecting space of Indian Ocean was evident. Studies recorded in the Indian Ocean argue for the important role played by the Indian maritime sojourners to develop a relation with Africa (Pearson, 2003). Chaudhuri (2003) in his detailed work of the 18th-century commercial mobilisation of Indian Ocean has shown us that the Indian connection with Africa dates back to the phase of traditional migration which is discussed here in the African context. Prior to colonialist expansion, there has been an embedded Asian-African connectivity through the ivory trade, cotton, sugar and other trading products. Ratha and Shaw, Bakewell, and other contemporaries who engage with the migration patterns of India-Africa overlook some of the important anthropological and historical studies.

The drivers of contemporary Indian-South Africa migration – the Indian labourers – are studied as a central component of the migration pattern of the south-south. I argue that mobility is not only for economic advancement. Indian migrants in the present day context see the possibility of migration because first, it is historically rooted for the migrants from Gujarat. Their ancestors have been sailing and dominating the ocean passage since centuries. Secondly, the mercantile and maritime culture of these spaces look beyond the existing borders of modern day nations. Someone from among the acquaintances of a migrant's village or caste has migrated to different parts of the

world. This longing forms the virtual imagination of being in a particular space which is not confined to the peripheries of their home. Hence, migration becomes something that was always inevitably thought of as an option. Thirdly, thinking of migration as a way of exploring the world is something new among the migration theories of the global south. Migration from the south is stereotyped as something that is to escape the temporary bad condition and to live a better life in the north. These repeated clichés of migration have only done harm to our understanding of migration and prevented us from looking beyond material benefits. Fourthly, it is not the distance within the south that matters for migration, as earlier works have attempted to show. In fact, distance is something which has to be contextualised and theoretically rooted in an appropriate sense without losing the essence of it. Distance for some is just a concept of thinking beyond the home. For some, it is a long journey that has pleasures on the other end. Distance is a fragmented entity in defining migrations within the regions of the global south. At times it acts a powerful motivation for one to cross the borders that are landlocked.

However, in the contemporary context, one can ask what happens to the movement beyond regional spaces that are land locked but involve crossing the seas. This phenomenon is new to the theoretical dimensions of the global south migration. I showed that distance is not a hindrance; the on-ground situation suggests that distance is only a matter of need and time. Indian migration to Africa and South Africa, in particular, has more to offer to our understanding of the theoretical concepts of mobility. It is a traditional bound phenomenon in as much as it is practised in the present day context predominantly by males with a few exceptions of females.

Migration in the global south context argues for looking beyond the imaginary boundaries. They seek to challenge the determinants of belonging. What is belonging? Is it to a particular landscape defined by international borders as a nation or is it where one migrates and returns, is

belonging? Belonging exceeds the definition of national borders. Migrant journeys to accumulate resources only to return and then later perhaps travel for a second journey. This circular process of movement is related to identity formation as much as a notion of belonging. It is not a fixed location where the idea of belonging rests; the idea of belonging is often changing. It is the changing of identity that determines one's belonging. Layers of differing belongings that vary according to time, location, desire and need, confirm the thoughtful process of migration. How a migrant sees him/herself is another epistemological enquiry. It can be then further extended to realise the belonging of migrant and belonging of space as two distinct categories. Humans are mobile while space is a fixed nomenclature which suggests that mobility happens with space. However, space can be defined by the movement of people; movement creates a geography. Categories can be broadened by including the relations between distance, reasons and post-migration plans; the subjectivity of the migrant. The migrant's life cannot be studied within the discourses of power and authority of the state machinery alone.

This leads our discussion to think that there are multiple spaces within the identical mono-space. There are many "souths" in the south. It is important to stress on the plurality of the vocabulary because it is not an argument for a single space that can be easily defined. In the migration context especially, it is proven discourses of multi-polarity that intertwine motivations, and processes of migrations. As Menon (2015) has argued referring to modernity debates that the debates on post-colonial intellectualism has added an additional "s" to the existing models of enquiry creating more complexities to our thinking in the south. South-south migration is a phenomenon which is not entirely defined by its other – the north. It is rather a premise to challenge the hegemonic discourses. In doing so one should be careful of not falling into the trap of similar arguments as debated in the north. Rather there should be a constructive criticism of the social

theory concerning migration. Migration within the south at one level is a microstructure concerned with the mobility of communities travelling within a certain landscape. I argue there is also the growing phenomenon of macro movements that are not related to specific communities but are part of modern day nation-state identity. Hence, a migrant from Gujarat's small town, Bharuch's small village is seen as a migrant from India elsewhere. Imposition of identity through the passport regime has brought out complexities in defining the multi-structures of society. However, migration within the south which is a very broad category in the social sciences discipline has to be developed into macrostructures as well. Because in the age of digital advancements one can easily talk about national-regional-continental movement rather than village-community-society mobility.

The iconoclasm of the emerging thought of the global south has been stated by Comaroff and Comaroff (2011) as something that cannot be defined in a substantive term rather it is a label that refers to a relation and is not itself a thing. The dynamics of the global South in relation to movement and mobility is unique in its characteristics.

What's left and the further research to follow

Over the course of analysis of Indian labour migration to South Africa, there are some overarching themes which could not be explored. I acknowledge the fact that I did not take into consideration some issues which were not accessible, not relevant or otherwise not significant for the thematic arrangements of the argument raised in this work. It is also because of the lack of access and rejection by the community. I was received and as well as rejected on the field. Over the years of my presence on the field I tried to assimilate into the host society. However, the relationship with the community fluctuated. At times the community was welcoming, whereas sometimes they disliked my presence in their working space. The predominant ethnographic literature that

discusses researchers being involved in the community so much so that one becomes 'dissolved' and 'absent' was not applicable in my case. On the contrary, I occasionally sensed hostility from the community. On one occasion I was told by my regular informant - that I should stop visiting the place because people dislike it. They might even physically assault me. I tried to examine the reasons for this reaction and hostility. These were the same informants who had been voluntarily offering their work time and space later turn hostile over researcher's presence after a few years of continuous contact is something that needs to be thought of as a critical ethnographic enquiry.

To move on, I will try to encompass the issues that were left out in the following section. It is arguably true that these areas would have brought up other dimensions to the study of labour migration. But I maintain that it is another set of debates which has to do with independent structural themes that can be studied separately and not particularly in this context.

1. Gender

The migrant labour workforce compromises males and females. I introduced the phenomenon of gender relations in Fordsburg workspace. This research is primarily focused on the young male migrants from India to South Africa, Fordsburg in particular. It is a close study centred on a small group of people migrating to the congested space of Johannesburg. Over the course of time, young Indian male migrants were accessible to undertake the research. During the research, only three female migrant labourers were observed.[144] One was working in a salon shop – Urva discussed in this thesis and the other two were reluctant to offer interview except confirming the name and the place they come from. Limited access to female migrant's lifestyle undermined to an extent the overall aspects of Indian labour migration issues. Various reasons

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[144] This does not mean that, women workforce was absent in Fordsburg and flea market. There were women traders in the flea Market and as well as in Fordsburg. But they were not the migrant labourers or migrant entrepreneurs, they were local South Africans.

could be considered for the small presence of women labour migrants. It can be traced to the 'cultural norms' which according to Rigg (2007) plays an important role in migration. Young women tend not to migrate because they feel vulnerable; hence no parents or families would have dared to send their daughters. Rigg (2007) sheds light on the reasons of the reluctance of young women migrating. It is due to "certain assumptions about acceptable behaviour that limit their opportunities to be mobile" (120). This can be applied to the Indian migration to SA.

However, in the retrospect during the mid-nineteenth century, the presence of Indian women labourers was considerably visible in South Africa. It was so much so that of the indentured labourers, 40 % were women and girls (Peberdy, 2009: 41). Testimonies and stories archived show the tendency of Indian women to travel to South Africa. Various reasons were accounted for women migration. Historians working on Indian labour migration have worked on the gendered perspectives of migration.[145] Desai & Vahed (2010) have shown that post-migration, Indian women were subject to the gravest violence and exploitations relating to sexual and mental harassment (105). Often it was on the plantation sites that drew women to the centre stage of violence. Workplace violence and discrimination against women was rated at its highest. They were not only paid less than men but also had unequal rations, despite equal hours of work. Hiralal (2014) has attempted to provide the picture of gendered Indian immigration of 'passenger' women coming to South Africa. Her work has framed an independent category of Indian women immigration that has opened up the possibilities of critical analysis to gendered migration perspective.[146]

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[145] For more on the indentured women labour see, Beall's (1990a, 1990b) work which details the historical aspects and sufferance of Indian indentured women. Simultaneously, Freud's (1991) work on the working class women in Natal offers insights on the transformation of women's professions over the years until World War II era.

[146] Furthermore, see Hiralal's (2010b), (2010c) other works which account women's activism during the early twentieth century and post-World War II era struggles.

The harsh treatment of women and children on the field was prevalent. Sirdars were appointed by the plantation owners to maintain discipline and order in the fields. The Sirdars and policemen were a nightmare for the workers on the field. Sirdars had various responsibilities, apart from employing and recruitment of Indian labourers. It was to control the activities of indentured Indian labourers on the field. Women and kids, along with men were often beaten by the Sirdars on plantation sites (Metcalf, 2007; Desai & Vahed, 2010). Their harshness was widespread beyond the fields. Below in the picture, a Sirdar is shown supervising over female workers in the field with a cane in his hand (Fig. 30).

An Indian sirdar (overseer) supervising the work of the kids in the canefields. Some sirdars are quite humane and kind.

Figure 30. Indian Sirdar on the field (Source: "Drum" (via SAIRR), Historical Papers Research Archives, UWL)

Female migration to South Africa has always rife with hardships (Mehta, 2004). It was difficult for an indentured labourer in South Africa to take his wife or mother along with him. Women were subject to suspicion and always regarded as a threat to the productivity of labour in Natal. Planters were fearful of the family institution which would impinge on the capacity of production (Beall, 1990a). It was almost an impossible task for a woman to migrate, even if she was willing to do so. Historical accounts show that women who were harassed by their husbands or were sexually tormented tended to leave India and migrate. Migration was an option to escape

the brutalities imposed upon women. Although this option was not easy, it was difficult for a woman to get on the ship if she was single and alone. Women had to plead with the men on the boat to accept them to travel along with.

A moving story during the 1860s of Choureamah Aurokuim, a thirty-four-year-old Christian woman from Trichinopoly, South India is painful. Choureamah was separated from her daughters – eight and three years old. Immediately after arrival in South Africa, she was assigned a duty to Grey's Hospital while her daughters apprenticed to two other ladies. Choureamah barely had time for "a stolen hug and a kiss" before she died. "Little is known about her daughters, stripped of their mother, ripped from each other, and orphaned before the age of 10" (Desai, 2013: 65). Such heart-rending stories of the separation of mothers from their daughters and children describe the harsh condition imposed upon women and children. Feminist scholars like Phizacklea (1983) points out the inferior status accorded to women in the migration process. She argues that the marginalisation of women at a certain level is due to the patriarchal society which focusses on the labour of men only. This translates further into the discrimination of wages and equal treatment denied to the migrant women workers.

Taking from the historical narratives, it is evident that women migrating on their own was an incredibly difficult task. It was beyond the imagination for a woman to leave the country if she was married and settled in the family. Widows or single women chose the option to migrate. In present case too, the female migrants that I met were single and had some familial support. Migration would impact on the marriage prospects for a single woman (Rigg, 2007: 130). As most young Indian women from different societies tend to marry in their young age; hence the question of migrating as a single lady is notable. On the other hand, migration is seen as a resort to get away from the poverty and explore new life. The political economy of gender issue among contemporary

labour migrants remains an unattended area of study which can offer more insights on the condition of women in South Africa.

2.   Sex[uality] of Indian immigrants

Regarding the sexuality of labour migrants, it is hard to trace their sexual habits. Over the course of field work, only a few spoke openly. Studying the sexuality of migrants is seen as an emerging concept among the scholars working on the transnational border crossing of labourers. Shah (2011) explored the sexuality of migrants from northern India - Punjab to North America – Canada and the US during the nineteenth and twentieth century. White (1990) studied the sexuality of labour migrants in Nairobi and how a woman offers comforts of home by cooking and offering sex. Understanding the sexual habits of labour migrants in Fordsburg was hindered by the fact that first, it was not a historical study; second, it is a one-sided study of male migrants alone; and finally, the lack of access. Going back to the discussion of sexual habits practised by labour migrants in Fordsburg, Bharat felt free to speak about the "embarrassing" issue of sex. It was because he was away from the group of people who often visited prostitutes in Hillbrow area for sex. A hotel in Hillbrow caters to the needs of migrants who visit for paid sex. Sunil spoke about the prostitutes coming from different countries and continents. He said you would "find prostitutes from Africa, Thailand, China, even India." Talking about his colleagues and friends, he said most of them visit the brothel often.

Since visiting prostitutes is socially unacceptable in Fordsburg, it is done in secret and often with friends. Despite the massive surveillance, young labourers visit neighbouring Hillbrow neighbourhood very often sometimes every week. Sunil's colleague who visits the brothel is a married man with two children. He has been away from his family since past three years. His visit to the brothel can be understood as a way to satisfy his sexual needs but also to get the "comforts

of home." Recent arrivals like Bharat do not visit the brothel and avoid hanging out with the people who visit the brothel and practice socially unacceptable norms like drinking liquor and smoking weed. Mushtaq, a firm believer in Islam from Bangladesh said that he has never had sex since he is in South Africa for the past four years. "My friends and colleagues visit prostitutes while I do not. I am a regular *namazi* (one who offers namaz five times a day). I do not go for such practice."

In this case, it can be seen that apart from the social policing, it is also the belief system for some migrants to refrain from prostitution which is considered *haraam*. Whereas for some, religion does not matter as long as they tend to find comfort in it. Ghoolam said almost 90% of his friends and their acquaintances living and working in Fordsburg visit brothels in Newtown. He said he has been to the brothel once, "just to get the experience and to see how it looks like."[147] He knows many of his friends who are regular visitors. It is a group of people who know each other well. They club together and secretly visit the prostitutes. The paradox of religious belief system and its relation to the socially unacceptable norms do not force one to follow the disciplinary habits. Migrants interpret and live their life as it pleases them.

Homosexuality was not actively visible among labour migrants. There was a discussion among the traders and workers in the flea market about a male gay businessman who was in his mid-20s. One dealer told me, "there is a guy who comes from a well to do family, dresses posh, and smart to appear (like) a gay."[148] On asking if he was sure of his sexual orientation, he replied, he is not sure, but he appears like one. Ghoolam also mentioned but could not confirm it. He tends to ignore by saying, "*chodo na, apan ko kya karne ka hain* (Leave it we have nothing to do with it) immediately changing the topic." Hence, the overall knowledge on the sexual activities of and among labourers remains a less discussed area. This potentially can bring in more possibilities to

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[147] Interview Ghoolam, 08 November, 2014
[148] Interview, Salim tabrez, 01 November, 2013

our understanding of the sexual desires among young migrants in the southern space; who are brought up in the ultra-conservative background with the influence of culture and religion that publicly discourage such practices. Also, one could investigate how many gay refugees from South Asia arrive in South Africa to claim protection as other African gay refugees.

3.   Love affairs

The love affairs among labourers of Fordsburg also remains an unattended issue. All the migrants whom I interviewed never disclosed their love affairs in Fordsburg. Although Latish who now owns a grocery store, explained the love affair between him and his wife in the early years of his life as a labourer. He used to work in a grocery store in the mid-1990s where his wife used to visit often. After few months he decided to confirm his love to her, and she accepted his proposal. They decided to marry, but her parents were reluctant, because of growing mistrust among the migrants who did not accepted marriage seriously. As mentioned in chapter 2, some young migrants married local women to get documents and then fled leaving them pregnant. Hence, Latish had to go through difficulties in convincing his wife's parents and eventually he succeeded. Similarly, Imaan fell in love with a local South African Indian girl. He decided to marry her but had to present assurances as a responsible person who could guarantee his commitment. Latish stood as a surety and Imaan got married to his wife in 2012. Love stories like this take place in the milieu of Fordsburg. South African Indian girls do get attracted to Indian migrants. Abhishek who runs a restaurant has been in a relationship with a local South African Indian girl for three years. The desire of finding love and getting married is not on the priority list of labour migrants; it is only an open option in case they fall in love.

Another story of Hema, a Hindu female migrant labourer from Bharuch, Gujarat is interesting. After her arrival in Fordsburg in 2012, she got into a relationship with Usman, another

Muslim migrant labourer who runs a salon shop. Over a year of their relationship, they finally

decided to marry. Hema decided to marry him despite the religious differences. Back in India, she

owned a beauty salon for ladies famously known as "beauty parlour." She acquired some wealth

to migrate to South Africa. After arrival, she fell in love with Usman, and they married in 2013.

Hema's parents resisted her decision to marry; she still went ahead and married Usman who now

owns a barber shop in partnership with three other Gujaratis. He has a permanent visa, but the

couple is thinking of returning to India and start a new life elsewhere apart from Bharuch. The

decision of marrying the one you love is a rarity and an extremely serious communal issue that

might invite violence. If this marriage had taken place in India, it would have serious consequences

claims Hema. She could not have married Usman in India due to the religious differences.

Additionally, the fear of Hindu-Muslim pogroms of 2002 persists in their mind.

> "My father and mother do not like my marriage decision, and they have abandoned me, asking never to return their home. Perhaps I have bought shame to my family and relatives, but my uncles are supportive."[149]

Migration to South Africa among young migrants has brought a hope of selecting their

partners and claiming an autonomous identity without elder's imposed decisions. Hema seems

relaxed and not unduly worried about her future. She said she is happy with her husband and that

they would return to India one day. She is not fearful of the consequences upon her return. The

fearlessness and confidence is also due to her economic independence. Additionally, at the end of

her term in South Africa when she decides to leave, she along with her husband would have enough

money to start a life new without relying on anyone's support.

Taking from above discussion the question arises - what is the life of migrants upon return

to India? To address the question of returnee migration, there needs to be compact understanding

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[149] Interview, Hema, 07 June, 2014

of labour migrant's economic and cultural background. As discussed in this thesis, intentions of migrant labourers depend on their length of stay and future plan. It is seen that migrants that do not care for work permits are the ones who already planned to return. Mostly these migrants came from a skilled background. Some were barbers, while some were tailors, some were chefs and some trained in information technology sector. They migrated to accumulate a certain amount of wealth that could help them in establishing a business back home. Some migrants who do not fall in the skilled "artisanal" background had much efforts to do; they invest their accumulated wealth in migrating to another country. For example, Urva used her South African savings to move to the United States. Having more money increases the chances of acquiring permits in the West. Studies done on the migration and livelihoods in the global south explain the impacts of returnee migration. In Southeast Asia and West Africa, returnee migrants contributed mostly in the migration process. Migrants wanted to return because of families and property interests. Initially, they migrated due to the poverty and seasonal changes (Mar and Mejia, 1981). Hence migration was undertaken to trade in a current crisis. Importantly, the ones who returned were married migrants having the responsibility of their children. Ashraf returned to support his children's education along with business plans. Apart from the investment, future and children's life, there are other reasons which is described by Kuhn (2004) who studied return migrants in Bangladesh. According to him, it is not only land that provides motivation to return, but it is the "livelihood, the culture and the identity provided by the village" (314).

4. The material of masculinity

Developing on the notion of masculinity among returnee migrants who form important economic relations in the home country. It can be seen that there are various ways employed to demonstrate the masculinity. Masculinity is related to buying the latest technological devices and

electronic gadgets. It is a competition amongst young migrants who flash their latest purchase in Fordsburg. It is a sense of achievement and recognition of prosperity. This is not the same conception of migration where a labour migrant bought cash, gold and land when returned. In the case of Fordsburg, we can see that return migrants do buy certain gifts for family and friends. It places one in a dominant position among the household. Gifts such as mobile phones, or designer clothes or electronic devices are increasingly becoming important in the life of labour migrants. This gift becomes an economic and political strategy (Roitman, 2005: 74).

Gifts are reciprocal. The notion of the gift is still a broken term which is contested. For a labour migrant it is either to gain praise, demonstrate the masculinity, leverage a privileged position, demand social respect or gain momentum in certain community spaces. When the migrant returns, it is always an obligation to carry something from the country as a gift for their friends and relatives. This takes place in the complex web of social relations where "gift economy" is encouraged towards the exchange of products. Ashraf returned after five years. Before he went home he explored markets in Durban to get some gifts for his family and friends. His idea of taking a handful of gifts is an intrinsic part of the returnee migration phenomenon. The "obligation to return" as mentioned in Mauss's (1990) description of Maori tribal culture is what reflects in the arrangement of the immigrant societal foundation. It is taken as a deep burden to return, especially when the person is in the dominant position of handling the money. Sometimes, gifts ensure the bonding of a relationship. Bharat's friend, a new arrival from Bharuch was scouting in the flea market to get some gifts. Upon enquiring Bharat's friend said that it is Rakhi festival where a brother gifts his sister on this day. So he was looking for some gifts for his sister.

A person returning from a foreign country is considered wealthy with international knowledge, experience and an understanding of the modern way of life. He has brought bags of

new things that are alien to the society. His gift is considered as a part of his affirmation and recognition towards his family and friends. This process is seen as transfer of skills and attitudes via generating social remittances through the gesture of gift (Castles and Wise, 2007: 8). It puts migrants in privileged ('dominated') position in the society. Gifting here is "constituted in social relations and is not simply a product of unequal exchange" (Mauss, 1970: 76). These social relations can be constructed in various modes of everyday transactions. For the caste acquaintances of Bharat who helped him in coming to South Africa, it is a way of gifting to his community in Gujarat. Here gift moves away from the individualistic operation to becoming a more social (societal) phenomenon. Debt is a product of social relations, which challenges the idea of individual borrowing.[150]

For someone like Ashraf, gifting someone is to repay the debt which he initially took when he left Gujarat. Gift develops the concept of debt for migrants who donate something valuable which is out of ideal economic capacity in India. For example, giving mobile phones or an iPad to someone in a village is a matter of prestige. As discussed earlier, electronic devices along with consumer goods and land carry a "prestige value" for returnee migrants. The gift is a voluntary submission of certain products, things, materials or valuables (in some cases, valuable relationships like marriage). But there is always something that is expected in return. This reciprocation is fundamental to the understanding of gift giving in the context of returnee migrants. However, this work was limited to studying the life of migrants in the post-migration phase.[151]

Fordsburg operates around the clock. It is mostly migrant labourers who work on shifts and overtime including the weekends. Mohabbat, CEO of an IT company in Fordsburg claims that

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[150] Appadurai explains this shift in his land marking work The Social Life of Things (1986).

[151] Although, I have been told by some scholars that there are many works in Gujarat which identifies itself as a global city because of its widely connected diaspora. Hence, the aspirations of returnee migrants and the societal response bring in the understanding of overall aspects of migrant stories.

Fordsburg would not have been the same without the contribution of migrant labourers. He says, "they bring new life to Fordsburg. It would have been unimaginable to visualise Fordsburg in the absence of these labourers."[152] Apart from the lack of sanitation and South Asian habits which are unacceptable in South Africa, migrant labourers rely on as cheap and trustworthy labour. The notion of the commodification of human being is visible in Fordsburg's scenario, where a labourer is in double jeopardy of being in the class of labourer and secondly in the box of a migrant, which gives capital owners more chances of exploitation. Shop and restaurant owners mostly target such migrant labourers who are vulnerable to the unaccountable extraction of labour. This area still stands as a strong base of attraction for migrant labourers. Apart from the positive side of labour migrant's presence, there are many problems which are debated in the working space of Fordsburg. Labourers being not treated well, minimum wage limitation, no insurance and medical benefits, lack of appropriate documents to continue the trade are several of the factors that would be interesting to explore in further research. Therefore, this discussion concludes noting two points of why Fordsburg is attractive. Ethnic identity and labour are the key resources that mainly run the economy of Fordsburg. The primary source of attraction in Fordsburg is due to the continuous labour of these migrant workers who remain the backbone of Fordsburg economy. As Mohabbat imagines, the life of Fordsburg market without migrant labourers would be "dead and stale."

By addressing the issues in conclusion section which were not addressed in the main framework of this work I have attempted to present the overall picture of Indian labour migration. The issues raised in the conclusion suggest other possibilities of labour migration which can be addressed in another discussion which remains open for further research.

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