Mobility, Space and Urbanism: A Study of Practices and Relationships among Migrants from African Countries in Cape Town, South Africa

By

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DECLARATION

I, Tamuka Chekero, prepared this original work to meet the University of Cape Town's PhD requirements. In that regard, this work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my original work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation from, the work(s) of others in this dissertation has been attributed, cited, and referenced.

Signature: Signed by candidate

Date: 16/01/2023

ABSTRACT

This study examines the ways in which migrants' diverse experiences in urban Cape Town are mediated by their mobility, movement, and circulation of necessary livelihood objects and ideas. I explore how social formations are individually and collectively created and co-created by migrants' daily interactions, encounters, experiences, and social dynamics in the city. The research is innovative in its deliberate option not to classify migrants based on their country of origin (except where necessary to explain the experiences of actors), thereby challenging stereotypes and preconceptions about African migrants and migration as "people out of place". Data for this study were gathered using a multi-sited ethnography between 2019 and 2021. Numerous visits in various Cape Town neighbourhoods, observations, interactions, and participation in migrants' social activities, as well as formal and informal interviews and group discussions with a sample of Cape Town's migrant population, were used. The data gathered were analysed using the framework of incompleteness and conviviality, to understand how migrants in Cape Town foster and sustain social networks, such as *hushamwari* (friendship) and mutuality inspired by ubuntu.

The empirical data reveals that the category "migrant" generates and reinforces particular kinds of "borders" and "boundaries" that limit and restrict the mobility potential, access to space and livelihood opportunities of the people so categorized. Some of these obstacles consist of profiling based on belonging and non-belonging, roadblocks set up by law enforcement and local hostilities that implicitly or overtly target them. Due to the precarious nature of their situation, migrant women are confronted with a greater number of challenges. In addition to these challenges, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic added another layer of difficulty to the problems that migrants face. Their livelihoods, sources of income, and as a direct result, remittances were all negatively impacted. In coping with the challenges, migrants form connections with diverse people and embrace various social networks, such as *hushamwari*, inspired by ubuntu and conviviality. Social networks are an important factor in assisting migrants in gaining access to opportunities for livelihood, sending available money and goods home (during the COVID-19 lockdown) and developing sociality.

Even though social networks exist, they are not easily accessible to everyone and will not last indefinitely. They may suffer and strain since they are not immune to conflicts, friction and tension. Conflicting religious practices, beliefs, and values have been demonstrated to strain and pose challenges to migrant social networks. Though social networks may be disputed among migrants as a result of conflict, the social bonds made through conviviality, mutuality, *hushamwari* and ubuntu appear to be strong and promising. By embracing these concepts, this study portrays migrants as rational individuals who rely on numerous interconnections and creative interdependencies to survive in Cape Town. In conclusion, this study underscores that more than nationality, networks such as *hushamwari*, which are built on incompleteness, ubuntu, and conviviality are more important in the everyday interactions, encounters, and livelihood struggles of migrants, and it is important to foreground this in research on urbanism and its cosmopolitan imperative.

KEYWORDS: incompleteness, conviviality, *hushamwari*, ubuntu, mobility, migrants, urbanism, Cape Town.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late father and my mother, without whom I would not be where I am today. Their unwavering support, honest advice, prayers, and proper guidance have brought me this far.

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List of Acronyms

CBD……Central Business District

DDB……Doctoral Degrees Board

DEIC……...Dutch East India Company

GAA……Group Areas Act

ICTs……Information Communication Technologies

ILO……International Labour Organisation

SACN……South African Cities Network

SAPS……South African Police Services

TRC ……...Truth and Reconciliation Commission

UN……United Nations

UNDP……United Nations Development Programme

UNHCR……..United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

USA……United States of America

USD……United States Dollar

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This ethnographic study looks into the opportunities and challenges associated with the movement of migrants[1] from other parts of Africa into and within Cape Town, South Africa. I investigate how migrants' subjective experiences of city life are mediated by their mobilities (often from African countries in more precarious economic and social situations), movement of things, services and ideas. This study looks into migrants' forms of mobility, sociality, mutuality, *hushamwari* (translated as "friendship"), and conviviality. Conviviality is a mode of sociality informed by the universality of incompleteness and mobility that manifests in different registers (Nyamnjoh 2017, 2019). However, these concepts (mobility, sociality, mutuality, *hushamwari* and conviviality) will be critically explored in this and subsequent chapters. In addition to the movement of people, I investigate how other critical livelihood objects are mobilized, activated, vitalized, and circulated for their survival. Money and goods are among the items under investigation. Remittances are used to send money, and goods are used for vending and other transactions. In this sense, the study sought to comprehend mobility as well as the formation and maintenance of social relationships among Cape Town migrants. Care is taken not to represent migrants as "people out of place". I do not aim to homogenise migrants and their experiences. Rather, I view them as calculative beings inventing and re-inventing methods of survival in Cape Town.

This study was conducted in Cape Town, which is an important city to consider migration and belonging because of its history. Cape Town's history is distinct from that of other South African cities such as Johannesburg and Pretoria, particularly in terms of the extremely strict control exercised over the city during the apartheid era (I will explore this later in this chapter). Understanding what it is that allows people to survive and thrive in a city that, despite its claims to be cosmopolitan and welcoming, is characterized by such violent demarcation of belonging, has thus become an essential intellectual endeavour for this project. In the post-apartheid period, Cape Town becomes an important site for exploring the question of the state's hospitality to those the state defines as "other"; migrants defined in racialized terms. This is because Cape Town was such

[1] I set out the scope of the term "migrant"as used in this research in point 1.5 below.

a rigidly exclusive city during South Africa's late colonial and apartheid periods. More recently, Cape Town has become a city that attracts a lot of migrants and locals alike. However, it is important to note that Cape Town is not unique and that other cities in South Africa have suffered or still suffer similar racialised and segregated fates, subsequently becoming spatial hubs for migrants.

In this city, daily mobility, interactions, and encounters among people of all backgrounds, including migrants, are common. This type of cosmopolitanism is referred to as "super-diversity" by Vertovec (2007). By "super-diversity", Vertovec refers to situations in which migrants and ethnic minority groups constitute a considerable proportion of the population, their national origins are diverse, and there is a mix of migration statuses and rights. Furthermore, Wessendorf (2014:2) defines super-diversity as a condition of people from various backgrounds living in a specific locality. The same could be said for Cape Town, which is a social space brimming with unintentional cross-linguistic and inter-ethnic dialogues on a daily basis. This is due to Cape Town's history as a multicultural city and also humans' innate need to conduct socio-economic transactions with one another. As a result, migrant urban residents "have developed a kind of agility and ability to live concomitantly in several different spheres", adding to Cape Town's diversity (Nyamnjoh, 2015: Hansen, 2009 cited in Wilhelm-Solomon et al., 2016:14).

According to Katsaura and Abe (2016), the innate spirit of socioeconomic transaction is what promotes innovation and survival in hostile and blocked spaces in foreign countries. Blocked spaces, which are structural and institutional exclusionary locations, will be defined later in this thesis as blockages. Some researchers believe that the difficulties that migrants face on their journeys to find a better life force them to look beyond the distinctions created by other social categories such as ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and gender (Foner, Duyvendak and Kasinitz 2019; Meissner and Vertovec, 2017). As a result, migrants physically relocate from one location to another, and cross socially constructed boundaries, such as nationality. A review of existing research found that migrants' mobility is hampered by several factors, including labour market characteristics, gender, nationality, citizenship, religious networks, and their spatial location on the city's inner core and outskirts (Katsaura and Abe, 2016; Alhaji, 2014, Nyamnjoh, 2017; Foner, Duyvendak and Kasinitz 2019; Meissner and Vertovec, 2017; Mutendi and Chekero, forthcoming; Zanker, 2021; Bolt, 2017; Breckenridge, 2014). These same factors, depending on the cases in

question, could also contribute to facilitating the mobility of certain migrants. On the other hand, one would think that daily mobility and spatial imagination might be limited to Cape Town. However, migrants travel physically and virtually throughout the city, as well as across national borders and back to their home countries. As a result, this study contributes to what Langevang and Gough (2009) refer to as "the mobility turn" in the social sciences, which emphasizes the importance of mobility in earning a living (Nyamnjoh, 2017). Mobility is central in this study to understand the practices that frame and generate everyday life in cities, as well as practices that foster tolerance and the exchange of ideas among diverse people and groups living in diverse environments. This project looks into the relationship between belonging and mobility, or what Nyamnjoh (2021:271) calls "nimble-footedness" (a concept I will discuss later).

Previous research on migration in South Africa has primarily focused on migration from rural small towns to metropolitan areas as well as return migration, and leaving and remaining in urban areas; however, the migration patterns of urban migrants have largely gone unexplored. (Datta 2009; Crush and Dodson, 2007, 2017; Anich et al, 2014). Although migration studies have revealed a phenomenal increase in migrant influx in South Africa since the late 1990s (Pophiwa, 2009; Muzondidya, 2010; Crush, Chikanda, and Skinner, 2015), little attention has been paid to the study of mobility within the city. Even though similar migration studies have shown this increase, my research focuses on urban mobility, which I define as the movement of people, objects, capital, and information into and out of urban spaces on both a large and local scale. This research is situated within specific institutional, spatial, political, and religious contexts, all of which I will investigate in greater depth in the following sections.

1.2 The Influx of Migrants into South Africa

South Africa is an important host country in Africa (Chekero and Ross, 2018; Crush and Tawodzera, 2014; Nyamnjoh, 2006; Morreira, 2010; 2016). It hosts many migrants from African countries and beyond, who reside temporarily or permanently (Katsaura, 2014). Most migrants from Southern Africa, who move to South Africa from Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique, settle or pass through the Limpopo Province to metropolitan cities such as Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Cape Town (Ramathetje and Mtapuri, 2014; Pophiwa, 2010). Limpopo Province is popular because of its proximity to these countries and, therefore, it automatically becomes a hub for maintaining links with home and other preferred destinations.

Though it has been noted that there is a huge influx of migrants in South Africa, however, the actual numbers are difficult to obtain. This is mainly caused by South Africa's poor record-keeping and migrants' use of multiple illegal entry points into the country (Morreira, 2016; PASSOP, 2012; Chiumia, 2013). In 2009, the total number of migrants was estimated to range between 1.2 million and 1.7 million (Landau, Polzer and Wa Kabwe-Segatti, 2010:220). As of 2021, StatsSA estimated that the number has jumped to approximately 3.95 million. An earlier estimate by the United Nations in 2008 revealed that approximately 72% of the international migrants in South Africa came from African countries (United Nations, 2008). Note, these migrants enter and remain in the country through both legal and illegal means (Ndebele, 2016; Makandwa and Vearey, 2017).

The mobility of people across national borders is not new in human history and it stretches from the precolonial epoch, colonial times and to the present. The large-scale movement of people has socially, politically, culturally, and economically shaped and reshaped the global migration landscape and, presumably, local landscapes. The mobility and population growth in the Global South are bringing changes to the cities as people move in and out of urban areas in search of greener pastures, passage, or protection (Landau, 2014; Landau and Freemantle, 2016; Kihato and Landau, 2020). While people migrate in and out of urban centres in South Africa, industries in urban areas are not growing at a corresponding rate (Abrahams, 2016). The socio-economic space is also gradually shrinking. In essence, there is a precipitous increase in competition for informal businesses and centralization of politics/authority, among other things. For Landau (2014:360), this means that "…most rapid growth is occurring at or just past the urban edge—often beyond the regulatory reach of city planners and state institutions—[which] raises important concerns."

The influx of migrants has been noted to have both adverse and favourable effects. Adverse implications are noted and documented in violence and crime prevention, social services provision, and urban governance, inter alia (Donaldson and Jurgens, 2003). Furthermore, Landau (2007:5) also discovered that migration exposes the majority of migrants to economic marginalization and hostility from the host country. In the case of South Africa, both the government and its citizens have shown hostile attitudes and practices towards the migrants. Available research-based evidence has shown that the majority of the migrants have been exposed to institutionalized xenophobia in their attempt to access public services in the health sector (Landau and Haithar, 2007; Landau and Amit, 2014; Crush, Ramachandran and Pendleton, 2013). On other platforms,

xenophobic attacks and discrimination practices perpetrated mainly by citizens have been witnessed and documented.

A worrisome fact is that the South African migration policy is discriminatory in nature. In lieu of this view, Nyamnjoh (2006) posits that the South African immigration policy is a mere piece of legislation from the dark ages of segregation and apartheid. Undoubtedly, the policy is agreed to be deeply entrenched in racist and anti-Semitic roots drawing insights from the 1937 Act which was designed to exclude German Jews fleeing Nazi persecution from coming to South Africa. Since then, the defining and redefining immigration policies have never been favourable to migrants – including refugees. However, in the early post-apartheid period, South Africa had one of the most liberal policies toward migrants and refugees in the world. That was a huge shift from the apartheid period and those gains have slowly been whittled away more recently. The South African government has developed a habitual practice of setting tougher entry procedures and requirements – higher visa application fees, restriction of multiple entry visas, and requirements to show bank statements and other forms of documentation (Nyamnjoh, 2006). The majority of migrants who have been affected by these stringent requirements are citizens mainly from Mozambique and Zimbabwe. In response to these tough measures, the majority of migrants from these two countries have resorted to “border jumping” as a strategy for accessing South Africa (Mutendi and Chekero, forthcoming; Zanker, 2021; Bolt, 2017; Breckenridge, 2014).

1.3 Research aims/objectives and question(s)

My research contributes to the literature on the role of mobility in fostering social interactions and encounters in urban space. It investigates the various urban experiences that migrants have and how these experiences are influenced by their mobility, movement, and the circulation of essential objects for their livelihoods. The study also looks into how mobility contributes to the development and maintenance of conviviality, mutuality, *hushamwari* ("friendship"), and ubuntu, built on incompleteness among Cape Town's migrant population. Incompleteness is a concept championed by Nyamnjoh (2015, 2017, 2019, 2020a, 2020b, 2022) to reflect, among other things, human relationships with other humans, technology, and the natural and the supernatural appreciated through the prism of mobility and encounters as a permanent attribute of being and becoming (I will critically engage with the concept later in this chapter). In developing a nuanced understanding

of migrants, mobility, social networks, ideas and space, my study is guided by the following key research question and sub-questions.

The study's major research question is:

In what ways do migrants from African countries, who often face challenging economic and social circumstances, perceive the importance of various forms of mobility (people, goods, and ideas) in navigating and shaping their subjective experiences of city life?

The following sub-questions will be addressed:

a) How do everyday mobilities allow migrants to occupy space in the city?
b) How do people move and understand space?
c) What spaces are accessible to some migrants and not to others and why?
d) How is the occupation of space by migrants informed by aspirations?
e) How do these migrants' everyday movements influence their identities and social mobility?
f) What do migrants gain by moving around (or not) and how is this movement regulated?
g) How do migrants make and maintain relationships, and what factors contribute to the failure or breakdown of these relationships?

1.4 Background and Justification

In South Africa, the influx of migrants is rapidly becoming a noticeable trend (Landau and Amit, 2014; Crush and Skinner, 2017; Anich, et al., 2014). As a result of its consistent and stable economic growth, it has become a magnet for migrants from all over the African continent. Anecdotal data, like elsewhere, revealed that urban areas and metropolitan cities are the primary receptive centres for migrants (Tawodzera et al, 2015; Datta 2009; Crush 2007). Much of the research to date has concentrated on the movement of migrants between South African cities (inter-city movement) (Owen, 2015; Morreira, 2016; Williams, 2017). What seems not to have captured the attention of scholars is the experience and movements of migrants within cities, blockages within cities and the creation of robust social networks (intra-city movement). Some of these blockages include institutional exclusion, national policy, the exercise of sovereign state power, local hostilities, and gatekeeping, inter alia.

Despite such obstacles, migrants continue to move within cities. Their mobility, according to Langevang and Gough (2009:7), can be read as a means for "understanding the connections,

assemblages, and practices that both frame and generate contemporary everyday life''. As Chabal (2009) observes, this gives a micro-picture of what individuals do daily to sustain, and if possible, better, themselves and their families in such an environment. Migrants' mobility allows them to create and sustain new social relations. Social connections are an important aspect of place appropriation (Maurice, 2016). In line with this discussion, I borrow Katsaura and Abe's (2016) concept of "multinationalisms" to demonstrate the dynamics of migrant patterns and the diverse social relations they generate. Noting the multiple social relations generated by the migrants living in Johannesburg, Katsaura and Abe coined a concept, "mediated multinational urbanism", to express that the coexistence of individuals of various nationalities side by side is commonplace in multicultural metropolitan areas. Associated with these routines is that individuals must converse with one another in regular socioeconomic interactions, regardless of their social disparities.

Similar studies highlighted that ethnic diversity is common and people every day live in diversity, which shows that South Africa's diversity has multiple faces and migrant urban residents (Meissner, 2015; Foner, 2017; Landau, 2014; Landau and Freemantle. 2010; Chipkin and Ngqulunga, 2008) "have developed a kind of agility and ability to live simultaneously in many different spheres" (Hansen 2009 cited in Wilhelm-Solomon et al., 2016:14). Such studies demonstrated South Africa's diversity. Like elsewhere, studies in Cape Town have proved that the majority of the migrants have developed well-calculated agility and pragmatism. Agility and pragmatism are hailed for allowing migrants to live harmoniously, and this transcends all diversities among themselves and the spheres where they live (Nyamnjoh, 2015). With this diversity, the city, in this study, is conceptualised as providing spaces for the establishment or failure of robust social relationships. Space is provided in the form of streets, marketplaces, shopping centres, nightclubs, restaurants, parks, places of worship or work and various institutional or spatial structures for the sustenance of different practices and relationships. As I explore below my research adds a new dimension to the understanding of both theoretical and practical perspectives related to migration-driven mobility, urbanism, and sociality by focusing on the movement of people that is predicated on an appreciation of the historical processes that shaped the city of Cape Town.

1.5 The Context of Movement in Cape Town

Cape Town is more than a city or a location in this study. It is a critical site to think through migration and belonging precisely because of its history, which is quite different from Johannesburg and Pretoria, among others, especially concerning the extremely tight control exerted over the city during apartheid (Mabin, 1992). Williams, (2017) notes that in terms of "race" relations, Cape Town has an academic and popular reputation for being the most relaxed of South African cities. Part of this reputation stems from the perception that there was far less segregation in Cape Town before apartheid than elsewhere in southern Africa (Williams, 2017). This thesis is a critical intellectual endeavour because it seeks to understand what allows migrants to survive and thrive in a city characterized by such violent demarcation of belonging, despite its claims of being cosmopolitan and welcoming. This study is significant because it takes place in a city that was so rigidly exclusionary during the late colonial and apartheid periods that it becomes an important site in the post-apartheid period to investigate the question of its hospitality to those the state defines as "other"; migrants defined in racialized terms.

Cape Town is a large urban area with a high population density, a high movement of people, goods, and services, extensive development, and numerous business districts and industrial areas. All of these elements contribute to an elevated level of urban activity. It is desirable to have integrated development planning and strong interdependent social and economic linkages between its constituent units because it represents centres of economic activity with complex and diverse economies. This is because it is desirable to have economic diversity. The Cape Metropolitan Council, Blaauwberg, the Cape Town Central Business District, Helderberg, Oostenberg, the South Peninsula, and Tygerberg are all included in the City of Cape Town. Cape Town, also referred to as the "Mother City", is one of the most historically significant cities in South Africa. , This is because it was in Cape Town that the first European colonialists set foot in South Africa, which also marked the beginning of the South African slave trade. The European settlement in Cape Town was propelled by the constant search for new opportunities by European settlers in the interest of activating themselves with new ambitions of conquest and the outsourcing of debt and indebtedness, hence, incompleteness.

In the 16th century, the Khoisan people of the peninsula and ship crews from Europe and the East Indies engaged in commerce at Table Bay. The land was level, and water was abundant. In the year 1652, the directors of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) established a refreshment station there for their fleets that were travelling this route. Because of this decision, the Dutch established a colony at the Cape that consisted of enslaved people and Khoisan who were under their control. According to Noah (2016), the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) arrived at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 and founded Kaapstad, which was later renamed Cape Town, to serve as a rest stop for ships travelling between Europe and India. The city of Cape Town, which is now located on Table Bay, engaged in commerce with both the hinterland and the port. This type of trade, in addition to Cape Town's administrative and military status, was a major contributor to the city's economic and demographic success. With more people living in the area, there was an increase in retail and manufacturing.

In the years that followed the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Cape Town maintained its status as a relatively small settlement. Bickford-Smith (1995) suggests that about 16,000 people lived there, with about 7,000 having lighter skin and being free, and the remaining 7,000 having darker skin and being slaves (mainly from DEIC possessions in the east, Madagascar, and Mozambique) (Saunders, Phillips and Van Heyningen, 1983). As a consequence of this, hierarchies of humanity and mobility emerged, each of which was propelled by a passionate, but ultimately fruitless, search for completeness (Nyamnjoh, 2022; Bickford-Smith, 1995). Darker-skinned people were slaves. Muslims made up a significant portion of both slaves and "Free Blacks". Slaves were set free in the 1830s as a result of British control of the Cape (Bickford-Smith, 1995). The dismantling of DEIC monopolies and the incorporation of the town into the imperial networks and commercial orbit of the world's first industrial empire both contributed to an increase in the amount of economic activity(Saunders, Phillips and Van Heyningen, 1983). A harbour and the initial railway lines into the interior of the country were both constructed in the middle of the 19th century. Other important events included the discovery of diamonds in Kimberley in the year 1867 and gold in the Witwatersrand in the year 1886. According to Bickford-Smith (1995), the increase in both trade and immigration can be attributed to the building of interior railways and the introduction of faster mail ships between Britain and the Cape.

After the South African War (1899-1902), in which Britain fought for control of the gold fields, the Boer Republics and the British colonies of the Cape and Natal formed the Union of South Africa in 1910. As Bickford-Smith (1995) noted, the legislative capital was Cape Town. According to the 1904 census, the city's population was still around 170,000 people, evenly divided between "European or White" (mostly Dutch/Afrikaans and English speakers) and "Coloured" (a term coined and applied by the government in 1950 to people of colour (mostly slave, Khoi, or "mixed-race" descent). The few "Native" people were Xhosa-speaking "Black African labourers" from the Eastern Cape. These classifications resembled a three-tiered economic and social hierarchy (Bickford-Smith, 1995). Apartheid legislation enshrined such racial categories in law (via the Population Registration Act of 1949) and insisted on complete spatial segregation (through, inter alia and most dramatically, forced removals of some 250,000 people, mostly "Coloured" Capetonians, via the Group Areas Act of 1953). Despite economic and spatial erosion, Cape Town's social hierarchy and geography continue to exist in democratic South Africa, particularly with the growth of a Coloured middle class. During the early contact period, Cape Town was a Khoisan settlement with both settled and mobile populations, then a port city with lively, violent interactions between sailors and residents.

As settlers drew imagined and physical boundaries between themselves and other people, patterns of exclusion began to emerge. These complex interactions became more violent with European settlement and colonization, and boundaries were violently demarcated and policed. By the 1960s, Cape Town was seen in two ways (Saunders, Phillips and Van Heyningen, 1983). The city became the city centre. District Six, which had disrupted the homogeneity of the city centre, was sanitized. As Witz demonstrates, this space symbolically defined the construction of Cape Town. According to Field, Mesthrie, and others, Cape Town in the 1960s was increasingly defined by sites of separation, with more rigidly defined practices anchoring routes, networks, workplaces, and private spaces. Apartheid space grew as existing places and "communities" were destroyed (Saunders, Phillips and Van Heyningen, 1983). The city's "model-Coloured villages" included Manenberg, Heideveld, Hanover Park, Kensington, Factreton, and others. Langa-inspired African spaces were also consolidated by Nyanga and Gugulethu. In apartheid terrains, the spatial practice became more about boundaries, barriers, borders, and the restricted spaces of crossings and imaginings – at the very least, in racially segregated areas (Mabin, 1992).

In order to mitigate their incompleteness, settlers began to invent and implement methods of keeping the Khoikhoi away from the settlement, regulating their access, and using their labour. Viewing Group Areas forced removals, and the destruction of District Six (which discursively includes every related place of removal from Windermere to Protea Village) as the city's defining spatial practice, on the other hand, is problematic (Saunders, Phillips and Van Heyningen, 1983). This moment is etched in social memory as the transition from "community" to dislocation. District Six and its desolate landscape tell the story of the city, whether it is one of nostalgia, government brutality, or resistance (Marquard, 1969). However, early colonial settlement expelled Indigenous people, resulting in a multiracial, stratified city. Following that, forced removals occurred (which long precede the apartheid state). District Six, a creative hub on the outskirts of the city, rose to prominence for all the wrong reasons. In the 1970s, the apartheid government forced over 60,000 residents to leave the "white" city limits and demolished the bustling neighbourhood (Saunders, Phillips and Van Heyningen, 1983).

To maintain social segregation and categorization, South Africa passed the Group Areas Act (1950), which was strictly enforced in the Cape. The Group Areas Act (1950) (GAA) was one of many laws that limited Indian, Coloured, and African property rights. Apartheid was elected by the National Party in 1948 (Mabin, 1992). This "separation" caused South Africans of different races to develop independently. Hundreds of thousands of families, friends, and communities were uprooted as a result of the GAA. Due to the law's retroactive application, under the GAA it was possible to demolish all houses in a group area and expel anyone who was not a member of the group (Mabin, 1992:422). The GAA limited Africans and was one of the first major violations of Indian and coloured rights (Marquard, 1969:163).

Many segregated living areas were established during colonialism and consolidated during apartheid through those infamous acts. Despite being the least segregated city prior to 1948, Cape Town became South Africa's most segregated city after apartheid ended. The GAA expanded its control over urban Black, Indian, and Coloured People (Baldwin, 1975:218). Rural migrants began arriving in cities in the mid-nineteenth century, but their length of stay varied. African urbanization accelerated as migrants found work on railways, docks, and in manufacturing, as well as wine and wool production. Depending on how long they worked in cities, families migrated to join the urban breadwinner to varying degrees. This is still happening today (Mabin, 1992).

The Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 established several “native reserves” for Black people, which resulted in Bantustans (Mabin, 1992). In subsequent decades, these areas grew, consolidated, and moved. By the 1950s, black people constituted at least 75% of South Africa's population, with reserves covering 13% of the country’s land. Passes and certifications were necessary to move around and live, and their validity was typically time-bound. This resulted in the transformation of Cape Town (for instance, the Eiselin Line established a Coloured Labour Preference Area) and resulted in the apartheid state imposing stringent and often violent restrictions on the mobility of Black Africans (Baldwin, 1975). Bantustans were the ten former territories designated as “homelands” for the Republic of South Africa’s Black African population in the mid-to-late twentieth century. Africans in South Africa were defined as “other” and redefined in ethnic-racial terms during colonialism and apartheid. Apartheid established Bantu or Black homelands. Gazankulu, KwaZulu, Lebowa, KwaNdebele, KaNgwane, Qwaqwa, Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei are some of these areas. Apartheid’s Bantustans kept Black South Africans from participating in national politics (Baldwin, 1975). In the 1940s, the monumental and modern city was planned to become apartheid Cape Town, which meant that the city would be sanitized and racially rezoned.

By the 1960s and 1970s, the central business district of the city had become a white enclave, complete with monuments commemorating the white history and a high-rise central business district dedicated to white businesses (Baldwin, 1975). According to the findings of Fields and Mesthrie's study of “mixed” spaces such as Windermere, Tramway Road, and Harfield Village, spatial and racial boundaries were much more porous than apartheid ideologues and town planners wanted them to be (Mabin, 1992). In addition to this, state control over national boundaries that, during the colonial and apartheid eras, permitted Africans from outside South Africa to enter only under specific conditions—to work in the mines (particularly for Mozambicans, and, for those who are now known as Zimbabweans, migration was primarily for either mine or agricultural work)—limited the opportunities available to African migrants in Cape Town. This was due to the early settlers' incompleteness as well as their desire for expansion, which compelled them to allow people from countries, such as those now known as Zimbabwe and Mozambique, as well as other neighbouring countries. The repeal of the pass laws in 1986 and the establishment of Crossroads and other settlements marked the beginning of a shift; however, Cape Town continued

to be hostile toward Black South African settlement (Mabin, 1992). After 1994, liberalization inside South Africa (repeal of race-based laws; shifts in rights to move) led to the liberalization of border control, the opening of borders, and the movement of people from within and outside South Africa. This movement of people was referred to as the "people movement". However, the movement of non-South African citizens is strictly regulated by South Africa's immigration laws and policies. (Mbembe, 2017; Landau, 2014; Misago, 2015).

Thus, my research on migration, mobility, and sociality in Cape Town is important because it helps to situate the stakes of movement to this city, as well as the fact that mobility within it is always political. This is because colonialism, including apartheid (which the African National Congress in exile defined as "colonialism of a special kind"), attempted to limit almost everyone's mobility in the city, with only whites remaining relatively mobile. Because freedom has historically been defined in terms of the urban environment, migrants serve as a true test case or litmus test of constitutional freedom and the post-apartheid condition.

1.6 Why Focus on Migrancy, not Nationality?

One of my research assistants, whom I call Mama Juju, is a leaseholder who lives in Woodstock (a neighbourhood in Cape Town). People of three different nationalities live in her house. She does not own the house, but she rents it from the owner, who lives in the United Kingdom. However, because the rent was too high for her, she sought to share the house with other tenants. During my frequent visits to Mama Juju's place, I discovered that she and her co-tenants share everything from bathrooms to cooking utensils. They also watch TV shows together, sitting on the same couches and laughing together. They also go to the movies to watch films together. During my interactions with Mama Juju, she told me that they share stories about problems in their families as well as happy stories. Their participation, as I observed, is lively. Mama Juju was once invited to a wedding of a relative of one of her co-tenants.

Mama Juju's experience demonstrates how people form social bonds across various boundaries (nationality included), allowing for mutuality between diverse individuals and groups. In this regard, transnationalism is not only physical in the sense of transborder but also cultural in the sense of people crossing identities that are imposed on them, particularly those imposed by the

state, as I will demonstrate later. People's relationships can develop independently of state classification[2].

This study is about a particular kind of outsider, the ones from outside South Africa moving within the city. In South Africa, it is not only foreign nationals that are categorized as outsiders. Misago (2015:19) noted: "It is not only non-citizens who face discrimination: people moving within South Africa are often equally labelled 'outsiders' and excluded based on ethnicity, language, and geographic origins. It is, therefore, not surprising that we continue to see tensions and discrimination not just against non-citizens but also against certain minority ethnic groups." Even though this is important, this study resists the nationalistic framing of migrants. Instead of having state categories framed in terms of nationality or rights discourse, e.g., refugees, asylum seekers etc., I am interested in people from African countries who move in these mobilities. Why does migrancy rather than nationality matter? The state always classified people according to nationality and administrative units such as Provinces and districts. This is not to say that a person's nationality is irrelevant in any way; however, as the ongoing debates regarding who is allowed to move to and reside in the Western Cape demonstrate, this is not the case for everyone. There is still a strong continuity with apartheid thinking among locals, in which the state's division of the country into provinces and districts caused people moving between provinces to face exclusion similar to migrants. Most migration scholars have been entrapped in the same pitfall. This study tries to move away from that particular kind of thinking. South Africa has always circumscribed who could move. The ability to move before the end of apartheid was highly restricted by classification according to race, gender, etc. Such nuances have continued in post-apartheid South Africa in which the movement of migrants from outside South Africa is monitored, shrunken or restricted through categorization according to nationality that comes with stringent migration laws and policies; even though, in the early post-apartheid period, South Africa had one of the most liberal policies toward migrants and refugees in the world. That was a huge shift from the apartheid period and those gains have slowly been whittled away more recently.

In this thesis, I try to de-centre from the state-based national migrant categorization. I am careful not to fall into the "state trap" of categorizing people using similar terms to those of the state, except that I categorize them as migrants, a possibility which I cannot do away with as this is the

[2] I am careful not to confine it to transnationalism, as it applies to translocalism more broadly.

mainstay axis on which my thesis is anchored. In doing so, my research does not delineate a single research population defined in terms of national origin as is often the case in many other migration studies. In the ongoing apartheid thinking and debates about who can move into and stay in the Western Cape, and particularly Cape Town, I do not situate my research in the administrative register and vocabulary of the state, which continues to classify nationals as insiders and outsiders to Cape Town. In the conceptualization of my research, I do not distinguish migrants in Cape Town based on their nationality from South Africans. Furthermore, I do not distinguish migrants based on region, province, or any other category recognized by the state. Beginning from nation-based identifications (e.g., Zimbabweans in South Africa; Congolese in South Africa; Chinese in South Africa) there emerge many questions about group and identity formation and this may cause short-sightedness in understanding the density, intensity, and range of networks that migrants may draw on. I consider social networks at the core of understanding mobilities and relationships in Cape Town. Thus, my research poses a critical question: What does it take to undo current notions of migrants and migration as "people out of place"? It is from this question that I argue for the importance of identifying migrants not by nationality but through their networks. I give migrants a voice and platform by which they can identify themselves.

My earlier research, conversations and encounters with researchers and colleagues guided me to a general understanding of how people perceive and identify migrants, and how migrants identify themselves. I realized that researchers usually fall into the trap of confining the researched/participants into primary levels of belonging, being and becoming. More so, researchers fall into the "state trap"; that is, they begin from an a priori categorization of people using the same terms as the state does. However, fieldwork has shown me that people do not have one side of identification or succumb to what the state considers to be primary levels of belonging. It is important to note that identities are not defined once and for all nor are they fixed but are open-ended. Identities are not bounded; one can acquire other ways of being and becoming. People can be understood and understand themselves through the context of their relationships with other people as well as their individuality.

Contributing to and reinforcing the characteristics that define selfhood are the experiences of continuity and integrity, as well as a consciousness of difference and singularity, which occur simultaneously with a sense of solidarity. There are many diverse kinds of influences, including

biological factors, environmental stimuli, and cultural factors, that either help us or hurt us and produce both positive and negative experiences. The context and history do not necessarily play a significant role in one's identity, although it is possible to transcend boundaries, as Nyamnjoh (2015:7) demonstrates. In line with this discussion, Lategan (2015) is of the view that both singular and multiple identities can play a key role in the development of individual personhood and the collective self-understanding of groups. The same authority claims that enriched and multiple identities are not achieved by replacement or exchange, but by widening (existing) singular identities into a more inclusive and diverse understanding of the self.

Similarly, Nyamnjoh (2015) uses the concepts of "incompleteness" and "frontier Africans" to imply an alternative approach to identity formation. It is important to note that Nyamnjoh is not using the term "frontier Africans" to describe a particular group of people who are situated geographically or historically in a certain way. Rather, he is using the term to describe any individual who demonstrates this approach to both his or her own identity and their relations with others. Nyamnjoh writes from a postcolonial perspective, and his argument, to a substantial extent advocating a more "equal" treatment of alternative forms of knowing and humanness within the knowledge paradigm, is written from this postcolonial perspective. The postcolonial discourse in South Africa since 1994 has displayed many of the characteristics that he describes, but it has also developed its own, unique contours. This can be seen, for instance, in the form of the values that are embedded in the South African Constitution, the concept of ubuntu, and the goal of reconciliation that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has. I argue that his views have particular relevance for the transition that is taking place in South Africa. Nyamnjoh is describing a mentality that is predicated on a very particular conception of identity; this conception is what I refer to as "multiple identities". Therefore, in situations of cultural diversity and social transformation, as in Cape Town, migrants embody multiple identities both on the individual and the group level as a strategy to get by, get along and get ahead.

It is important to note that this thesis is part of the larger interdisciplinary, social sciences and humanities project entitled "Mobility and Sociality in Africa's Emerging Urban". This initiative is a scholarly response to unprecedented levels of urbanization and mobility that are driven by conflict, ambition, and the re-spatializing of economies. It aimed to develop African-based contributions to theories of human mobility as well as transform modes of social engagement,

autonomy, representation, and expression in society. The University of Cape Town, the University of Ghana at Legon, the University of Nairobi, the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, and the University of Zimbabwe in Harare were the five institutions that collaborated on this project. As a result of its implementation, mobility, encounters, and the cross-pollination of ideas on incompleteness and conviviality were encouraged in workshops that were hosted by each of the members from the various African countries and institutions that were involved. In line with the project, I build my research on theories around incompleteness and conviviality, to focus on the role of mobility in fostering social interactions and encounters in urban Cape Town. The approaches help to undo stereotypic representations of African migration and cosmopolitanism by emphasizing a non-nationalistic approach to studying migrants and migration. In so doing, the project interrogates systems of blockage in the mobility of people, ideas, and resources necessary to the ongoing world-making in South Africa.

In this research, I use the term "migrants" to designate a broad category of non-citizens resident permanently or temporarily in South Africa. These may include people with formal refugee status, immigrants with legal rights to settle, those who have settled by crossing borders illegally, those who have moved. . If the legal category of migrant status matters, I signal this in the text. My intention is not to categorize migrants, but to highlight the fact that statuses have shifted over time as South Africa's migration policies, particularly regarding migrants from African countries, have changed. I noted that, in terms of state definitions, the same person can become an undocumented immigrant, a legal immigrant, an asylum seeker, a refugee, a tourist who enters the country regularly ostensibly for vacation, and so on. In other words, this research does not succumb to the state's imperative to categorize except where doing so is necessary to explicate the experiences of actors (see also Neocosmos, 2010).

The mobility and circulation of people, their things, ideas and goods and various encounters with other people mean their identities, whether personal or collective is dynamic and not fixed (Nyamnjoh, 2020). As Nyamnjoh[3] noted, "And through encounters with others, mobile people are constantly having to navigate, negotiate, accommodate, or reject difference (in things, ideas, practices and relations) in an open-ended manner that makes them a permanent work in progress." This means that it is important not to stick labels on migrants but rather let them define their own

[3] https://www.thejugaadproject.pub/home/rhodes-the-complete-gentleman.

identities in their social world. Nevertheless, individual human experience, interaction and encounters influence awareness of difference and uniqueness in relation to others. This may contribute to and reinforce the specific individual's consciousness of selfhood. My observations from the study have taught me that there is not a single way of doing research, or only one epistemology that is valid and applied all over the world. In other words, there is no single universal knowledge and ways of knowing, rather they are multiple. Therefore, it is important to undo such stereotypic representations of migrants according to where they come from or their colour or other categories. Even though it is possible to downplay the significance of certain classifications or categories, it is still possible that such an investigation will be challenging and only partially realizable. In this regard, I believe that it is more effective to criticize some problematic state categories, such as nationality and ethnicity/race. Nevertheless, factors such as culture, gender, age, and so on can be taken into account in order to comprehend and relate to mobilities and migrations, despite the fact that these factors could be state-determined.

By deconstructing stereotypical representations of migrants based on nationality, I am situating migrants within the context of South Africa without compartmentalizing them based on nationality – except for one important distinction: I am classifying them as migrants. This is the distinguishing feature/axis on which my thesis is based, so I cannot exclude it although it is a statist category. I am more interested in their relationships outside of the influence of the nation-state. While previous research has been informed by the concept of a nation-state, it is possible to note that it is not without flaws. It contributes to peculiar forms of inequality, discrimination, and xenophobia. This habitually results in the exclusion of migrants from accessing basic social services including health care. However, identifying migrants according to their social networks, ties and relationships does not mean the other forms of structural violence cease to exist. Rather, it provides a framework for thinking through how social life is enacted with and through others without necessarily invoking the card of nationalism. This has the potential to strengthen ties across ostensible differences.

Despite tireless efforts to find a substitute basis for citizenship, the status of migrants has no logic, power, or moral force outside a nation-state (Hansen, 2009). A citizen enjoys a wide array of civil, social, economic, and political rights accorded by a nation-state. For instance, a citizen can call on his or her nation-state to claim diplomatic protection, and the nation-state can, in turn, demand the

ultimate loyalty of its citizens, including the obligation to fight and die. Similarly, migration, mobility and integration studies have originated from within a nation-state migration apparatus (Dahinden, 2016). The formation of modern nation-states has immensely contributed to mobility, migration, and integration research. This is similar to what is echoed by Sichone (2022), who suggests that the rest of the world could learn from resilient philosophies of kinship and solidarity in Africa to approach mobility and that less emphasis would be placed on containing the situation and more on accommodating strangers and allowing them freedom of movement.

In this study, I am looking at relationships among migrants that are not restricted by factors such as where they come from, their citizenship and so forth. This is because migrants have no one side of identity and identification. Identities always emerge as people move and interact every day. This goes in line with Nyamnjoh (2015:7), who revealed that, through interaction, new identities are formed and so are the relationships which define their survival. For example, in my research, categories, such as Congolese and Zimbabweans, have been transcended by the people as they share apartments, form business partnerships, and attend religious gatherings together.

In line with this discussion, Daihinden (2016) observed that most migration studies are critiqued for centralizing their focus on the nation-state and ethnic-centred epistemology. I argue that it is possible to move the field of research from the conventional ways of researching and identifying migrants. This could be possible if migration scholars embrace the idea of identifying people by their networks, ties, or relationships. This does not mean that researchers should be completely oblivious to nationalities; however, newly emerging forms of identities should also be welcomed. Most migration research has transferred categories of variables and logic of nation-states into migration and mobility studies. This “methodological nationalism” has become inherently linked to the modern nation-state with consequent institutional and categorical effects on migrants.

Dahinden (2016:5) expressed that one epistemological problem the majority of scholars fall into can be resolved when they accept and reproduce categories without inclining them to nationality and ethnicity. This will help in the formulation of better research questions, research design, data collection, analysis, and theories which go in tandem with ongoing mobility and migration trends. In line with this argument, Mbembe and Nuttall (2008:24) pointed out the importance of downscaling the importance of an individual as a critical member in making the city, materially and imaginatively and concerning others. Clumping people together into groups with differential

claims to a city that pre-exists them decentres the mass prospect created through nationalist logics of interest, security and exclusion and the borders this prospect necessitates.

As I demonstrated above in my historical appreciation of Cape Town, South Africa's nation-state has a long history. It is inextricably linked to European migration and colonization of the region. In South Africa, the anxious need to manage migrants is deeply embedded in the notion of the nation-state and has since been institutionalised through the state migration apparatus (Mbembe, 2017). Even though mobility is a structural feature of human history, the tight control of cross-border movements through border controls, visa regimes, immigration laws and roadblocks targeting migrants makes it difficult for migrants to move (Vezzoli, 2021; de Haas, Vezzoli and Villares-Varela, 2019). These are part of the modern nation-state. Such restrictive regimes, however, do not only regulate mobility in a technical sense, they create the label "migrant" and other migrant-related categories.

Scholars such as Mbembe (2017)"have challenged the idea of borders. Borrowing from Mbembe, my study also challenges the issue of borders because they lead to the creation of unnecessary labels with negative repercussions for migrants. In 2017, Mbembe wrote an article entitled 'Scrap the Borders that Divide Africans", which was published by the newspaper *Mail and the Guardian March 17* where he was advocating for the total removal of the borders which divide Africans. This piece of work is not merely about borders, rather, it challenges the notion of the nation-state reinforced by physical and virtual borders that people put in place for each other. Pan-Africanists such as Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere once advocated for the formation of the United States of Africa where people exist on a sense of African unity. In this, there is a sentiment of "Africanness", a feeling of mutual involvement, which pervades all the political, economic and cultural life of the continent. With the nationalistic categories, migrants have often become a group that is constantly stigmatized and negatively framed in South Africa (Landau, 2007; Vearey, 2008). As such, there is a potential vacuum in researching, writing and representing migrant groups.

In this study, migrants often prefer non-nationalistic categories, as they do not carry any negative connotations with them. Their fear of being identified as migrants to state authorities, and during the height of discriminating movements, such as Operation Dudula, is visible and revealing. In a newspaper article entitled, "Xenophobia does not tell the full story of migration in South Africa",

published in May 2022 by *The Conversation Africa*, Prof Shannon Morreira and Chekero focused on the spaces of violence and identifying new survival strategies by which migrants can settle and live ordinary lives among South Africans. After sharing the article with my colleagues, who are also migrants, the majority were frightened and declined to respond because it was published at a time when Operation Dudula was at its peak. Operation Dudula, which can be loosely translated as "push back" or translates as "force out" or "knock down" in the Zulu language, expresses the common purpose of organizations like it – to force out African immigrants. The fear of being identified and persecuted as "foreigners" was also worse during the period of my study. Even though the horrifying Operation Dudula against African migrants in 2020 was not as pronounced in Cape Town as elsewhere, however, it defined local interpretations.

1.7 Migrants' Mobility and City Life in Cape Town

In modern-day Cape Town, the majority of African migrants survive through diverse livelihood strategies. Some of the strategies include moving around on foot, using Ubers and minibuses, hawking on the street, flocking around markets, carrying goods on their heads, or hanging around on street corners. Some migrants are working in restaurants, bars, nightclubs, hair and beauty salons, and barbershops, among other places, and presumably, some are not in public places – people have private lives, too. I asked myself: Where are they all going and why? Migrants in Cape Town associate their ability to get by and "become successful with their ability to move around the city. Moving around is equated to being active, making something of oneself, going places and acquiring money and material goods (wealth) for repatriation" (Northcote, 2015).

In the broader context, the majority of migrants who participated in this research expressed their heightened desire to find formal employment in the city and their neighbourhood. My research assistants in this study revealed that they aspire to obtain formal employment in places such as Bellville, Salt River and Mowbray, amongst others. Unfortunately, their desires are difficult to materialize, since the majority of them lack the requisite documents or papers which make them formally employable (Morreira, 2010, 2016). By requisite documents and papers, I mean work or residence permits. In her study of Zimbabwean asylum seekers in Cape Town, Morreira (2016) observed that many of them were fully aware of the importance of having requisite papers in Cape Town and South Africa at large. Though some confirmed their knowledge of the rights of asylum seekers as stipulated in South Africa's Refugee Act, however, the process of getting the papers

remained a big challenge to them (see Chapter Four). The Zimbabwean migrants with whom she worked further expressed how the lack of "papers" was limiting them in being flexibly mobile in the city. On the other end, the majority of them ended up lamenting the fear of enduring hostile reception coupled with the possibility of being detained and deported.

Another study by Katsaura and Abe (2016), also meshes well with the above sentiments of migrants' challenges when it comes to issues of getting the "papers". They revealed that many migrants found it difficult to obtain formal employment despite possessing the necessary credentials/qualifications and critical technical expertise (Katsaura and Abe, 2016). As a result, the denied chance to access employment in the formal labour market drove many into the informal economy (Smit and Rugunanan, 2014). In other cases, some qualified migrants engage in what Meagher (2010) calls "identity economics", which is driven by shared networks to access job opportunities, loans, and shared housing (I will explore this in Chapters Three and Six). It is one of the social connections which improve other migrants' income and employment chances. Important to note is the fact that, not only do foreign nationals face exclusion and hardships in finding work, but even some unfortunate citizens also experience these challenges. A study by Misago (2015:19) revealed that some South Africans, especially from minority ethnic groups, are also considered as "outsiders" and face consequential discrimination. Herein, identity markers, such as ethnicity, language, and geographic origins, pave way for discrimination in cities like Cape Town.

Despite the ongoing discrimination against both migrants and other ethnolinguistic geographic minorities, however, foreigners' plight is worse, given the claims that "foreigners steal our jobs" that have beset public conversation since the early 2000s. Balbo and Marconi (2005) contend that the political nature of immigration issues makes migrants contentious, while Crush (2005) notes that often migrants in South Africa are framed solely as "intruders". Certainly, both the government and many nationals view refugees as contributing to the growth of negative urban issues including crime, overcrowding, and unemployment (Landau, 2020; Landau and Wanjiku, 2018; Misago and Landau, 2022). Furthermore, discrimination against migrants in both formal and informal labour markets should not be considered with a gender-blind approach. It is on record that, whenever there is a dire situation, mostly women are the worst victims when compared to their male counterparts (Geddie, Oikonomou and LeVoy, 2007; Lefko-Everett, 2007; McGregor

and Primorac, 2010). In this study, a trend revealed the opposite when it comes to job opportunities amongst women from different countries. It emerged that, in Cape Town Zimbabwean women are in demand as domestic workers in middle-class white households (Owen, 2015; Morreira, 2016). Also, Malawian men are in demand as gardeners in the same category of households, and in more rural areas of the Western Cape, Zimbabweans and Malawians are in demand as seasonal labour in the agricultural sector (Morreira, 2016). The general reasoning behind such categories of people looking for work in these areas is that they are regarded as industrious workers while other categories of migrants are not. Such claims have been documented by various scholars (Tshishonga, 2015; Banda, 2017). In the end, it can be noted that there are subtle and not-so-subtle hierarchies in how people can find work.

In the bigger context, it is notable that men's and women's experiences in getting jobs are not the same. Despite migrant women having access to space in the city, their experiences are not the same when compared to those of their male counterparts. Studies have shown that they are affected by several factors which limit their ability to move around freely (Phadke, 2013; Viswanath and Mehrotra, 2007). In wider thinking and consideration, Nyamnjoh (2005) and Andrew (2000, 2009) identified the global structures (and thinking) as the major determinants of men's and women's mobility potentials. Migrant women face various challenges and obstacles that I frame as "boundaries and borders" when their ability and agility to move freely in the city are limited by the lack of safe and reliable modes of transportation, unequal access to space and lack of belonging. This usually results in limiting women's potential of accessing the city when compared to men. Studies have shown that, despite facing challenges in accessing space in the city, women are resilient and will continue to battle for their way into the town (Nyamnjoh, 2005; Andrew, 2000; Phadke, 2013; Viswanath and Mehrotra, 2007) (see Chapter Five). Those that have done so have survived by building what is referred to by Sheller and Urry (2006) as "network capital". Network capital is characterized by diverse types of connections, such as friendship networks, which allow them to navigate with their goods in the blocked spaces of the city.

Some migrant women, like Neria, one of my participants I met in Cape Town Central Business District (CBD), adopt economic and subsistence mobility that allows them to run their businesses and engage in informal trade, informal waged work and piece jobs (Langevang and Gough, 2009).

For business, they rely much on seasonal goods which are highly dependent on supply and demand changes. In a further discussion, Neria confirmed that she needs to be well-informed about products which are in demand but varying from daily to seasonal timeframes. For example, in winter she concentrates largely on selling winter wear, such as jackets and blankets, among other things. This means that, just like any other businessperson, there is a need to constantly adjust and improvise.

Neria's situation is not unique but reflects what obtains in the wider socio-economic space of migrants who are in informal trading. The continuous adjustments make them thrive in this competitive space. Evidence has revealed that the market in Cape Town fluctuates without following a particular pattern and this calls for the need to consciously adjust and re-adjust to survive. They told me that a product can be sold in one week, but the next week it can be a different case. This requires migrants' agility and ability to connect to retailers, knowledge of goods, places to sell, and the capacity to predict changes in demand and supply. This is best achieved by moving around. Migrants often explore wide areas of the city in search of new products, decent prices, and customers and new networks.

In their livelihood struggles, some migrants find themselves being unproductive while others thrive. In illustrating this statement, Amin (2009) noted that sometimes cities are places of low-wage work, insecurity, poor living conditions and dejected isolation for many at the bottom of the social ladder. Vulnerable migrants always live in constant fear of crime, helplessness and close association with strangers. In line with these views, Thrift (2005) further explains that different acts of violence and conflict are commonplace in cities, which causes migrants always to be on the move and adjusting to hostile life. Some patiently wait to get lucky with their job hunting and future life prospects. Migrants are not blank slates who are helpless, and hopeless and always turn to crime when facing life-threatening predicaments. Their normative and pragmatic survival strategies help them to navigate life in the city of Cape Town.

1.8 Borders and Boundaries to Mobility of Migrants in Cape Town

According to Newman (2006), borders and boundaries are lines between us and them. These two do not just keep people out, instead, they are used for defining wide-ranging aspects, such as identity, belonging, inclusion and exclusion, among others (Adegbeye, 2019). Firstly, in this study, I interpret borders as the means used to define wide-ranging limits of migrants in socioeconomic

contexts. The limits or restrictions act as hurdles and impediments that hinder migrants from accessing critical services and enjoying their rights as stipulated by the law (Brown, 2001; Brunet-Jailly, 2004, Fassin, 2011). Secondly, I define boundaries in the context of both geographical and social demarcations that exclude migrants. The boundaries in this context include, among other aspects, physical obstacles, including visible natural or man-made social, political, and economic infrastructure that restricts refugees' livelihood spaces, opportunities, and entitlements (Albert et al., 2001). These obstacles also act as impediments to spatial access in a city.

Borders and boundaries have always been configured by movement composed of a multiplicity of hybrid objects, from infrastructure and technology to law and culture (Wood and Graham, 2006). In this study, the consequences of mobility are presented in terms of the constraints of access to places or spaces. Constraints herein refer to the limitations individuals face in navigating and negotiating the city (Jiron, 2010; Ureta, 2008); albeit the possibility of accessing places and spaces by daily mobility exists, migrants' urban experiences in cities involve confining effects. These effects reduce the possibilities that could be afforded to refugees through encounters and interaction.

In Cape Town, the common borders and boundaries I observed during my fieldwork include roadblocks, lockdown regulations and curfew, and local hostilities, among others. Roadblocks are the major factor in defining boundaries and they act as internal borders. Despite identifying roadblocks as internal borders, however, it is wiser to acknowledge that they are not unique to South Africa because they are a common feature across Africa and beyond. Some might also argue that South African roadblocks are far more open than in Zimbabwe. However, what sets South Africa apart is that these roadblocks are there to search out "foreigners" and some are coordinated "community-based" boundaries, for example, Operation Dudula. In the national COVID-19 lockdown level 5, the government of South Africa suspended movement including that of Uber, meter taxis and private cars, and pedestrians during the curfews. Most of the migrants who work in informal trade were affected, as curfew and other lockdown regulations made it more challenging. During the tightened lockdown, migrants were restricted from crossing national and internal borders in South Africa hence worsening their already precarious life chances. Therefore, it can be noted that migrants' rights to movement can be deferred or revoked at any time depending on ongoing diverse factors.

This unprecedented influx has birthed diversity among migrants mostly in urban spaces (Wessendorf, 2014). Multiple categories and subdivisions of groups in the contemporary metropolis are proliferating (Vertovec, 2007, 2015). These groups are commonly classified according to nationality, citizenship, religion, ethnicity, and history of migration or race (Wilhelm-Solomon et al., 2016:14; Wise, 2009; Noble, 2009). The diversity has been received with mixed feelings by South Africans (Neocosmos, 2004; Ita and Schepman, 2009; Landau, 2014; Mbembe, 2015). While spates of xenophobia since 2008 have been used as evidence of hostility, conviviality between local groups and migrants has also been witnessed in institutions such as transport systems (Nyamnjoh and Brudvig, 2014), small business enterprises (Northcote, 2015) and churches (Hay, 2014). Migrants are opting to be "tactically cosmopolitan" (Landau and Freemantle, 2010). Though contested, South Africa has created rigid spaces in terms of transformed and unchanged, insider and outsider, and foreigner and local (Nyamnjoh, 2006; 2016). Nyamnjoh and Brudvig (2014:218) argue that "the interconnections and entanglements of urban social life and the 'tactical alliances' are entered by diverse people for survival".

1.9 Migrants' Mobility and the COVID-19 Pandemic

The coronavirus disease, commonly known as COVID-19, is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus (Cucinotta and Vanelli, 2020). In December 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic started. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic (Cucinotta and Vanelli, 2020). The pandemic is one of the extreme challenges that the world is currently facing. The Covid 19 pandemic, which occurred during my fieldwork, was both a challenge and an opportunity. It provided me with the opportunity to investigate new avenues in the lives and livelihoods of migrants. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted migration flows, livelihoods and remittances flow among migrant communities (Bossone and Natarajan, 2020). The lockdown measures, such as the restriction of mobility, curfews, and social and physical distancing, impacted negatively on people's lives, livelihoods, and remittances. Migrants were more vulnerable because they had limited safety nets during the pandemic (Rugunanan, 2020). The vulnerability was worsened by their status of engaging in informal employment. Rugunanan (2020) noted that migrants in the informal sector were more vulnerable to job and income losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic than those in the formal sector. Most migrants from African countries in South Africa fall in the category of the informal sector.

More so, the migrants were excluded by the government measures that were meant to cushion the vulnerable during the peak period of COVID-19. Amid such calamity, unemployed migrants suffered more with no support from the government. Garba (2020) revealed that, in South Africa, the government made no significant efforts to support the unemployed and vulnerable migrants. They struggled to access government subsidies, as they lacked the documentation. Documentation was a pre-requisite by the government to access state-provided social relief food parcels and the relief fund, and in some cases, they were denied access to COVID-19 health care (Garba, 2020). Such episodes of exclusion are common among migrants living and working in Cape Town. It is important to note here the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic worsened the already existing inequalities and unequal encounters.

1.10 Incompleteness as a Permanent Feature of Migrant Experiences

Nyamnjoh (2015, 2017, 2019, 2020a, 2020b, 2022) developed the concept of incompleteness to illustrate, among other things, human relationships with other humans, technology, and the supernatural. Nyamnjoh focuses on Amos Tutuola's lived experience in explaining this concept. Nyamnjoh (2017) proposes inventive alternative ways to comprehend relationships based on this concept by interpreting Tutuola's life and works. Incompleteness, according to Nyamnjoh (2017), has two components: first, collections of more or less fully dynamic elements that are thus more or less vulnerable; and second, these incomplete entities appear to improve themselves through technical or relational extensions. This study focuses on these possible explanations to investigate the normalcy of incompleteness among migrants from African countries in Cape Town. I sought to investigate the individual and collective relationships of migrants, with a focus on their social networks and the capacity to coexist, as well as an openness to experiencing life in various forms.

According to Nyamnjoh (2015), the human condition is defined by "incompleteness". He argues that conviviality is a better strategy for "frontier Africans" to improve themselves and become more effective in their relationships and sociality (Nyamnjoh, 2015:1) than majoring in difference. The core of Nyamnjoh's argument is that everything in the world and life is incomplete in some way: nature, the supernatural, humans, and human action and achievement are all incomplete. This type of incompleteness implies that people are not singular and unified in both form and content, even if their appearance suggests otherwise. Incompleteness thus animates humans to create relations with humans to enhance their incompleteness. The creation of relations is similar to the

concepts of conviviality and ubuntu. Conviviality is a mode of sociality that manifests in different registers. On the other hand, ubuntu is closely related to collective personhood rather than the individual. According to this philosophy, a person's humanity is inextricably tied to the humanity of others, whether or not they are members of their immediate community. The reality and ontology of incompleteness, as well as the ethic of conviviality and ubuntu that it entails, are characterized by fluidity, compositeness of being, and the ability to be omnipresent in whole or in fragments (Nyamnjoh 2017, 2019, 2020, 2022). These characteristics are central to the idea that incompleteness exists. Recognizing and accepting our lack of completeness is a necessary component of conviviality.

In this sense, this study frames incompleteness to understand mobility and the formation and maintenance of social relationships among migrants in Cape Town. According to Nyamnjoh (2015, 2020), if incompleteness is the natural order of things, whether natural or not, conviviality encourages us to celebrate and preserve incompleteness while also reducing delusions associated with aspirations and claims of completeness. Not only does conviviality encourage us to recognize our incompleteness, but it also challenges us to be open-minded and open-ended in the ways we think and the ways we do things. In keeping with this assertion, the purpose of this study is to demonstrate how relational migrant encounters in Cape Town are and how the presence of incompleteness influences actual migrant experiences. In a similar vein, I observe Kongo (2022), who also uses Nyamnjoh's ideas of incompleteness to argue that incompleteness seems to matter regardless of social status, particularly in accessing basic social services, goods, money, and the formation of social relationships, as among migrants in Cape Town.

The concept of being incomplete is not fixed; according to Nyamnjoh (2019, 2017, 2022), "every social, organizational category – be it race or ethnicity, place or geography, class or status, gender or sex, generation or age, religion or beliefs – is incomplete without the rest of what it takes to be human through relationships with other humans and non-humans – or probably what Mawere (2015) termed 'other beings' – in the natural and supernatural worlds" (Nyamnjoh, 2017:2). This study uses the analogy of incompleteness to try to situate the formation of social networks among migrants in Cape Town in the context of an environment marked by divisions between "insiders" and "outsiders". For example, even though documented migrants have access to more benefits than their undocumented counterparts, these migrants' social networks, which include their closest

neighbours, friends, and members of their religious community, are still critical to their well-being. Accordingly, incompleteness is about "interconnections, interdependence, and the reality of debt and indebtedness", which is consistent with Itaru and Nyamnjoh's observation (2022:264). Migrants are shown to be the products of a variety of interconnected networks. Furthermore, migrants actively participate in the creation and maintenance of these networks (Owen, 2015).

The claim of incompleteness advanced by Nyamnjoh is based on a different understanding of reality, the dynamics of social relationships, and how identity is structured and experienced. My research investigates the implications of incompleteness and conviviality for the formation of social networks among migrants, specifically cross-cultural and transnational social connections among Cape Town migrants that hail from different parts of Africa, due to the inadequacy of human existence. Instead of absences, this incompleteness is caused by possibilities. Nyamnjoh demonstrates how, using Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* as an example, "we constantly strive to overcome the constraints of our own limited experience and look to those claiming the status of seers and frontier beings, those endowed with larger-than-life clairvoyance and the ability to straddle worlds, navigate, negotiate, and reconcile chasms. We can activate ourselves to compensate for the deficiencies of the five senses with the power they provide, allowing us to perceive what is normally lost to us in terms of the fullness and complexity of reality" (Nyamnjoh, 2015:8).

In most cases, people do not give much thought to the fact that their lives will always be incomplete. The condition of incompleteness continues. The pursuit of extensions as a means of repairing one's state of incompleteness, as stated by Nyamnjoh (2020), only serves to highlight one's incompleteness when one is confronted with all kinds of extensions that one has not mastered. In this study, migrants, like all other categories of humans, are both incomplete as individuals and as communities. Migrants are always eager to find ways to improve themselves through relationships with other humans (be it local South Africans or fellow migrants) because they are aware that they are lacking in some way and recognize the need to fill that void. Even if such enhancement is always situational and cannot make them completely whole, it is only because of the relationships they have with other people (whether these other people are individuals or groups) that they can be activated to enhance themselves in one way or another. This is the case

even though such enhancement is the only thing that can make them more complete. Because it is impossible to achieve, and because doing so will only render us worthless and cause us to take advantage of the connections we have with others, the pursuit of completeness should not be our goal. In light of this, we should not make this our objective. Instead, we should make it a priority to get to know new people, gain knowledge from them, and obtain sustenance from them while also allowing them to obtain sustenance from us; hence, conviviality.

In this context, conviviality can be understood as the admission and acknowledgement of inadequacies in some facet of one's life. Not only does conviviality encourage us to acknowledge our inadequacy, but it also challenges us to be open-minded and open-ended in our claims and articulations of identities, being, and belonging. As a result, the objective of this study is to investigate how conviviality both pushes and pulls migrants to reach out, meet, and investigate ways of enhancing or supplementing their mobility and livelihoods with the added potency brought by the incompleteness of others (human, natural, superhuman, and supernatural alike), and in Nyamnjoh's (2015:262) terms, never as a ploy to become complete (ultimately an extravagant illusion), but to make them more effective in their relationships and sociality.

This study also uses Nyamnjoh's (2015, 2017) concept of incompleteness to demonstrate its significance and effectiveness as a means for migrants to create social networks that meet their needs. Incompleteness and conviviality encourage migrants to experiment with new ways of thinking, living socially, connecting, reconciling, and networking, not only with their fellow countrymen, but also with people from other countries, to make the impossible possible, respond to problems and mediate their subjective experience of city life (Nyamnjoh, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021). For example, as I will demonstrate later, migrants, regardless of nationality, share housing, bathrooms, and kitchen utensils, share happy and sad family stories, and watch television programs together. As Nyamnjoh (2017) points out, acknowledging or accepting one's incompleteness is the first step toward achieving independence, active participation, and mutual fulfilment with one another.

Undoubtedly, insights can be drawn here leading to the conclusion that, incompleteness is the bedrock which drives the majority into life and possibilities. In this study, I borrowed Nyamnjoh's

incompleteness concept as it animates the migrants' exploration of ways to enhance themselves in their daily struggles. For example, when migrants are financially incapacitated, they share houses or apartments with others whilst concurrently sharing the financial burden of rentals. In this way, incompleteness challenges them to forge links in an "open-minded and open-ended" platform, making them swim against the tide of vulnerability. As noted, incompleteness motivates them to fully exploit their potential without confining themselves to exclusionary identities. However, important to note is the fact that this is not an automatic process, they need to consciously and willingly cross borders of nationality, race, belonging, and religiosity in an attempt to enjoy the fruits of unionism. In this context, they need to develop the nimble-footed approach (Nyamnjoh, 2015:8) as the stimulant to enhanced interconnections, interrelationships, interdependence, collaboration, coproduction and compassion.

1.11 Conviviality as a Means to an End among Migrants in Cape Town

Among the migrant population of Cape Town, conviviality serves as a means to an end. I draw on conviviality by Nyamnjoh (2017). Gilroy (2004, 2006). Vertovec (2007) and Wessendorf (2014) to focus on the role of mobility in fostering social interactions and encounters among migrants in Cape Town. Conviviality is recognition and provision for the fact or reality of being incomplete. The cultivation of networks to enhance incompleteness is premised on what Nyamnjoh (2017) describes as conviviality. "This is the pursuit of sameness and commonalities by bridging divides and facilitating interconnections" (Nyamnjoh, 2017:263). In the twenty-first century, approaches to analyzing and comprehending the contemporary social dynamics of urban diversity have been predicated almost entirely on the notion of conviviality. The concept of conviviality has been used by scholars on racial and urban studies to investigate how people "live with a difference" (Landau, 2014; Nowicka and Vertovec, 2014; Wessendorf, 2014; Wise and Velayutham, 2014). Callahan (2012) argues that conviviality is fundamental to being human – biologically and socially – and necessary for processes of social renewal and regeneration or, in particular contexts, reconstruction. Conviviality is a popular concept across, and even beyond, the social sciences, with authors employing it to depict diversity, tolerance, trust, equality, inclusiveness, cohabitation, coexistence, mutual accommodation, interaction, interdependence, getting along, generosity, hospitality, congeniality, festivity, civility and privileging peace over conflict, among other forms of sociality (Gilroy, 2004; Karner and Parker, 2011; Noble, 2013; Wessendorf, 2014; Williams and Stroud, 2013; Wise and Velayutham, 2014).

Conviviality as used by Gilroy (2004) refers to the processes of interaction and cohabitation that have made multiculturalism an everyday part of social life. As Mushonga (2022) observes, Gilroy (2004, 2006), Vertovec (2007) and Wessendorf (2014) are the ones who first applied the idea of conviviality to multidisciplinary approaches to urban studies. This is even though the concept has deep roots in Anthropology and Sociology (Nowicka, 2019). Conviviality supports a project that begins with the interdependent and relational nature of "being" and "becoming", allowing diverse urban residents to "live with a difference" (Gilroy, 2004 cited in Wright, 2015). Conviviality is another way to enable mobility. Conviviality does not imply that all forms of interpersonal and structural violence are defeated; however, it does reinforce the concept of an ability to be at ease in settings where there is a lot of diversity. In the context of this thesis, the concept of conviviality investigates the similarities, interconnections, and potential differences that emerge between migrants themselves, as well as between migrants and locals. While conviviality is typically hailed for its positive encounters and outcomes, this study will focus on both the positive and negative aspects of convivial interactions. For instance, in chapter three, I delve into the concept of ghosting as a negative manifestation of conviviality, which contrasts with the desire for continued relationality. My method also goes the extra mile and draws parallels between conviviality and the Dependency Theory of the 1960s, which treats vulnerable people as passive dependents of those who have resources. This theory was developed to explain why certain groups of people were more successful than others (Gilroy, 2005:59; Nowicka and Vertovec, 2014:346). In addition, Ferguson's (2013) Dependency Theory continued to portray migrants as a social system that is distinguished by the competitive pursuit of followers and relationships. On the other hand, conviviality eliminates the ambiguity by portraying migrants as rational individuals who are dependent on a wide variety of interconnections, inseparable entanglements, and creative interdependencies to maintain their way of life. The ability of migrants to dilute national and ethnic differences runs counter to the logic presented by the Dependency Theory, which primarily emphasizes chronic dependence and passivity.

In this study, conviviality manifested in everyday private places, such as houses, and crowded social gatherings, such as soccer. Everyday mundane convivial encounters that take place in a variety of urban spaces and localities have a positive effect on the attitudes that residents have towards one another. Urban theorists refer to places like this as "micro-publics" and they see them as the sites of "prosaic negotiations" between various groups of people (Amin, 2002). People

actively negotiate diversity and differences in micro-publics, according to Van Leeuwen (2010), who argues in support of Amin's position by using a variety of approaches that can be categorized as "interactive" These approaches are predicated on the notion that it is essential to seek contact with the "Other" to give birth to "new collectives" (Mould, 2014).

Discussions of conviviality around ethnic differences have brought attention to the ways in which diverse populations that share urban localities and spaces manage the process of interdependence, cohabitation, and collaboration, as well as modes of living together. These discussions build on more established studies of social relationships, race, and identity (see, for example, Gilroy, 1987; Jones, 1988). (Wise and Noble, 2016). Therefore, conviviality serves as the foreground on which urban spaces that are characterized by diversity are shaped. However, this diversity can be negotiated and translated through convivial encounters, social interactions, and broader processes of positive articulation (Amin, 2009; Back and Sinha, 2016). The urban geographers, Fincher and Iveson (2015), are credited with the invention of the concept of convivial encounters. jaIt is predicated on the notion that modern cities are characterized by diversity, and, as a result, interactions with people who are not known to one another are an essential component of urban life and are inherently connected to what it means to be socially included in urban spaces (Young, 1990). For example, during my fieldwork, I used to go to and play social soccer in Mowbray (a neighbourhood in Cape Town). In these locations, I met people from various backgrounds. There were both unplanned and planned conversations. These locations and social gatherings have allowed me to connect with knowledgeable participants. Papatzani and Knappers (2020:150) praise social spaces and events, such as soccer, for providing a fertile ground for data collection among people from diverse backgrounds. In addition, the relationships formed as a result of such interactions will dilute commonly known nametags such as "strangers", forcing them to accept "living with differences". In such cases, some migrants form formidable networks, which may lead to opportunities such as employment and other benefits. People share information and opportunities related to their needs on the Mowbray social soccer fields. The occurrence of such encounters in "micro public" settings (Papatzani and Knappers, 2020:20) results in the emergence of needs-specific discussions, which yield meaningful results in the daily livelihoods of South African migrants. This demonstrates that people's interactions extend beyond the social. Going beyond the social demonstrates that the interaction becomes more than just conviviality.

I am not necessarily focusing my work in this study on the Dependency Theory. I used it for comparison while also opening up new avenues for situating other conceptual frameworks, like *hushamwari*, nimble-footedness, and conviviality. It should be noted that the dependence on each other presented by *hushamwari*, and conviviality differs from the Dependency Theory. It defies logic to say that poor and vulnerable migrants are not always victims of their circumstances; in many cases, they are champions of their survival. Their reliance is a calculated and pragmatic move that places them at the exit door to opportunities. My goal with this research is to create a version of migrants who are not always victims of existing events. In South Africa, this study treats victims as rational and autonomous individuals who own and control their destinies.

1.12 *Hushamwari* as a Manifestation of Conviviality

In this study, I embrace the concept of *hushamwari* (which translates as "friendship" but, as I show in this thesis, it incorporates a deeper meaning than the direct English translation) to illustrate the manifestation of conviviality and sociality among migrants from African countries living and working in Cape Town. In my previous work,[4] I employed *hushamwari* a concept which I borrowed from the vernacular Shona language from Zimbabwe. I used it in the discussion and critical analysis of various forms of mutuality and conviviality between Shona-speaking migrants and Tsonga-speaking South Africans living in Giyani, South Africa. In this thesis, I expand the concept to apply it to a wider African social context. I champion the notion of *hushamwari*, a Southern African concept, for its uniqueness when compared to the conventional development or migration theories. My choice of the *hushamwari* concept was largely influenced by the ideas of Mbembe (2017), who calls upon Afrocentric scholars to produce dissimilar theoretical and conceptual models which are congruent with the African spirit, history and identity. Afrocentric scholars also hailed Africa's long-held traditions which are galvanized with flexibility, networked sovereignty, mutual security and integrating sojourn (hospitality). In keeping with Mbembe's ideas, the notion of *hushamwari* is hailed for its flexibility to move beyond binaries of kinship versus friendship relations and examine the ways in which people create reciprocal friendships that are a little "like kin" (Chekero and Morreira, 2020; Chekero, 2018). Thus, the *hushamwari* relations crosscut all forms of collective personhood that underlie both locals' and migrants' ways of being (Chekero and Morreira, 2020). This is paramount in forming social bonds across national

[4] https://open.uct.ac.za/bitstream/handle/11427/29185/thesis_hum_Chekero_2018.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

lines which can be relied upon as survival gateways and safety nets during outbreaks of unforeseen eventualities.

In my previous research for my master's thesis conducted in Giyani, I embraced the concept of *hushamwari* as a means of moving from the binaries that divide the migrants. The traditional binaries in the movement and migration of people include, but are not limited to, dualisms between locals and foreigners, legal and illegal, documented and undocumented, and xenophobic and welcoming. In lieu of these arguments, I expanded the notion of *hushamwari*. In doing so, I began with interactions on the ground between people to surface endogenous knowledge concepts through which to conduct social analysis. Being social does not confine people to interacting with only those that they have known or kinsmen, rather it is expected that even strangers can benefit from sociality and eventually become close. This is what Nyamnjoh (2018:19) commented: "[T]here is an almost total discontinuity between the idea of knowledge in African universities and what constitutes knowledge outside universities." While the narrative to decolonize universities in postcolonial African settings has gathered momentum, I submit herein that to analyze mobility and belonging in Africa, there is a need to centre Southern ways of knowing in the Afrocentric context.

For Morreira and Chekero (2020), Southern African cosmologies and cultures are complex and provide a sound basis for concepts for the theorization of social worlds. Premising my work on such concepts and ways of knowing does not mean I seek to separate it from other forms of knowledge and knowing. I seek to integrate my work into the existing frameworks, but within a Southern African setting. In lieu of this, Nyamnjoh (2018) noted that Africa is a space for "frontier realities". This means that there has been mingling and interconnection of knowledge long before colonization. For example, my study uncovered how "like kin" relationships have been mobilized in Cape Town and are entangled with other ways of being in the world. In that regard, my thesis seeks to provide imperative insights into the social engagement and survival of migrants within a diverse urban setup. My work enables new insights into the creation of mundane social relationships created and entrenched in diversity in urban settings. In this process, ideas of *hushamwari* – that is, making formal, reciprocal friendship relations that are a little "like kin" – emerge.

Most migrants I worked with have their relations defined in terms of friendship. They refer to themselves as "friends". This, however, does not confer any consanguineal or kinship affiliation,

rather it is a way of connecting and enacting life with and through others. Practices of friendship among migrants in Cape Town of making formal, reciprocal friendship relationships made it possible to remove some of the ambiguities and doubts faced by migrants. For example, among Shona-speaking Zimbabweans there is an old saying, *hushamwari hunokunda hukama* (friendship could be much stronger than blood ties). For migrants, friendship provides tangible ways of creating social cohesion and mutuality across nationality lines.

1.13 *Hushamwari* as an Expression of Ubuntu

Friendship is closely related to the concept of Ubuntu. The concept of Ubuntu colloquially means, "I am because we are." It suggests the impossibility of an individual human being surviving in a social vacuum or being self-sustaining. Rather, it calls for collectivism, inclusivity, and togetherness. However, as Nyamnjoh notes (2019), "it is not enough to recognise and be conscious of togetherness to fulfil Ubuntu". He further elaborated that, there is a need for collective social action that ensures genuine participation and inclusivity for all and sundry. Thus, ubuntu inspires people to identify themselves and understand themselves in the context of inclusive participation in pursuance of common goals in their daily lives, and to aspire to this state of being. For African migrants, differences should not be a matter of concern; what matters most is the prioritizing of common goals for the betterment of everyone's welfare. In relation to this notion, Whitworth and Wilkinson (2013:121) expressed that migrants in South Africa and the citizens of that country should generate a common grounding where humanity defines parameters and direction of life.

During my research, I leant that *hushamwari* encompasses relations "like kin," that are bred in various spaces such as business partnerships, house or apartment sharing, clubs and religiosity, among others. I also discovered that migrants who have the capital to start businesses but do not have documents form business partnerships with locals. The partnerships transcend the economic sphere. Some eventually transform into close friendly ties. In the Shona culture and cosmology, *shamwari* means a remarkably close friend, a sibling that one can choose to have. *Hushamwari* means one has a person on whom one can rely. Friendship relations are imbued with joyous moments, but this does not mean that the relationship is independent of tensions, frictions, fights and even, grief. Important to note is the need for setting a common and bigger goal which transcends friction and tensions and grief altogether. Defined in this sense, *hushamwari* is a deep bond in human life created based on mutuality, support and selflessness. Mama Juju (see 1.5

above) shared living space with fellow migrants from diverse African countries in her rented house to have assistance with paying the rental. However, during my frequent visits, I found that their ideologies and practices differed. Mama Juju always mentioned that "when the other lady cooks fish, the fish smell fills up the house and it's boring". Also, conflicts over the payment of electricity bills, tidiness and conflicting social identities prevailed. Despite such conflicts, they could share the physical space and material resources as a result of being co-tenants. Their bonds were also solidified through sharing the available amenities.

In Mama Juju's story, it is common for migrants to create relationships/social networks with other humans through convivially forged solidarity. In the same fashion, Nowicka and Heil (2015:12-13) expressed that conviviality calls for unity and it makes migrants maintain closeness and unity. Based on this approach, incompleteness fuels solidarity and glides over real and perceived differences amongst migrants in their everyday life. As a result, togetherness and the strong need for stewardship continuously push migrants like Mama Juju to continue co-existing with her co-tenants regardless of recurring fights and tensions. Mama Juju's case feeds well into the observations made by Chekero and Morreira (2020) which revealed that forming solid social bonds is the best strategy for overcoming national and ethnical based differences and identities.

1.14 Nimble-Footedness as a Way of Getting By in the City

Nimble footedness can be simply defined as one's ability to move the feet swiftly and effectively. I borrow the concept from Nyamnjoh (2003, 2021) who employs it to illustrate the experiences of Fulani of the Western Grassfields of Cameroon and on Cyprian Ekwensi's novel, *Burning Grass*, to argue that most so-called simple African societies are cosmopolitan in composition and outlook. Nyamnjoh introduces the concept of nimble-footedness through the Mbororo Fulani, who are subjected to borders and boundaries in a complex postcolonial politics of rights and entitlements, in which juridico-political citizenship is frequently challenged at local and regional levels by claims of autochthony. Ordinary Mbororo-Fulani quickly understand how to accommodate the political elite in this game of indigeneity and citizenship umpired by the state, and especially how to pit one political elite against the other in the interest of change and continuity or mere survival.

In this study, I refer to nimble-footed as how migrants have created the ability and agility to navigate and negotiate the challenges and opportunities they meet in Cape Town. Migrants must

know when, where and how to move and when, where, and how not to make movements (Mbembe, 2017). In responding to the complicated and dynamic mundane encounters, a migrant quickly understands the ways to accommodate fellow migrants and locals alike all in the interest of continuity and survival (Nyamnjoh, 2013; Mutendi and Chekero, forthcoming). Migrants create networks with these various categories of people as a means to an end. However, it is not just a matter of indiscriminately creating connections or networks. In these encounters, migrants need to have an astute sense of discernment. They must discern with whom to create relationships or not, to avoid friction and tensions that come with overstepping boundaries. In that context, social networks play a pivotal role in their everyday mobility and sociality and in how money, goods and services are circulated, vitalized and mobilized.

Even though challenges form part of migrants' reality, it is particularly interesting to understand what allows migrants to survive and thrive in a city that, despite its claims to be cosmopolitan and welcoming, is characterized by such violent demarcation of belonging. Migrants face challenges, which I frame as "borders" and "boundaries". These two phenomena do not just keep people out, instead, they are used for defining wide-ranging aspects, such as identity, belonging, inclusion and exclusion, among others (Albert, 1998; Adegbeye, 2019). A border may be considered not as something that is fixed but flexible. Balibar (2004) and Anderson, Sharma and Wright, (2009:6), "borders follow people and surround them as they try to access paid labour, welfare benefits, health, labour protections, education, civil associations, and justice". Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that borders are experienced differently by migrants in Cape Town. Social networks are important in the way people experience borders and boundaries. These create inequalities in the enjoyment of rights and access to basic services, and they also exclude migrants from being active members of society, who have responsibilities and are proportionally liable if at fault (Landau, 2020; Landau, and Wanjiku, 2018; Misago and Landau, 2022; Landau, 2014; Nyamnjoh, 2006). Using public spaces and even simply moving around may be difficult experiences for migrants.

In response to these limitations, migrants develop ways to contest borders and boundaries, hence nimble-footedness. Migrants' performances, according to Erving Goffman (1959), lead to practices where visibility and invisibility become strategies that migrants need to adopt to adapt

their experiences to the reality of Cape Town. Moreover, it may also help them to take advantage of the ambivalence of the state towards migration. The French philosopher, Michel de Certeau (1984), notes that, in situations like these, migrants develop tactics that depend on time, and migrants must "watch for opportunities that must be seized" (De Certeau, 1984:xvii). As such, tactics and ways of contesting borders become fundamental in migrants' lives.

1.15 Thesis Outline

In Chapter Two, I explore the methods and approaches I used in collecting data between 2018 and 2021. I explore my doctoral field-based data collection experiences before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. I reflect herein on the positive encounters, negative experiences and lessons learnt as I was studying the complex livelihoods of migrants from African countries who are residing in Cape Town.

Chapter Three interrogates the concept of space and how migrants negotiate their relationships in shared space. The chapter notes that space is an integral part of social life. Space is constructed through migrants' interactions with the world they live in. It is constituted through participation in socially shared practices, which convey, mimic, and alter meanings and social interchanges. However, in this chapter, space includes spatial and physical space in everyday migrants' encounters and interactions. I am not oblivious to sites; however, humans do not evolve out of sites. What is important is how humans create space within and beyond the visibility and tangibility of a shared physical space.

Chapter Four explores how the category "migrant" produces and reinforces particular kinds of boundaries and borders in mobility and survival efforts. Evidence in this chapter reveals the exclusion and marginalization of migrants in mobility and survival efforts despite being granted such privileges by the South African Constitution. In practice, they face constraining forces from the sovereign state power – through police roadblocks, institutionalized xenophobia and the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. Unfortunately, the state is reluctant to abide by the constitution and policy demands which call for the inclusion of migrants.

In Chapter Five I focus on how migrant women (who vary across vegetable vendors, hairdressers, domestic workers and Uber drivers) navigate the city, negotiate, and transform space in their everyday mobility and encounters. The chapter seeks to give a unique perspective to the orthodox globalized capitalist structure and thinking about power and gender. Even though migrant women have access to space in the city, their experience of cities is profoundly unique, differing from their male counterparts, as several factors affect their ability to move around freely. Thus, this chapter challenges the globalized structures and thinking that have habitually given the public sphere to men while domesticating women.

In Chapter Six, I explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on migrants' remittances, livelihoods, and sources of income. Nonetheless, the main gaze is cast upon how, despite the COVID-19 containment measures, migrants were able to move remittances emanating from within the city of Cape Town to their home countries. This chapter thus unveils the creative schemes that migrants employed in subverting the effects of their containment measures brought on because of the pandemic. To send money and goods back home, I discovered that, migrants heavily relied on social capital and conviviality.

In Chapter Seven, I look at how networks among migrants are ruptured by everyday conflicts in sharing accommodation. In doing so, I look at conflicting religious beliefs, values and practices and other conflicts. This chapter pays attention to how some migrants fail to connect with fellow migrants and/or locals alike. This chapter argues that there is a need to pay granulated attention to how migrants fail to access networks and how some fall out of relationships in varied social locations with diverse people.

In the eighth and final chapter, concluding ideas are presented. In this chapter, I will revisit the concepts of incompleteness, conviviality, *hushamwari,* and nimble-footedness to develop the empirically implied theoretical implications of migrants, mobility, and sociality. I consider the connections that can be made between the various concepts I have brought together, including conviviality, *hushamwari,* ubuntu, vital relationships, incompleteness, and nimble-footedness. I employ the principles of African flow to give life to these concepts. If flow is a significant component of how we conceptualize social life, then we can cultivate a more vibrant understanding

of how conviviality influences mobility and relationship. This, in turn, may revitalize concepts such as ubuntu, *hushamwari*, and others.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Negotiating Borders and Boundaries: Researching Migrants from African Countries

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the ways in which a multi-sited ethnographic study was conducted between 2019 and 2021 to investigate various forms of mobility, mutuality, incompleteness and conviviality among migrants from African countries residing and working in Cape Town. The chapter addresses the complexities, ambiguities and challenges, as well as opportunities that I encountered while researching fifty-five migrants in Cape Town. I give insights into the complexities of the urban migrants from African countries in the city. The chapter seeks to contribute new knowledge by providing and suggesting strategies that can be employed in researching migrants and the neighbourhoods they inhabit across Africa. By so doing, researchers conducting studies across cultural and linguistic lines, especially in international settings, have to be actively present and always critical of the shortcomings of one's elucidative horizons (Gadamer, 2004). To that end, I address issues of how I adopted and adjusted the approach of having my research participants accept my physical presence in their personal spaces. The synthesis of illuminating perspectives with others in the field, a process that may involve deep contextual and methodological reflexivity, is essential for enriching value-free research. This process is likely to lead to the explicit questioning of our data and, of course, the conclusiveness of our findings (see also Ryen, 2011).

2.2 The First Encounter

In my first fieldwork encounter, my first participants were French-speaking migrants who worked as bouncers in nightclubs on Long Street, which is located in Cape Town's Central Business District. My attempts to understand their day-to-day activities and interactions with customers, patrons, friends, family, and co-workers were unsuccessful. I encountered a formidable obstacle. I attempted to communicate with the four Central and West African French-speaking migrant bouncers, but they all refused to speak English with me. In contrast to my command of the English language, their proficiency was only average. If I ever desired assistance from them, they insisted I first communicate in their language. Unfortunately, I am unable to speak, write, or understand French. They eventually agreed to speak with one of my research assistants, Elvis, who is fluent in French, after much negotiation on our part. I had no choice but to rely on my research assistant.

As a result, I was demoted to the role of a bystander and relegated to observing the ongoing conversations rather than continuing in my role as the primary investigator. The vast majority of the time, I relied on the expressions on the participants' faces and the projections of their voices. I asked for, and was granted, consent to observe their vocal projections and facial expressions. According to the British Psychological Society's Code of Human Research Ethics (2010:25), "studies based on observation in natural settings must respect the privacy and psychological well-being of the individuals studied." The following explains why this is the case: Observational research may only be conducted in public settings where the individuals being observed would anticipate being observed by strangers in the absence of their consent. The violation of these individuals' privacy could be considered a breach of privacy. I paid close attention to these voice projections and facial expressions because, once I had completed the translation of the interviews, I wanted to corroborate the information I gained from them. *Techniques of the Body*, written by Marcel Mauss and published in 1934, is generally acknowledged as the first work to outline a methodical anthropology of the body. Its purpose is to demonstrate that the majority of everyday body techniques are distinct between individuals raised in different environments. This is because these individuals' lifestyles necessitate a unique set of skills. According to Mauss, all of our daily activities, including walking, running, swimming, and resting, are not innate abilities but, rather, are acquired through our culture. I compared the vocal and facial expressions of the bouncers to the body techniques of Marcel Mauss. I was taking notes on what I observed, the environment, and the behaviour of the participants, whose permission I had negotiated through my dependable research assistants throughout the entire interview process. After completing the interviewing process, I gathered the summarized versions to use for writing and analysis. I had the impression that the language barrier prevented me from investigating complex issues while simultaneously reducing the probability of advanced biases and misinterpretations.

This was not the only time I encountered language barriers and interview refusals during my research. However, my previous research experience stood me in good stead when I expanded my inquiry beyond national and linguistic borders. As I began to work in a more dynamic and complex research field, I made it a point to ensure that I could always delegate the role of the primary investigator to my research assistant whenever it was necessary, and the occasion arose. To put it another way, I prioritized maintaining this adaptability. To communicate effectively with people from diverse cultures and languages, such as the bouncers on Long Street, I had to carefully

consider the questions I should ask as well as how I should ask them. This was necessary for me to communicate effectively with them. On a more positive note, I realized that one of the lessons I can take away from this experience, which is similar to Maunganidze's (2019) study of gatekeepers in research, is the importance of considering how changes to the data collection plan, particularly those involving language barriers, can affect not only the data collected but also the interpretation of the results. As a result, I was careful not to draw erroneous conclusions, especially since I was gathering data in contexts where I was unfamiliar with the nuances of linguistic variation and lived culture. Nonetheless, my anthropological training aided and equipped me with the tools I needed to overcome these challenges.

In the body of this study, the numerous socio-political and environmental encounters that influenced the results of my research are referred to as "boundaries" and "borders". These terms are used interchangeably throughout the text. Reichard et al. (2020) discovered that many field researchers were unable to conduct interviews because they were unable to communicate with participants in their native languages. This has prevented them from gathering pertinent data for the study. Participant observation, on the other hand, is intended to reduce a researcher's reliance on hit-and-run research methods such as interviewing and leaving. This is because participants frequently express mistrust and distrust during interviews, particularly when the interviewer does not speak the interviewee's native language. Researchers frequently used to sanitize and "whitewash" their fieldwork experiences to present a near-perfect image. However, it is becoming increasingly important for them to consider the drawbacks and other (un)expected obstacles they face while in the field. This is due to the decreasing likelihood that their fieldwork experiences will be near-perfect (Johnstone, 2019). As a result, conducting research in Africa in general, and researching African migrants in particular, is such an arduous task that researchers must exercise extreme caution (Jacobsen and Landau, 2003; Bob-Milliar, 2020). I was aware that to conduct a fruitful study of this population, my interactions with the migrants living in Cape Town needed to be both methodical and reassuring. On a related note, my colleague Minga Kongo, who is also a PhD graduand at the University of Cape Town, informed me that he faced similar linguistic difficulties while conducting fieldwork. Despite his fluency in English and some local South African languages, Minga was denied permission to conduct interviews with French-speaking Congolese car guards in Cape Town. Minga's efforts in this regard were futile. He finally

succeeded after a few weeks of failed attempts by utilizing his fluency in French. He achieved success after exhausting all other options. This proved to be the most crucial factor in his success.

I admit that borders and boundaries compromised my ability to accurately interpret and evaluate the research findings. In reality, even though I relied on my multilingual research assistants who spoke English, French, Arabic, Xhosa, and Swahili, among other languages, the process of interpretation was complicated by difficulties in language comprehension, as well as subsequent difficulties in translating specific words and concepts. Finally, the conceptualization of the translated versions left open the possibility of conveying meanings other than those intended. Because of the substantial number of diverse participants in the study, this was a particularly challenging task for me. In light of this, I was aware that how I interacted with migrants in Cape Town needed to be both methodical and self-assured if my attempt to research this population was to be successful. Briefly, developing rapport with the various migrants who eventually became participants necessitated a significant amount of emotional labour on my part (Blix and Wettergren, 2015). I was required to do "strategic emotion work", which entails "externally building trust and internally building self-confidence" (Blix and Wettergren, 2015).

2.3 The Research assistants

In this section, I discuss how I employed my research assistants and the roles that they played, not only as research assistants but also as interpreters/translators. I had six research assistants in my study. Research that crosses cultural boundaries frequently requires collaboration with research assistants to carry out data collection activities (Maunganidze, 2019; Chereni, 2014). It is abundantly clear that the participation of research assistants, such as my research assistants in the research project, has implications for the quality of the study's design, its process, and its outcomes. The range of divergent functions that research assistants end up fulfilling, from translators to guides to gatekeepers, makes this point abundantly clear (Stevano and Deane, 2017). On the other hand, their function is not always investigated. The table that follows provides an overview and demographic data of my six research assistants.

Table 2.1: The demography of the study's Research Assistants (Source: Field data, 2020).

Name	Age	Gender	Languages spoken

Mama Juju	28	Female	English, Xhosa, Shona
Elvis	35	Male	French, Swahili, Lingala and English
Sonia	28	Female	French, English and Shona
Marie	38	Female	English, Arabic, and Yoruba
Bra Taka	43	Male	English, Shona, Xhosa
Zabho	25	Male	English and Shona

All of my research assistants except for Sonia were individuals I already knew before beginning my research. Before becoming an occasional plumber, Elvis had been my barber. Since then, until now, Bra Taka has been my barber. I have known him since 2016 when I first moved to Cape Town. My half-sister is Mama Juju. Bra Taka and Marie share the same workplace. Bra Taka was the one who introduced us. Sonia is a person I have known since meeting her on a train while I was already engaged in fieldwork. She turned out to enjoy research, so she agreed to work with me. All of these research assistants spoke multiple languages, making it easy for them to link me and communicate with a diverse group of participants in this group, such as when Elvis facilitated communication between myself and the Long Street bouncers.

I shared my research and its objectives with my research assistants before beginning fieldwork. I explained to them that the purpose of the study was to examine how migrants from other parts of Africa perceived life and mobility in Cape Town. The training lasted two months, from December 2018 to January 2019. I extended the training because I did not want to rush my research assistants before they grasped the project's purpose. Sonia was an adaptive and agile learner, who gained knowledge of the project during the research phase. I did not go into the

field with all of my research assistants; rather, I selected one research assistant based on the location of my research and their availability. I did this because I did not wish to disrupt their daily routines.

Similarly, Stevano and Deane (2017) observe that, when planning fieldwork, a researcher must make several important practical decisions, such as determining whether a research assistant is required and managing work relationships. In that regard, I combined practical considerations with potential power imbalances stemming from the employment relationship between the researcher and the research assistants. Indeed, when selecting my research assistants, I kept in mind that power dynamics between research participants, research assistants, and researchers affect the research process and outcomes, as well as how these power dynamics reflect the larger institutional research landscape, where questions of power, ownership, and extraction are prominent. For example, some of my research assistants, including Marie, Elvis, and Bra Taka, were older than I was. This had the potential for power dynamics that could develop between myself and my research assistants. Because I am a migrant researcher who collaborated with other migrant research assistants, power disparities were not particularly pronounced in my study. As a result, most of my research assistants viewed me as an equal.

It should be noted, however, that as a young man working with women and men, my age, level of education, and other factors may have impacted my relationship with my research assistants. However, I entered the field as a simple migrant eager to learn from my research assistants. This ambiguous status benefited me in this study because it was less likely to disrupt normal activities or alter the social relationships of my research assistants and participants. Migrants themselves, my research assistants were free and receptive to a fellow migrant. It also implies that I participated in certain activities without any difficulty or deceit. This also made it easier for me to gain the trust of my research assistants, which increased my chances of gaining access to valuable information. Thus, my research experience has taught me that researchers must reflect, discuss, and write more about the crucial role research assistants play to fill a critical gap in the literature on research methodology. According to Halvorsen et al. (2019), this has the potential to provide practical guidance for future researchers and establish a foundation for more equitable collaborations between North and South research institutions.

While this research adopts a qualitative approach, it is important to acknowledge that the employed approach has inherent strengths and limitations. I am aware of some of the potential limitations of the design of this study. For instance, as I demonstrate in Chapter four, conducting interviews with a larger sample size would have been preferable for analysing the mobility of remittances. However, the COVID-19-induced conditions did not allow for the collection of a larger sample size. I heavily relied on individuals accessed through social networks, resulting in a smaller sample size. Nevertheless, the qualitative design offered greater flexibility, enabling me to adapt the questions, address various conditions, and modify the setting to achieve optimal results.

2.4 The Journey

In June 2018, I became a doctoral student. December of that same year found me completing my proposal and delivering it to the ethics committee to be considered. To move on to the next step before beginning work in the field, I needed to obtain approval from the Doctoral Degrees Board (DDB), which is the highest decision-making board at the university. Despite this, I continued to conduct my pilot fieldwork survey throughout the six months that we were forced to wait, by using non-participant observation and transect walks. During this time, I was planning out how I would engage with the participants in my study and mapping out the locations where I would conduct my fieldwork. I also took advantage of this time to share my research aims, objectives and plans with my research assistants, who ended up being essential members of the team that I worked with during my fieldwork. During this time, I concluded that my study required an ethnographic research strategy that incorporated multiple sites. This is because the migrants with whom I intended to work, including, but not limited to, Uber drivers, mobile vendors, house helpers, bouncers, and informal traders, were highly mobile due to their jobs. Therefore, the nature of the livelihoods they pursued required them to continuously consider moving.

My research endeavour got off to a brisk start after the Doctoral Degrees Board (DDB) gave their go-ahead and vouched for me to pursue a doctoral degree. During the first and second years of my doctoral studies, I participated in a variety of relevant forums, such as seminars, conferences, and writing retreats, where I also presented my doctoral proposal and some of the findings from my preliminary research. During many of my academic conversations with colleagues and scholars, as well as presentations, I was questioned on why my research did not

delineate a single research population that was defined in terms of nationality. Many people commented on the "vagueness" of my investigation and suggested that I narrow the scope of it. Some people suggested that I pick one nationality on which to centre my attention. In the process of responding to these comments and suggestions, I realized that my conceptualization of the project as investigating the lives and livelihoods of "migrants from African countries" seemed to be too open-ended and comprehensive. I came to this realization as a result of the fact that this seemed to be too general. On the other hand, I let some of my critics know that I was concerned about falling into the "state trap", which is the habit of classifying people based on terms that are similar to those used to describe the state. I tried to follow the arguments that Landau (2007) and Vearey (2008) presented, which demonstrated that the victimization of migrant groups is typically the result of nationalistic categorization, and I was successful in doing so. In a world full of different classifications and levels of belonging, I am aware that a nation is just one of many possible categories. If nationality is eliminated as a factor in discrimination, other justifications for the practice will arise. Among these factors are the migrant's race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, and age, as well as the physical location of the migrant within Cape Town (in terms of space or place). In South Africa, the framing of this categorization is almost always done with an adverse tone in the background. Because of these discussions and encounters, I now have a more well-rounded understanding of how people generally perceive and recognize migrants. I recently realized that researchers frequently make the critical error of limiting the people being researched or the participants to primary levels of belonging and becoming. I felt obligated to give migrants a voice so that they could define themselves. Migrants, rather than their nationality, defined themselves through their social networks. Therefore, becoming signifies that identities are not definitively defined at any point in time, nor are they static; rather, they are open-ended. There are no limits placed on identities, and one is always capable of learning new ways of being and becoming. According to Nyamnjoh (2021), being African, particularly being an African migrant in South Africa, is something that can be claimed and denied depending on the circumstances. While all claims and denials may be founded, that doesn't mean that every claim is informed by the same factors. For Nyamnjoh (2021), if being African and becoming African were compared to going grocery shopping, one could argue that some people are flexible in what they put into their shopping baskets, while others are meticulous about what they allow themselves to purchase.

And some companies force their products down the throats of their customers. In particular, I am curious about how being an African migrant has been claimed and denied throughout history, sociology, anthropology, and political discourse.

2.5 Negotiating Entry and the Politics of the Field

Prior to my fieldwork, I assumed that, because I am a migrant, researching fellow migrants would simplify my research. This is because I assumed that being a migrant would automatically make me an "insider" in this group. As I mentioned in the introduction, I assumed that, because we were all migrants, the bouncers would easily accept me into their world. The language barrier, on the other hand, taught me that insider and outsider identities are always layered and contextual or situational. I found myself bound outside the group I thought I belonged to. I was confident in this because I had already established contacts and connections in and around Cape Town during the preliminary stages of my fieldwork. I used them to gain access to "the field". My first two months of fieldwork, however, were quite different. The work was unpredictable, full of unexpected complexities, denial, and intense bargaining. My prediction that my initial interactions with my participants would pave the way for me to do more intensive work did not come true. Taylor (2011) and Merriam et al. (2001) inspired me before I started fieldwork, revealing that being an insider is the best condition for gaining easy access to the field and data under study. I later discovered that the "insider" label I gave myself was a fallacy, not a straightjacket.

My research experiences, on the other hand, are not unique, as other scholars (Gukurume, 2018; Rubinstein-vila, 2009; Maunganidze, 2019) have encountered comparable challenges during their fieldwork research. Later, I discovered that breaking into the field is a lengthy and complicated process that necessitates careful planning, detailed programming, and effective strategies to avoid hitting a wall of resistance, refusal, and disinterest along the way. According to Maunganidze (2019), to gain access to the field setup, one must first carefully establish a rapport with the gatekeepers and then overcome every possible barrier to obtain valuable data. Similarly, Singh and Wassenaar (2016) stated that, for a researcher who wants to enter the field, a method that has been carefully calculated is the answer. If you do not do this, you will be denied access or given incorrect information.

In my situation, I changed my attitude and adopted a more pragmatic strategy, which resulted in the participants being more willing to tolerate both my research assistants and me. In addition to relying on research assistants who spoke more than one language, I also observed both participants and people who weren't involved in the study. By utilizing these tactics, I was able to make frequent visits to a variety of establishments, such as nightclubs, churches, restaurants, marketplaces, barbershops, and other places that attract gatherings of various migrant people. In addition to that, I travelled to my participants' homes to meet with them there. During the course of these frequent visits, I was able to observe their social interactions, as well as their day-to-day lives and the way in which they related to their immediate neighbours. This indicates that I observed by making use of all five of my senses rather than concentrating on the interviews. I made certain that the observations were carried out in a manner that was designed to be as unobtrusive as was humanly possible. This is comparable to the theory put forth by the French sociologist and anthropologist, Marcel Mauss, who referred to techniques of the body as a concept (1973). This concept refers to "the ways in which people from different societies know how to use their bodies" and can be found in anthropology (Mauss, 1973:70). These methods are learned ways of carrying out an action, such as having a particular positioning of the hands and arms when walking or running. The framework developed by Mauss is relevant to the process of identity transformation in the sense that the type of physical labour that an individual, – in this case, a migrant – performs and the manner in which they perform it offers a glimpse into what their identity is like, regardless of whether they have a single identity or multiple identities. In this vein, I also paid close attention to how individual participants interpreted the day-to-day social relationships they established with South Africans as well as with other migrants. I was also interested in the meanings that individual participants ascribed to these kinds of relationships, as well as how they interpreted the social realities that were immediately surrounding them.

January of 2019 marked the beginning of my initial attempt to negotiate my way into the field. During this period, one of my primary focuses was on locating the most important gatekeepers and developing the necessary networks to recruit potential participants. One definition of a gatekeeper is someone or something that controls access to an organization or institution; another definition describes a gatekeeper as someone or something that monitors certain information and withholds others (Bryld, Kamau and Sinigallia, 2013; Neuman, 2012; Singh and Wassenaar, 2016).

Gatekeepers are the individuals who serve as the first point of contact for individuals who are located outside of the organization, thereby connecting the organization with the external environment. Additionally, gatekeepers are responsible for internal roles involving liaison and coordination. The theory of gatekeeping proposed by Kurt Lewin in 1943 served as the inspiration for the concept and metaphor of the "gatekeeper". According to Maunganidze (2019), in the field of migration studies, gatekeepers are typically understood to be bureaucrats who hold the power and authority to grant permission to cross state borders and to access a particular migrant community. In addition to these officials, there are also local informal contact persons who monitor the flow of information from migrants who are either without documentation or who are in the country illegally. According to Iacovetta (2006), the term "gatekeeping" encompasses the vast array of activities related to migration, including those dealing with citizenship and regulation. Therefore, negotiating with gatekeepers is especially important, considering that access to a research population is frequently mediated by multiple institutions (Chaudhuri, 2017; Mainwaring, 2016). Gatekeepers are individuals in my research, who are influential, know a large number of people, and have an impact on how I connected with and recruited my participants. One example of a gatekeeper is Bra Taka. These are also the people who have the ability to potentially cut off connections with participants if they have reason to believe that either their safety or the safety of their people is in jeopardy.

I met with Bra Taka, who has been cutting my hair in Cape Town since I arrived in 2016. Bra Taka is a migrant barber who works in a hair and beauty salon that also serves as a barbershop. Bra's shop is a hybrid business. This establishment employs 12 people of various African nationalities, but only two of them are South African citizens. Bra Taka was gracious enough to introduce me to all of his co-workers. My study concentrated on both private and public spaces where migrants live and work. As a result, before I could conduct my research, I had to negotiate and re-negotiate my entry into these spaces. The vast majority of newcomers had a suspicious demeanour. They were concerned that I was a spy who would reveal their identities to law enforcement or immigration authorities, especially those who lacked proper documentation. On the other hand, I assured them that I was unconcerned about the state of their documentation. Some even expressed skepticism, wondering how a privileged student with a study visa could spend time with them without having to engage in any form of paid labour. Thus, not only did I face linguistic and

cultural barriers, but also numerous other obstacles, such as being suspected of being a spy who plans to sell out undocumented migrants. As demonstrated in the preceding story, when I encountered French-speaking bouncers, I encountered more than just linguistic and cultural barriers. To summarize, not everyone was ready to welcome me into their world when I arrived.

Because some of my participants were mobile and, eventually, with the advent of Covid-19, I needed to be both physically and virtually present to access them. On virtual, I was fortunate to be permitted to join specific WhatsApp groups. These groups served as platforms for social commentary and the sharing of vital issues, such as job opportunities, documentation access, police operations (such as searches for undocumented migrants), and religiosity, among others. Unverified stories were also circulated, and when gathering information from these groups, personal discretion was essential. When I became a member of these WhatsApp groups, they were aware that I would be joining as a student researcher. I also negotiated permission to use information that I thought would be useful to me. However, I assured them of their safety and privacy, promising not to reveal their names, phone numbers, or where they stayed. Given the suspicion, porousness, and unpredictability of the field, negotiating entry was an iterative and continuous process. My experiences have confirmed Van Duijn's (2020) assertion that, when conducting ethnographic fieldwork, access must frequently be (re-)negotiated for each field.

I connected with some of his co-workers after Bra Taka introduced me to them, but others rejected me. I asked the migrants to direct and introduce me to their friends, colleagues, and relatives after reaching out and building rapport with them. I was able to reach out to participants with diverse and wide-ranging experiences using this snowballing technique. Both those with documented and undocumented migration and resident papers were included in my selection. Unfortunately, some of the participants who lacked proper migrant and resident documents were hesitant to participate for fear of being arrested, victimized, or subjected to xenophobic attacks in the near future. Nonetheless, because I was introduced to them by trusted friends and colleagues, this gap was not a major issue. In this case, for example, I relied heavily on Bra Taka's assistance. Using my social capital, he became an important figure (gatekeeper) in introducing me to his friends and other migrants I had not met before the research. His vibrant social connections ended up connecting me

with migrants from various countries. Ideally, snowballing enabled me to interact with migrants of various nationalities, languages, and cultural orientations.

2.6 Participant Observation

I assumed participation in migrants' daily routines, including formal and informal socio-economic activities, as well as other gatherings, such as churches, family fun days, end-of-year parties, nightclubs, and restaurants. I volunteered to work for Mama Santo, a 50-year-old female mobile vegetable vendor who drives a small white Nissan NP200. She purchases vegetables from farmers, transports them, and distributes them throughout Cape Town. Although she is usually on the move, Mama Santo occasionally runs her vegetable business next to the Wynberg taxi rank, which is a few blocks off the main road. I offered to drive Mama Santo twice a week (mostly Saturdays). My friend Tino, who has a long-standing relationship with Mama Santo and can buy fruits and vegetables on credit, introduced me to her. The following is a transcript of my conversation with her on the first day I volunteered:

> Are you sure you want to work for free my son? This is not an easy business and sometimes it's dangerous as we are targeted by armed robbers. Sometimes we can travel and work the whole day without having the chance to eat. Are you sure you can do this? Can I also trust you with my business, with my money?

The fact that Mama Santo referred to me as her son provides some insight into our relationship. It illustrates the way in which social relationships are enacted through and with other people. The earlier statement made by Nyamnjoh in his paper from 2002 that "[a] child is only one person's in the womb" is consistent with the experiences that I have had. This Afrocentric idiom can also be found in other parts of the world; for instance, in Zimbabwe, the native Shona language has a phrase that goes, "*kubara mwana wabarira vamwe"* (a child belongs to the community). In addition, a well-known African proverb asserts that "it takes a village to raise a child" (Reupert, 2022). The African value or principle known as "ubuntu" is inextricably linked to this proverb (a concept that I will explore later). According to Nyamnjoh (2002), this demonstrates that social visibility or notability results from (or is made easier by) being connected with other individuals in a communion of interests. I was able to reassure Mama Santo that I was a trustworthy individual and that she could entrust both her money and her business to me because Tino had vouched for me. My relationship with Tino, or *hushamwari*, developed out of what Nyamnjoh (2018) referred to as the "conviviality" at the core of Southern African personhood. In this sense, *hushamwari* was

the source of my relationship with Tino. I reassured Mama Santo that I was an employee who was committed to their work. My relationship with Mama Santo is an example of conviviality and ubuntu, and it is one that I have worked hard to cultivate and develop further. Both of these concepts encourage people to work on repairing their relationships with one another rather than rejecting one another. My time with Mama Santo lasted for a total of six months, and this was how it all started. I also assured her that I was eager to learn new things and that the research I was doing was for academic purposes.

This is just one example of how the mobility of people, things, and ideas can impact migrants' ability to make ends meet in the city or how their subjective experiences of city life are mediated. It depicts the relational, emotional, and embodied aspects of everyday convivial encounters between migrants in Cape Town's diverse informal spaces. As a result, convivial encounters play a role in repositioning Cape Town as a more accommodating space, one in which difference is routinely, regularly, and often amiably negotiated in mundane social interactions. It is considered the norm in the public sphere to be sociable with people of different ethnicities and cultures, and these patterns persist in informal social networks. Sandercock (2003), in a similar vein, describes Amin's (2002) "micro-publics" as successful sites of social "mixity", where people overcome the myriad complexities that characterize urban geographies through the simple process of comparing ways of doing things and sharing tasks with the "Other". Discussions of conviviality around ethnic differences have highlighted how diverse populations that share urban localities and spaces manage the process of interdependence, cohabitation, and collaboration, as well as modes of living together, building on more established studies of social relationships, race, and identity (see, for example, Gilroy, 1987; Wise and Noble, 2016).

Working with Mama Santo unlocked a significant number of doors for my research. Mama Santo sold her fruits and vegetables to many customers, both locals and migrants. In my encounters and interactions, I made friends, acquaintances and more importantly, participants. Interactions and encounters in this study meant the mundane social processes that enabled migrants to engage with each other and locals in Cape Town. Positive interaction between Mama Santo's clients and I helped me to effectively build networks which later helped me in two ways. Firstly, it assisted me in building networks of mutuality and reciprocity. I was able to recruit my participants and research assistants. Secondly, positive interaction provided a window through which I observed improved

migrant relations. These relations involved more than just mere tolerance of each other's presence, co-presence and co-existence, but mutually beneficial convivial relations emerged through convivial urban encounters. Thus, conviviality serves as a foreground for the formation of diverse urban spaces, but this diversity can be negotiated and translated through convivial encounters, social interactions, and broader processes of positive articulation and "civic becoming" (Amin, 2009; Back and Sinha, 2016). Fincher and Iveson (2008), urban geographers, pioneered the concept of convivial encounters. It is based on the idea that, because modern cities are diverse, encounters with strangers are a central feature of urban life and are intrinsic to what it means to be socially included in urban spaces (Young, 1990). Many of Mama Santo's customers, like Tino, preferred to buy from her rather than from a well-known store. One, Mama Santo delivered; if a customer purchased even small quantities, she would deliver, selling to other customers en route. Two, Mama Santo allowed her dependable customers to purchase fruits and vegetables on credit. As Chabal (2009:137) points out, networks play an important role in the exchange of ideas and monetary transactions among Africans, particularly migrants in South Africa. Migrants who make a living in this manner must rely on obligations and reciprocity. Mutual trust is essential in this situation. It places enormous social pressure on Mama Santo's customers to pay back. Through these informal socioeconomic transactions, trust is thus a critical component in weathering everyday life and activating social networks.

Apart from working with Mama Santo, I also embraced the strategy of visiting gathering places. I frequently visited clubs and restaurants. In addition, I visited and spent time in crowded places such as bus terminals, bus and taxi ranks, and train stations, among others. I was able to establish long-lasting bonding relationships with the participants by using this tactic, lowering the barriers that stood in the way of my continued interaction with them for the research. Long Street in Cape Town's Central Business District was one of my areas of research where I spent nights out, and I also liked to hang out in the Observatory neighbourhood, which has several restaurants and nightclubs. I was able to observe migrant employees' interactions with their customers and patrons in these clubs. I also developed a network of *hushamwari* with Maxwell, who worked as a bouncer at Kind Regards (a club in Observatory). Maxwell speaks Swahili as his first language, and he is currently learning English as a second. We were able to communicate even though his English was limited, and my Swahili was nonexistent. During our many conversations, he revealed that he is hesitant to interact with people who speak English for extended periods because he has difficulties

understanding it. However, since we became *shamwari* (friends), he was always friendly and accommodating to me. Maxwell also stated that many of his Swahili-speaking friends who work as bouncers chose the job because it does not require them to engage in in-depth conversations with customers and patrons, implying that language is not a significant barrier to employment for them. Maxwell stated that this was one of the reasons they chose the position. My observation in Long Street and what my research assistants repeatedly told me concur with what Maxwell shared.

I also used public transportation, such as taxis and trains, to get to public gatherings. This allowed me to conduct fieldwork with mobile participants on the move (Wittel, 2000; Melly, 2013). According to Van Duijn (2020:283), "to follow a variety of partners, one must first gain access to different fields." In this way, I used public transportation to track my participants and learn about how they interact in public spaces. I rode trains in the morning and evening, when people were heading to work, doing other things, or leaving the city to go home. During these encounters, I would quietly observe their actions, conversations, and interactions with one another. At times, I would strike up a conversation with them. During these interactions, I discovered that some migrants, particularly those who do not speak the local language, are very selective about whom they engaged in conversation. They are concerned about being "outed as foreigners". I met Sonia, a migrant who works for Mukuru, a Bureau de Change in Cape Town CBD, on one of my many train rides. During our first conversation, I learned that Sonia commutes daily by train from Bellville to Cape Town CBD because living in Bellville and commuting is less expensive than living in the CBD. After three weeks of phone conversations, Sonia became my key informant. Given her position in a remittance company, she was especially helpful in assisting me in understanding migrant remittances (see Chapter Six).

In addition to riding in trains and taxis, I went to a lot of different locations where people, both men and women, play soccer. For instance, I went to a place called, Tekkerz,[5] which is a five-a-side soccer park in Mowbray, a neighbourhood in Cape Town. I went there on a regular basis. Tekkerz Soccer Park is a well-liked location for both business gatherings and birthday parties due to its four soccer fields that meet the standards set by FIFA. Football is played for social purposes at Tekkerz, and there is also sometimes a financial benefit attached to it in the form of bets that

[5] Tekkerz is the only 5-a-side soccer park in the heart of Cape Town's Southern Suburbs. https://tekkerz.co.za/#

people place. During the course of my routine trips to this location, I have had the opportunity to take part in, as well as observe, the soccer games that take place on most Saturdays and Sundays. The place is frequented by people of a wide variety of nationalities, including migrants. Football is the unifying force that brings these people and communities together, although they speak different languages and come from different ethnic backgrounds. Soccer has the power to unite people, teach them to appreciate one another's unique qualities, work together, and develop important life skills that are essential for the development of a healthy society. People create spaces in these locations so that migrants and locals can form and maintain significant connections with one another. As I show throughout the dissertation, these bonds are translated into social capital that helps them to communicate and connect across various inequalities, boundaries, and borders.

In addition, I went to restaurants for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I would observe the various people in these settings and strike up conversations with some of them. The majority of the restaurants I visited were run by people from other countries, and they served "exotic" foods to customers whose native cuisines did not include those ingredients. Because of the crowds and noise levels in the bars and restaurants where I was trying to record interviews, my strategy did not always work. I had no difficulty conducting interviews in English with the other customers I had the pleasure of meeting. I conducted in-depth interviews with those who agreed to my methodology, taking notes as we went and sometimes recording key phrases verbatim to capture the actual meaning derived from what Rubinstein-vila (2004) refers to as "natural settings". In this context, I realized how critical it is to understand the contextual emergence and application of specific concepts, even if they appear straightforward when translated literally. For this purpose, for example, the social construction of the concept of "friendship" needed to be thoroughly understood and contextualized in relation to how it is applied. For example, I've noticed that a sizable proportion of those who self-identify as Nigerian use the term "friend" to refer to anyone with whom they are conversing. I noticed this pattern every time I went to a restaurant that served Nigerian food. Waiters and other staff members would refer to male customers as "friends", and female customers as "mama" or "sister", depending on the age of the individual being addressed. "My friend (to a male figure), my sister (to a female figure), what can I give you today, *egusi* or red sauce?" they would ask their guests as they brought the food to the table. In these other contexts, the phrase "my friend" denotes more than just a greeting and interaction gesture. There

is more to the concept than meets the eye, and it can be translated into meticulously calculated social relations. Bonding, dependence, stewardship, collectivism, reciprocity, and conviviality are some examples of these relationships. The fundamental principle of conviviality in this regard is mutual aid, which is common in volunteer organizations, families, and friendship networks. It's worth noting that Nowicka and Heil (2015) compare this principle to Illich's convivial order of "autonomous individuals and primary groups". Nonetheless, overcoming differences should not be confused with bridging differences between individuals, who interact with one another, through the use of courtesy. Convivial gatherings and interactions frequently maintain a high level of exclusivity along the lines of kinship, gender, social class, ethnicity, and race (Nayak, 2017). Although this was a possibility in my research, I did not encounter it, or I may have overlooked it. However, it is common practice to refer to the paradox that arises as a result of the power hierarchies involved in the simultaneous presence of conviviality and exclusion (FinNayak, 2017; Tyler, 2017; Neal et al., 2018).

In other cases, I used non-participant observation, walking around Cape Town's inner city and observing migrants in places like Greenmarket Square, Sea Point, Waterfront, and other popular recreation areas. I visited the Cape Town train station regularly and noticed that migrants strategically placed their markets there to attract customers as they boarded and disembarked the trains. The tactic of observing participants in action is praised by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007:4) for its unique advantage of reflecting the exact action as it was produced by the field. This benefit is emphasized in this strategy. Furthermore, this is critical in reducing the researcher's ability to create actions from his or her imagination, which is a source of bias. In an ideal world, interpreting social life and events in their actual contexts would reduce the likelihood of assigning subjective meanings and avoid misconceptions (Bryman, 2008).

The mobile nature and shared sense-making processes of Cape Town's migrants inspired my use of multi-site ethnography. This type of ethnography was first coined in 1995 by Marcus, who saw it as a suitable method for a rapidly changing society and increasingly complex research topics that are not limited to a specific location. In this case, migrants are constantly on the move in search of employment opportunities and better life opportunities. In addition to travelling with Mama Santo, I utilized trains and taxis to travel to various locations, including Bellville, Claremont, and Woodstock, to name a few. I was following a manageable number of selected

participants, particularly those who allowed me to visit their residences and places of employment. In addition to their mobility, migrants have multiple forms of identification. This prompted me to embrace what Hannerz (2003:204) refers to as "there, and there, and there, and there!" "Following" is the central pillar of multi-sited ethnography. I was required to move from location to location in pursuit of people's social lives as they developed.

The experience of conducting ethnographic research at multiple sites was pleasant, but also included elements of suffering and regret. I gained valuable insights by observing migrants as they travelled to various locations. The suffering occurred since I was both an "insider" and an "outsider": an insider as a migrant researching fellow migrants and an outsider as a student with a student visa researching people who might not have documents. Although documentation issues were irrelevant to my research focus, they were important to my participants, which presented me with a few challenges. My PhD fieldwork experience provided me with a different perspective on research than did my Honours and Master's degree research experiences near the Zimbabwean border in Giyani. Participants in these studies were Shona-speaking Zimbabwean migrants. Also, my native language is Shona. Based on the horizontal ties of the native Shona-speaking migrants, I found my interactions to be less complicated and more easily expedited. In contrast, my doctoral research exposed me to new challenges resulting from diverse national, linguistic, and cultural characteristics, exacerbated by the city's multiculturalism. I had a preconceived notion of what a "complete" study of migrant life would entail and discovered that incompleteness is a central theme. My level of engagement and need for consensus have exceeded my previous expectations and experiences. My consideration of migrants with these differences and orientations enabled me to develop an interdisciplinary research strategy.

2.7 Researching during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The textbook plan of research is to plan how data will be gathered, the timeframe and the tools to be used, but what transpires in the field can be unpredictable. It requires adaptability, flexibility, and agility. My fieldwork occurred during a portion of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the design and planning of my fieldwork, I never considered COVID-19. Nonetheless, one of my chapters (Chapter Six) focuses on how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the mobility of people, money, and goods and services. Just before the start of the lockdowns in January 2020, I joined the World

Bank in Washington, DC, United States of America (USA) for ten months. In the World Bank's Social Development Global Practice, I participated in the Africa Fellowship Program. I participated in analytic work, including promoting gender equity, social cohesion, and economic inclusion among displaced people and other vulnerable communities in Uganda, Zimbabwe, and Eswatini. In discussions on the ensuing mobility dynamics during COVID -related lockdowns and restrictions, I was able to reference findings from research I conducted in Cape Town between January and December of 2019. Notably, the incorporation of Cape Town data balanced conclusions on vulnerability while driving insights into inventive adaptation.

I interviewed with the UN and its subsidiaries, including The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), among others, at the World Bank. These organizations help migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people. In addition, I interviewed World Bank staff involved in migration and reviewed secondary data sources, such as reports, blogs, and policy briefs on migration. My time at the World Bank was an important part of my PhD research. I chose all of these participants based on their expertise, suitability, and impact on the survival and livelihoods of migrants. During my World Bank attachment, I co-wrote a blog and a policy brief on the impact of COVID-19 on the mobile population (Ogude and Chekero, 2020). These publications demonstrated that the same measures used to contain the pandemic's spread – border closures, lockdowns, physical separation, limited onward mobility, and access to social networks – undermined the very coping mechanisms that migrants typically rely on to overcome challenges. Under “normal” conditions, migrants’ adaptation to health, economic, and social stresses and shocks is reliant on social networks. These include immediate and extended relationships found in faith-based groups, women’s groups, social and recreational activities, and a variety of other networks, including those with host communities. State-driven COVID-19 containment measures halted the movement of people, goods, and money (including domestic and international remittances), eroding migrants’ adaptive mechanisms. The disruption of social networks has increased the socioeconomic vulnerabilities of migrants. This provided me with a new perspective on migrants and remittances (see Chapter Six).

When I returned to South Africa in November 2020, the country was on level 4 lockdown. During this time, a curfew was imposed, which began at 9 p.m. and ended at 4 a.m. Interprovincial travel was restricted in some ways. To continue my fieldwork, I chose fewer participants. The COVID-19 pandemic influenced this decision. To reduce the risk of infection to both the researcher and the research, I had to reduce the number of participants. More importantly, for studies like this with dynamic and complex characteristics, keeping numbers smaller is critical. According to Geertz (1973:23), this consideration allows the researcher to focus on the depth, nuances, detail, interconnectedness, and complexity of migrants' everyday social interactions and mobilities rather than just the breadth of social connections. Geertz elaborated further, stating that small facts speak to large issues in the research conundrum. As a result, I kept in touch with my few chosen participants, but with deeper, well-maintained relationships and traces of their daily migrant experiences. My primary goal was to maintain depth and quality over quantity.

The final stage of data collection was carried out using digital ethnography as a precaution against potentially harmful close contact. Through computer-mediated social interaction, digital ethnographic methods were developed. The WhatsApp groups I joined before the COVID-19 pandemic proved extremely useful during the pandemic. They helped me with my digital ethnography. I was able to listen in on migrant conversations. During this phase, the hot topics were how COVID-19 began, how it spread, and how it could be cured. Vaccine conspiracy theories also arose and spread quickly. Some speculated that the vaccines were intended to reduce population growth in Africa. Some people believed that COVID-19 was created in China and was intended to spread throughout Africa to reduce population growth. Some thought it was a disease for the elderly, while others thought it was just the 'flu that would go away with time and required less intensive medical care. Although my research was not specifically focused on COVID-19 issues, such conversations helped me understand the construction of migrants' everyday lives and interactions, both online and offline. This also allowed me to capture the daily social realities of migrants as individuals rather than as members of a group (Eastmond, 2007).

Digital ethnography helped me understand migrants' behaviour in a variety of ways. People were able to express themselves through photos, videos, and voice recordings thanks to the use of smartphones and WhatsApp. I appreciated the role of smartphones and tasks like video diaries and photo uploads, which allowed me to peek into the lives of my participants without physically being

present (Ruikai Dai and Luanjiao Hu, 2022). I had easier access to in-depth insights. I captured and understood their behaviour and reactions as they occurred, delivering true-to-life data faster and more easily than ever before. The great thing about mobile phones is that participants use them in their daily lives, so they are a natural research tool that makes research easy because people already know what they need to do. Digital ethnography is also easily integrated into people's lives, allowing them to participate in research while going about their daily lives –- and no one needs to know (Lupton, 2020; Jitu, 2020)... Furthermore, digital ethnography was not limited by geographical boundaries. It is also important to remember that digital ethnography is not a "bounded research method" or technique with a distinct beginning and end (Pink et al., 2015). It is more processual, and it makes us realize that ethnographic immersion is possible even when the space of interaction lacks a concrete physical grounding (Hine, 2000). Because I did not have to travel to my respondents, I was able to gain insights that I would not have been able to obtain in my physical presence (Lupton, 2020).

During the COVID-19-induced lockdown in 2020, I kept in touch with my informants by employing some of the Shona-inspired friendships (*hushamwari)* that I had developed over the years. I was able to keep in touch with my sources in novel ways thanks to the advances in technology. These methods include everything from virtual happy hours with friends to online religious services. During the coronavirus lockdown, there was a significant increase in the use of online tools all over the world, as reported by the most prominent digital platforms and social media platforms (Perez-Escoda et al, 2020). Many of the social cues that are normally present in face-to-face encounters were lost in online communication, leading to an increase in impersonal interactions (White and Dorman, 2001) and making it more difficult to offer and receive support (Lewandowski et al., 2011). On the other hand, I was able to maintain contact with my social contacts by using digital platforms such as WhatsApp, which provided me with information about the most recent developments in migrant mobility and social interaction (both of which were restricted). I discovered that online communication improved social relationships when I tried to use it to strengthen existing relationships with offline informants, friends, and family. This was especially true when a lockdown made in-person social interactions more difficult. As a result, a few of my friends, family members, and other informants and I have begun to use video-calling technology such as WhatsApp, Zoom, and FaceTime to engage in digital forms of communing, fellowshipping, cooking, and eating together. Because of the COVID-19 virus pandemic, a

different type of connectivity was required, one that was not necessarily physical but was certainly social and emotional. In keeping with this observation, Nyamnjoh (2020)[6] is of the view that

> [i]t is in recognition of incompleteness that humans are ever so eager to seek ways of enhancing themselves through relationships with other humans, and in using their creativity and imagination to forge solidarities and to acquire magical objects or technologies that can extend them in their relationships with fellow humans and with the whims and caprices of natural and supernatural forces….

This observation is in line with the observation that "it is in recognition of incompleteness". To put it another way, people are perpetually interested in discovering ways to better themselves through the relationships they have with other people. Researchers who study mobility, migration, and the experiences of migrants in urban settings use the term "conviviality" to refer to this kind of social connection (Nowicka and Vertovec, 2014; Nowicka and Heil, 2015; Wise and Noble. 2016). This indicates that for us to come together, although we are physically located in different places, we needed to participate in a variety of different forms of virtual solidarity.

2.8 Specific Data Collection Tools

I spoke with members of the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Metro Police, and the Traffic Police during my fieldwork. I had no intention of conducting interviews with law enforcement during the planning and preparation stages of my fieldwork. On the other hand, I was once detained by police while travelling to and from the field, and a spur-of-the-moment discussion about migrants ensued. Even though these conversations just happened to occur at the right time, they were extremely useful in bringing in new information. Although migrants shared their experiences with traffic cops and police in general from the perspective of a victim, police also shared their perspectives, which differed from migrants'. In light of this, I decided to take a "reflexive approach", as Finlay (1998) describes it, as a constructive step towards successfully completing the fieldwork and data collection processes. I did this to take advantage of the police officers' prior experience working with migrant drivers and commuters. This was done to promote openness and acceptance of research procedures in the pursuit of accurately reflecting value-neutral data. The use of both normative and pragmatic research strategies that I employed when harvesting the experiences of both migrants and police officers in their encounters and interactions had a significant impact on the process. As a result of my discussions with law enforcement, I

[6]https://americanethnologist.org/online-content/collections/post-covid-fantasies/a-post-covid-19-fantasy-on-incompleteness-and-conviviality/

decided to look into documents that describe the primary role of the South African Traffic Police (SATP). This prompted an examination of the work done by South African traffic police in collaboration with the National Traffic Law Enforcement Agency[7] (NTLE). I'll go into more detail about this in the fourth chapter.

In addition to that, I used unstructured interviews to collect my data. The participants came from a variety of locations, including public spaces and marketplaces located in and around Wynberg, Rondebosch, Mowbray, and Salt River, as well as the city itself. Purposive sampling and snowballing were the methods that were used to select the people who would participate in the unstructured interviews. The participants were chosen for a specific purpose and were able to assist me in locating their migrant friends, relatives, and co-workers. I was able to probe their experiences of daily life in an urban setting and how they formed social connections in Cape Town thanks to the direct discussions I had with the migrants (especially those who spoke English). These discussions gave me enough room to do so. I relied on the research assistants I had working for me who spoke French. Due to the adaptability of unstructured interviews, Minichello (1990) praised them for their versatile nature, which provides the opportunity for self-expression to both the researcher and the participants. In addition, Patton (2002) stated that unstructured interviews are essential additions to the method of participant observation because they provide participants' expressed views in the settings in which they are most comfortable.

While unstructured interviews are valued for promoting open-ended conversations, they have limitations including lack of standardisation, subjectivity, bias, and potential depth restrictions. Without a predetermined format or set of questions, unstructured interviews lack uniformity, leading to fluctuating responses that may hinder systematic comparison and analysis. Subjectivity and bias may arise as interviewers unintentionally introduce their own biases, potentially influencing participant responses. Moreover, the absence of a clear guide in unstructured interviews may impede the addressing of key areas of the research comprehensively, with the possibility of obtaining insufficient responses. Despite these limitations, I maintained focus within the inquiry and utilised follow-up questions to ensure a thorough exploration of key areas within

[7] https://www.rtmc.co.za/index.php/what-we-do/ntp#:~:text=The%20primary%20function%20of%20the,fitness%2C%20freight%20and%20public%20transport%2C

the scope of my research. I also used focus group discussions (FGDs) in data collection. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and Gibbs, focus groups are 'a group of individuals selected and assembled by a researcher to discuss and comment on personal experiences with the subject matter" (1997). The goal of the focus groups is to learn more about the subject at hand. With the help of the FGDs, I was able to address migrant encounters in Cape Town, as well as their experiences, meanings, and perceptions of everyday social connections, engagement, and connections. Regardless, what I present in this study is more than a simple description or re-creation of these interactions. This is because migrants are too mobile and frequently preoccupied with their commitments, making it difficult to organize a formal focus group discussion (FGD). During my fieldwork, I initiated conversations in crowded places like restaurants, barbershops, and salons, where I found spontaneous emergence of FGDs. This proved highly beneficial and as a result, I conducted a total of 14 FGDs. To ensure validity, I triangulated the information gathered from these discussions. Follow-up discussions further complemented the initial participant contributions. The impromptu nature of the FGDs resulted in varying numbers (10 on average) and genders of participants, with most groups consisting of both men and women. I adopted this organic approach throughout my research period to maintain consistency. One of the incidents occurred while I was getting a haircut at Bra Taka's barbershop. My friend Bra Taka and I began by lightheartedly discussing soccer, and then we moved on to a discussion about how migrants make a living in Cape Town. Finally, migrants from various experiences and backgrounds took part in our discussion, as they did in others that followed. It's worth noting that, as more migrant girls and women were included in the discussion, it became more balanced. Women's participation encouraged an equitable conversation between the sexes and provided a range of perspectives from various social backgrounds. At the end of the conversation, I concluded that I had gained a more in-depth understanding of the migrants' situations both before and after they arrived in Cape Town. Most importantly, the majority of participants responded without acknowledging that I was interested in their genuine and varied responses to my study. Despite this, they appeared to enjoy the opportunity to engage in vigorous debate.

2.9 Ethnographic Reflexivity

As a black, male, and migrant university student, I had to consider several issues before entering the field of study. I had to consider my interactions with the participants as both an "insider" and an "outsider". As a student, I was unfamiliar with street language, workplaces, and other

experiences, so I was an “outsider”. Importantly, as a migrant, I qualified to be an “insider” in the worlds and spaces of other migrants, and I assumed that this would help me to be accepted and blend in well with the migrant community after some attempts.

I embraced self-reflexivity while conducting the study to reduce biased results. In doing so, I was mindful of how my Shona cultural belief systems, Shona language, Zimbabwean nationality, and knowledge can influence research processes and outcomes, particularly when researching people who are not Zimbabweans themselves. I embraced reflexivity to reduce the possibility of unbalanced power asymmetry in interviews and other data collection interactions between the researcher and the researched. However, given that I am a migrant researching fellow migrants, power differentials were not as pronounced in my study as they might otherwise have been. As a result, my respondents saw me as their counterpart. Nonetheless, I recognize the presence of power dynamics in research processes and interview settings, even if they were not obvious. I recognized that, as a young man working with both men and women, my level of education and visa status, for example, might have a minor impact on my interactions with the participants. To mitigate these potential challenges, I entered the field as a mere migrant eager to learn. This position was critical in shaping my interactions with the participants because we interacted with few biases and constraints.

On a related note, other potential flaws, such as the participants’ assumption that I was aware of information that is considered by the people to be “common”" knowledge, were potentially a threat to the content of the data that I gathered. In other instances, some of the participants glossed over some important issues, presumably under the impression that I, as a migrant, was already familiar with them. The following was brought to my attention by one of my experiences. One day, I was having an informal conversation in a restaurant in Cape Town with a 33-year-old woman named Yvonne, who told me that as a migrant hairdresser, she faces many challenges, such as clients who refuse to pay her after the job. She stated that they take advantage of her lack of the necessary documents to legally stay in the country and challenge them in court. When asked why she did not report such incidents to the police, she explained that the police do not take action. They lose interest in pursuing the case as soon as they learn that it is a South African refusing to pay a foreigner. She described numerous incidents in which migrants, who attempted to report similar cases, were arrested by police for lack of legal travel documents (passport or permit). My

participants frequently shared stories about hairdressers not being paid and police ignoring cases they reported. Yvonne's complaint made me realize that I might have missed out on important information because I was convinced that law enforcement does not apply the law selectively based on nationality and citizenship. When I was alerted, I used my well-established social relationships to elicit more detailed explanations.

In other cases, my reflexive approach has also helped me in getting even more sensitive information from my participants. One of the sensitive issues which I came across involved episodes of gender-based violence regularly erupting among migrants. I managed not to cross over the boundaries of the cultural values and norms of my participants on these sensitive issues. For example, one day, while visiting one of my research assistants in Wynberg, I discovered a lady physically assaulting a man. My research assistant informed me that the two were husband and wife from outside of South Africa. They were also potential participants in our study. My research assistant had scheduled an interview with them before the fight. However, the brawl left my research assistant and me with mixed feelings. Should we keep interviewing them or call the police? What if they were arrested or worse, deported? As researchers and moral beings, we wrestled with these issues.

Such incidents involving sensitive subjects are common in the field of research. Despite my condemnation of violent behaviour, I used my interpretation in this scenario without further investigation. As a result, I cannot deny that, in some cases, I failed to detach myself from the findings of my research. The important thing to remember is that I tried to maintain objectivity and sensitivity to the issues under consideration. While some argue that ethnographic knowledge cannot be generalized, its value lies in the specificity with which forms of life at a given time can be described and analyzed. In this regard, reflexivity aided me in carefully considering myself as a researcher and how, under what conditions, I write sensitive subjects, and what impact these might have on the value of the ethnography produced.

2.10 Ethical Considerations

My fieldwork included the COVID-19 pandemic, and despite the difficulties, I followed the professional Ethical Guidelines and Principles of Conduct for Anthropologists. According to Anthropology Southern Africa (ASnA, 2005), the professional code of ethical conduct provides a framework policy that ensures adherence to, and promotion of, ethically accountable research. I

followed the UCT ethical research standards in all processes, beginning with ethical clearance, participant identification, data collection, and other related processes. Data collection in the field was guided by Spradley's (1980) fieldwork principles. His participant observation principles include protecting informants' rights, interests, and sensitivities, communicating research objectives, protecting informants' privacy, not exploiting informants, and making reports available to informants. In my study, I made certain that I communicated all of my research objectives to the participants. Before beginning my research, I obtained the consent of the participants. In situations such as my interaction with nightclub bouncers on Long Street, I did not force them to participate in English. Instead, I adjusted and delegated the task to my French-speaking research assistants. Similarly, consent was obtained before I began recording interviews or observing facial expressions and voice projections.

I was ethically obligated not to expose them to danger or cause them harm, given their precarious living conditions far from their homes. To protect their safety, I did not record their real names, exact places of business, and residential areas in Cape Town, which could expose them to potential danger. I adhered to this strategy learning from my other previous research that anonymity is crucial and if this does not stand you may end up exposing the majority to violence, arrests and erratic xenophobic attacks. In other provinces, such as KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, and Mpumalanga, violent arrests and xenophobic attacks against non-South African nationals are common. When researching non-South African nationals, the politics of belonging are a prevalent factor that must be carefully monitored and managed.

Following the discussion, migrants with whom I worked expressed concern about being publicly identified as "foreigners" and becoming vulnerable to xenophobic tensions in 2020. Foreign-owned shops were targeted despite the COVID-19 lockdown, and there was widespread fear. My role as a researcher was to ensure that I did not expose them while conducting research. Fortunately, no obvious violence occurred during my fieldwork; however, violence may have occurred outside of my sight. If it had happened in my presence, I would have adjusted and readjusted my research plans and schedules to ensure my own and my participants' safety. Avoiding risk and potential harm in the field for both parties remain a primary consideration in human-related ethical issues (Nhemachena 2014; Cramer et al., 2011).

Another critical aspect was the emergence of some ethical and legal questions during my research. In one instance, for example, a participant introduced me to a fellow migrant who was involved in the sale of illegal and dangerous drugs to survive. As a researcher, I was faced with the difficult decision of whether to report the incident to the police or to leave it alone, knowing full well that doing so would have disastrous consequences. I was also afraid of becoming a victim of the crime that was taking place right in front of my eyes. However, ethics dictated that I only observe and collect data without exposing my participants to any potential harm. The Criminal Procedure Act 51 of 1977, which governs procedures and related matters in criminal proceedings, also guided and informed me. A crime consists of a criminal act, criminal intent, concurrence, causation, harm, and accompanying circumstances. In this case, I was constrained by the parameters of my research, which required me to only observe and collect data without putting my participants in danger.

Another ethical dilemma I encountered in the field concerned gender sensitivity. Because my research included both males and females, I came across sensitive issues such as gender-based violence in intimate relationships. My main quandary was whether I should report the perpetrators of violence to the police or leave them alone. On another note, I wondered if I was supposed to offer some kind of counselling to those feuding couples. As a researcher and academic, I was conflicted as a bystander witnessing the unjust acts taking place. However, with the assistance of research assistants, we were able to refer the couple for counselling to Sonke Gender Justice,[8] a Cape Town-based organization dedicated to gender justice and gender transformation. We never wanted to be witnesses or accomplices in criminal activity. Following up on the case, we learned that the couple had divorced and moved out of town. Finally, we had no idea whether our efforts had been fruitful.

Another ethical concern I encountered was participants who did not have proper migrant and resident documents. The vast majority of my participants fall into this category, and some even engage in illegal or criminal behaviour. However, because I was not interested in witch-hunting, I ignored all of these concerns and concentrated on my academic goals. I found myself becoming more enthralled by how they were cultivating robust conviviality despite their legal status. And, as the research progressed, I discovered that migrant legal status is not a significant variable in

[8] https://genderjustice.org.za/

migrants' everyday interactions, but it is a significant variable in their interactions with authorities. I observed that survival was founded on constructed pragmatisms that enabled them to navigate the unbalanced socio-economic terrains of Cape Town. In the end of it, I realized that protecting them and their livelihoods was more important.

Finally, the ethical and moral quandary that I faced in my study was avoiding stigma and discrimination against my participants. Often, research on underprivileged populations results in biased judgments and indiscriminate conclusions. Of course, the group I studied is not immune to stigma and prejudiced discriminatory conclusions, as other scholars, such as Landau (2007) and Vearey (2005), have noted. Being a foreigner (without a resident or work permit) added to their stigma and discrimination. To avoid this problem, I maintained reflexive considerations and saw them as all other people struggling to make ends meet. To keep value-neutral data, I avoided "otherising" them (see van Wyk, 2013).

2.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, I address the complexities, ambiguities, challenges as well as opportunities that I encountered while researching migrants in Cape Town. I give insights into the complexities of the urban migrants from African countries as migrants in Cape Town, South Africa. This chapter sought to contribute new knowledge by providing and suggesting strategies that can be employed in researching migrants and the neighbourhoods they inhabit, not only in South Africa, but also across Africa. By so doing, as a researcher conducting studies across cultural and linguistic lines, especially in international settings, I had to be actively present and always critical of the shortcomings of my elucidative horizons (Gadamer, 2004). To that end, I address issues of how I adopted an adjusted approach of having my research participants accept my physical presence in their personal spaces. The synthesis of illuminating perspectives with others in the field, a process that potentially involves deep contextual and methodological reflexivity, was my goal. This process is likely to lead to the explicit questioning of our data, and, of course, the conclusiveness of our findings (see also Ryen, 2011). It is important to note that I found it difficult to detach myself from field dilemmas and other inherent ambiguities as a researcher working in an open and socio-culturally constructed context. It was nearly impossible for me to avoid the time-consuming and complex processes that ranged from entering the field to data analysis. In lieu of this, it is undeniable that the COVID-19 pandemic, negotiating with gatekeepers, linguistic differences,

positionality, and physical and insider/outsider relations, among others, are factors that I had consciously managed (see Morosanu 2017; Maunganidze 2019). As a result, the successful completion of these processes was critical in increasing the credibility of the study and its findings. In a sensitive and complex study like this, careful consideration of these processes was my primary goal.

CHAPTER THREE

Migrants Navigating "Convivial Spaces" in Cape Town

3.1 Introduction

Drawing on the frameworks of incompleteness and friendships (*hushamwari*) explored above, this chapter investigates how convivial space is created and co-created by migrants' daily interactions, encounters, experiences, and social dynamics in urban Cape Town. It focuses specifically on the ways in which space is created and co-created through the experiences of migrants. I contend that the materialization of convivial space in urban space results from fellow migrants; migrants and locals negotiating a shared physical space. In this study, physical space is negotiated through the establishment of public spaces, such as social soccer fields, churches and restaurants. The study selected and concentrated on these three specific examples, social soccer fields, churches, and restaurants, because they have emerged as three dominant spaces frequented by migrants and have a direct impact on their interaction, encounters, and daily lives in Cape Town. According to Shaftoe (2008:51), public spaces serve a variety of practical purposes, including trading, meeting, conversing, resting, and other similar activities. While many scholars have focused on interaction and encounters in parks, squares and pavements, this chapter focuses on how people create convivial spaces by participating and interacting in social soccer, churches and restaurants, among others (Mangezvo, 2015; Hay, 2014; Nyamnjoh, 2018) I tried to give insights into the experiences and encounters of migrants in spaces characterized by ethnocultural diversity and explore the social dimensions of everyday intercultural encounters.

Everyday convivial encounters of varying duration and depth can foster a sense of social inclusion, belonging, hope, and identity among migrants, and this has the potential to open up opportunities for new ways of living together with difference (Mushonga, 2022; Wright, 2015). In this chapter, social soccer provides an important environment for the formation and maintenance of social relationships not only between migrants but also between migrants and locals. Encounters, participation and interaction in social soccer open doors for creating connections that would later afford people opportunities and sociality. Although players may speak a variety of languages and come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, social soccer can bring people together. In this study, social soccer brings people together and teaches them to appreciate one another's unique qualities

while also fostering the development of important life skills that are critical to the growth of a healthy society. At these locations, migrants create a space for themselves and the locals to form and maintain strong bonds. These connections become social capital, allowing people to communicate and connect regardless of the hierarchies, orders, or boundaries that separate them.

The importance of social networks among migrants in surviving in Cape Town cannot be overstated. Religion is an important coping strategy and a means of accessing social networks or connections in this struggle for survival. Religious practices and the church play an important role in the relationship and interaction of migrants and locals in Cape Town. Religious affiliations, and religious language shape how migrants create a space where they can feel at home away from home, whether temporarily or permanently. Conviviality underpins the creation and co-creation of such connection networks (Nyamnjoh, 2017). In relation to church-created social networks, De Certeau's (1984) work on "tactics" is relevant because it depicts how the concept of conviviality operates in contexts of constraints. De Certeau (1984) recognizes how convivial connections between different individuals and groups can be used to negotiate and encounter opportunities. This is consistent with Hay's (2014) observation at Cape Town's Bay community church, where conviviality is negotiated by striking a balance between intimacy and distance in relationships between people of various socioeconomic backgrounds and nationalities. At the Bay, the difficulty of reconciling seemingly incompatible emotions of aversion and curiosity can lead to hostility and animosity, but it can also lead to acceptance of differences and the discovery of similarities, hence conviviality.

Aside from social soccer and churches, sharing common spaces, such as restaurants and the food they serve, brings people together. People cultivate relationships, celebrate milestones, resolve conflicts, and express gratitude for life in restaurants. Restaurants enable migrants to mediate their subjective experiences of city life through practices and conviviality. They not only provide food, but they also make migrants feel at home away from home by serving staple foods from their home countries. Restaurants and other food establishments have become focal points where passersby and residents meet and have unintentional conversations. Connections are formed and translated into bonds in these dialogues, which can then develop into social networks such as the *hushamwari* network. *Hushamwari* emerges not only in restaurants but also in social soccer and churches. I see

hushamwari as a concept that embodies "conviviality" that lies at the heart of African personhood. In this regard conviviality "emphasises the repair rather than the rejection of human relationships with fellow humans as well as with the non-human world" (Nyamnjoh, 2018:21). This resonates with the Shona language idiom, *Hukama igasva, hunozadzikiswa nekudya* (relationships are incomplete until you share a meal). In light of incompleteness, this explains that sharing food binds all forms of relationships ranging from relatives to friends. The sharing of food occurs between and among men and women in Cape Town. Sharing of food brings people together in restaurants. This is critical in the process of forming cross-national social bonds that can be relied on as survival gateways and safety nets in the event of outbreaks of unforeseen events.

3.2 Understating Convivial Space

In this study, convivial urban space makes people feel safe and welcome, particularly migrants. According to Illich (1973:35), conviviality entails not only collaborating with others but also confronting external forces and demands. While urban planners have focused on creating places that foster a sense of community, they have ignored conviviality. According to Illich (1973:35), "a convivial society should be designed to allow all of its members the most autonomous action using tools that are least controlled by others". While the geographical, physical, and administrative dimensions of space are all important, this chapter considers how some people's fantasies about space include keeping other people, whom they define as different, out of that space. Specifically, how the nationalistic fantastical, such as Operation Dudula (the most recent organization to use South Africa's extreme socioeconomic disparity as a springboard for attacks on foreigners), excludes migrants. Furthermore, it was not surprising to see people verbally abused for not speaking local languages during my fieldwork. Such fantasies must be investigated in order to account for the daily risk of violence that (mostly African) migrants face. Violence is seen as an edge to the mundane in this study. It may not be present directly, but it has the potential to manifest. Despite the prevalence of social cohesion, distrust, tension, and conflict will always exist between individuals, various in-groups, and out-groups in urban spaces, according to Monson (2012).

Convivial urban spaces influence people by providing opportunities for everyday socioeconomic interactions, encounters and negotiations. Amen and Kuzovic (2018) observed that urban space is not just a simple, physical configuration. Instead, it is a transformation of human experiences with

different synchronic architectural characteristics that needs a critical examination to segregate discrete layers of structural elements. This study shows how conviviality allows people in their diversity to interact in public and private spaces, as everyday cities are becoming more diverse. In Cape Town, human beings are in constant interaction with each other and the surrounding environment in their pursuit of improved life chances. Convivial urban spaces stretch beyond human and habitable places in cities and form the fabric that allows migrants to reach out to fellow migrants and locals. Without this kind of space, cities would be overflowing with buildings without positive interaction between people. In her study, Peattie (1998:18) espouses that conviviality incorporates activities such as "small-group rituals and social bonding in serious collective action, from barn raisings and neighbourhood cleanups to civil disobedience...."

3.3 Migrants Negotiating and Experiencing Space in Cape Town

Migrants' relationship with space is created and co-created through the daily lived city experiences. It relates to how people think about and mentally perceive space. Space does not only refer to spatial space or landscape, but it also encompasses social spaces, virtual spaces, and boundaries alike. The way migrants inhabit and carve up space at home, and work and how space is experienced by men and women cross-culturally, in religious spaces and migratory spaces are areas that are worth investigating. Social spaces are built on networks, and they are instrumental in boosting the livelihoods of migrants living in Cape Town. As I demonstrate in the case of Drew, who made connections through social soccer (as a space) that allowed him to advance his music career and earn a living from it (see 3.4), this is similar to the observation of Brudvig (2014), who observes that space serves as a domain for the exercise of agency, and the individual has the ability to animate space to make it a site of specific interactions, thus contributing to the collective meaning of place. Cape Town reflects an ongoing and continuous assemblage of various meanings, thoughts, and judgments associated with personal experience and spatial deflection as a social and political location.

The most important spaces for social support lie in people's everyday associations. Migrants try to activate the collective networks to which they belong and attempt to invent new ones by creating convivial spaces in social soccer circles, salons, churches, and other activities to which they belong. Scholars, such as Amin (2002) and Wessendorf (2013), have made significant contributions to the understanding and theorizing of everyday intercultural interactions and

encounters in public spaces. Other scholars, such as Wise and Noble (2016) and Wise and Velayutham (2009, 2014), have emphasized studying the everyday qualities of life in public realms, such as pavements, squares and parks, that are marked by ethnically diverse contexts. Let me begin by discussing how social soccer creates space for convivial connections.

3.4 Social Soccer as a Space for Conviviality

An example of a convivial space in this study is the sports grounds, Tekkerz (see 2.6), where migrants meet and play social soccer. During my fieldwork, Zabho my research assistant, and I frequented this place. During our regular visits to this place, we participated and observed that, on most Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, people meet to play soccer. People of various nationalities frequent the place, including locals. Despite linguistic, ethnic and national differences, social soccer brings these people and communities together. In most cases, an hour before the beginning of the game, some people gather and exchange conversations. Conversations across nationalities, religions, ethnicities, and genders are exchanged in these planned and unplanned dialogues and meetings. Tekkerz offers social spaces that attract people who are not necessarily interested in soccer. Locals and foreign nationals mix and mingle at Tekkerz. Those who are not interested in playing soccer crowd the facility as well. Because the location is convenient, some people will be selling products, such as sportswear. The majority of those selling such clothing are women, with some being migrants and others being locals. This is consistent with Sadgrove's (2014) observation that convivial encounters may also contribute to the reduction of prejudice and exclusion among diverse urban residents. Diverse social actors and, in this case, social soccer players and non-players, like supporters, negotiate everyday space and social relations, and navigate different socio-spatial contexts (Karner and Parker, 2011). In line with this, Amin (2002:959) observed that intensified negotiation of differences is common at various levels generated through everyday experiences and encounters. In social soccer, for example, people interact at a very local level. The social networks that are created in these local-level contexts are transnational since they permeate boundaries of nationality.

On one of our visits on a Friday afternoon, seven people had come for the game. Out of the seven, I vividly remember Drew and his girlfriend whom I knew through Zabho, my research assistant. Zabho and Drew attended the same high school, and they were close friends. Zabho is the one who facilitated my access to this group of social soccer players and those who watch it. I also became

part of their WhatsApp group. Both in the WhatsApp group and in person important information regarding how to apply for permanent residence and livelihood strategies, especially among informal traders, were among the topical issues discussed. Information regarding job applications, visa applications and passport renewal was widely shared continuously in case one needed it. Moreover, issues to do with xenophobia were also discussed. Furthermore, trending news about English Premier League football and Spanish LaLiga football were among the debatable issues that Zabho and I engaged in. The fascinating observation was how tension brewed during the selection of players at Tekkerz. Each team would want to have the most talented and competitive players. However, tensions and friction would not end with the selection of players, it also occurred during the game between players of the same team and across the rivals. The most important thing is how people in these scenarios managed the tension. If one person is seen to be angry, other players usually would tell him "not to go to the feeling station". This simply means the aggrieved should separate feelings from the game.

Despite the physical benefits of remaining fit through soccer and exercising, social soccer at Tekkerz is like a social glue. Social soccer brings people together and teaches them how to accept differences, as shown by how Drew's team is composed of different nationalities. I had a conversation with Sly who was part of Drew's team who told me:

> There are times when we are tense and disagree with one another, but that is to be expected. What matters is how we resolve our disagreements and defuse the tension on the field. The most important thing is to take care of your health and enjoy yourself while playing the game.

This shows that despite trivial tensions, people also cooperate and build valuable skills that lay the foundation for a positive society. Apart from exchanging information, the sharing of social and physical space allows people to create spaces where migrants and locals form and maintain connections. We played five-a-side social soccer at Tekkerz. Five-a-side soccer is a team sport in which each team has five players: four infield players and one goalkeeper. The sport can be played both indoors and outdoors, on artificial grass or turf surfaces. The field at Tekkerz is surrounded on all sides by a net barrier to prevent the ball from leaving the play area. Five-a-side football is a

popular and enjoyable way to exercise at any time of year, according to the people I spoke with at Tekkerz. The rules are similar, though no formalized rulebook is universally followed. The game usually lasts 60 minutes, indicating that people do not adhere to the standard length of a football match. Depending on the mood of the day, people will sometimes play for 120 minutes. There was no set time limit or set of rules to follow; everyone improvised.

Another fascinating observation I made is that, when migrants share information while playing soccer, those who are in a similar trade, for example, Drew who is an upcoming RnB and hip-hop musician would further engage beyond the soccer field with others who are in the same genre of music. They assist each other in marketing and creating shows. I observed this when Zabho invited me to Trench Town, a club in Observatory Cape Town, where Drew was performing. I noticed that beyond the connections created by participating and interacting in social soccer, Drew was also a good friend to the social soccer players who are also patrons at this club. During my frequent interactions with Drew, he told me:

> By playing at Tekkerz every time, I met a guy who works at Trench Town in June 2021. We met one day when he came in excited to meet his team, which did not show up. We made room for him on our team. We exchanged phone numbers and that's how we got in touch. After several months of meeting at Tekkerz and communicating over the phone, my friend who works at Trench Town discovered that I was an aspiring Hip-Hop artist and arranged for me to perform as an open act for some well-known musicians at Trench Town. In this situation, I was able to connect with more established musicians. Because of a friend who works at Trench Town, such connections have shaped my music career. This allowed me to perform in shows at Trench Town getting some money for rentals and upkeep.

Drew's experience is telling. In crowded places like Tekkerz, which is frequented by people of all nationalities, conviviality emerged. Such locations facilitated the formation of *hushamwari* connections such as Drew's with the Trench Town employee, which later paved the way for other connections Drew made with established musicians. In this sense, conviviality emphasizes empowerment for both individuals and groups, rather than marginalization of one by or for the other. Promoting a convivial society may entail negotiating between, or competing for, various agentive forces (Nyamnjoh, 2002:111). It is important to note that the bonds created in social soccer are translated into social capital that helps migrants communicate and connect across various borders and boundaries. As observed by Putnam (1993:35, 1993) social capital includes

"features of social organizations, such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit". The *hushamwari* created during the social soccer matches was turned into capital that allowed Drew to perform at Trench Town. In line with this idea, Nyamnjoh (2015:266) sees social capital as a way of building bridges and linking people's spaces and places. It cross-pollinates ideas and inspires innovative ways that seek and consolidate the good life yearned for by the migrants and their families. In my study, I discovered that social soccer is not just a sport but a space in which relations are made and maintained, tension erupts and is diffused. Conviviality eliminates barricades that separate people from one another and promotes harmony even in unusual places. It allows us to think about space in terms of nimbleness and connection, movement, and relation simultaneously.

Migrant men and women whom I worked with established that social soccer in Cape Town is a social glue, meaning it binds people together across divides despite the tension that happens as a result of the game. As I have shown through my interaction with Drew and his teammates, the social soccer competitions bring together migrants and non-migrants to play social soccer in the spirit of unity. During my regular visits and participation in the soccer matches, I became more like a family member of Drew's team. In that case, I realized that social soccer creates unity and unimaginably promotes social cohesion and integration although sometimes it causes tensions and friction over issues, such as who has won and who has not and over rules that are not specified especially on five aside matches. Even though they did not open up initially, however, my research assistant, Zabho, played a significant role in assisting me to create rapport with the teammates. I tapped from my social capital with him, and he became an instrumental figure in introducing me to his friends and other teammates whom I didn't know before the research. His social links ended up connecting me to a group of people.

During my participation in social soccer games, I noted that incompleteness brings various people together to exchange nourishing conversations. When people exchange conversations, they build relationships, as a way of activating themselves through learning about each other's practices and cultures But before coming together, people realize the need to bond and link. The need to reach out to fellow humans and make connections is ignited by the realization of their incompleteness. There is incompleteness in terms of numbers: for example, during a five-a-side, a game is supposed

to be complete when it has 10 players with five players on each team. However, just being a team is not enough. Players need to understand each other's movements as they play as a team. From my observations, it is not every day that people play as a team. In some instances, one player would prefer individual brilliance at the expense of the team. This makes the team incomplete as it is bound to lose. For players, incompleteness means they have to seek assistance, effort, and interplay with other players to enhance their completeness. The game and its rules open space for conversations. Conversations open space for connections. For example, Zabho met a teammate called Qudus where they played soccer together and eventually became friends. Zabho has parents in the United Kingdom (UK). In my interaction with Zabho, he told me how he met and connected with Qudus as follows:

> I first became acquainted with Qudus while we were both playing social soccer at the UCT football field on Lower Campus. We spent some time together at Tekkerz playing soccer as well. We quickly became friends and even became close. The soccer field was not the beginning and end of our friendship; we later introduced each other to our parents, and our parents were also aware of our friendship; as a result, we became closer to being family. I was able to help Qudus purchase a laptop from the United Kingdom by going through my parents. I have it in my travel plans to go see Qudus in his native land, and I have it on good authority that he will do the same for me.

In the light of this discussion, it is imperative to note that the connections on the pitch also transcend the pitch. They are translated into networks that are relevant to get by and get ahead. So, on the pitch, one player is incomplete, he/she cannot make a team. The players need the efforts of a goalkeeper to defend goals. They need other players to help exchange passes and score goals. They have to exchange passes with each other to make it to the opposite end and score goals. Such good training is driven by the burning but elusive desire for completeness and it binds people together, and space for enriching conversations is created. However, teamwork or togetherness does not mean that tensions and friction are absent. Despite the presence of tensions, interaction as a team is the only way which can generate conviviality, solidarity and conflicts. In line with these views, Nowicka and Heil (2015) further expressed that conflicts are inevitable during interactions, but they serve a big function of solidifying the spirit of respect, mutuality and prosperity.

More so, togetherness does not mean that structural violence is over. Even on a soccer pitch, the exclusion is present. Use of the soccer pitch is paid for and the ones with no financial means would not be able to always participate in the game. Migrants who participated in this research revealed episodes of discrimination and exclusion which they encountered in such spaces. One of my participants, Moses, described the treatment which he received from some social soccer players on a social soccer court at Tekkerz soccer park, as hostile. He narrated how nine players rejected his offer to join their ongoing game. The game is usually played by ten people with five players on each side. Moses saw an opportunity to join the team that was a player short, but he was denied access to join. Moses told me:

> I came to play soccer and have fun with others. I had my own money to pay for entry into the game, but I am convinced that they rejected me because of my skin colour. However, I was accepted by another team. Because of the rejection, I felt terrible, and, in my opinion, social soccer is a unifying factor; in fact, soccer brings people together all over the world. Have you ever noticed how people gather even when they are not playing to watch soccer in pubs, restaurants, and homes, among other places? That's how much I enjoy soccer.

Moses insisted that such exclusion was solely based on his skin colour and accent. His exclusion is indicative of incompleteness as an enduring process. Moses, however, went on to describe how he was then asked by another team to join them immediately after he was rejected. He explained different occasions where he was included or excluded from playing. Some people accommodate strangers for the love of the game and the love of humanity.

Similar to Moses' experiences, Ganji and Rishbeth (2020) argue that many of the pleasures and challenges of living in cities are the nearness of difference. Difference and diversity are what characterize social soccer. However, for people like Moses, how they encounter and respond to each other in diversity is important in negotiating urban life. In so doing, they strive to create connections in a way that allows them to join soccer even without visible economic benefits. For Moses, just connecting with people on a human level is what counts. However, even though sociality is contested in such scenarios, the bond and connection created in these spaces in inevitably strong. Even though the bonds created are inevitably strong, conviviality is put to the test when tempers flare in cases of losses or rough play, which are common in social soccer.

However, in most cases which I observed, conviviality is what overcomes the dangerous precedents that temper/bad mood creates.

Social soccer is an activity that opens up space for convivial connections. It promotes inter- and intra-team connections. As the experience of Moses has shown, it can also orient people towards interacting across differences (Klinenberg, 2018; Landau and Freemantle, 2010; Lofland, 1989). Putnam (2000) is of the view that society is nurtured by informal social networks. This resonates with Oldenburg's (1989) work which focuses on "inclusively sociable" spaces. These spaces include hair salons, cafes, stores, and restaurants, among others. These are regarded by the aforesaid scholars as spaces for social connection or networking. Social activities, such as soccer, avail a network of spaces that allows institutions and groups to create social connections. In these spaces, everyday encounters and interactions are not an exception. In that regard, Nyamnjoh and Brudvig (2014: 218) expressed that conviviality reinforces interconnections and entanglements of urban social life as the bedrock for the formation of tactical alliances which are fundamental for survival.

In tandem with the above discussion, scholars such as Butcher (2009) and Thrift (1999) pointed out that the everyday migrant encounters, experiences and practices provide important entry points into understanding their mobility, sociality and urbanism. This depicts a micro-picture of migrants' daily mobilities that enable them to sustain, and if possible, better themselves and their families. In this regard, mobility is not completely economic, rather, it frames routines that are vital to understanding their everyday lives (Chabal, 2009; Lees, 2003). Importantly, their sense of belonging is related to their experiences of positive or negative encounters with those perceived to be different. Turning away from social soccer competitions, it is worth thinking about other spaces that enable particular kinds of activities and practices. I now turn to look at how churches facilitate practices and conviviality that enable migrants to mediate their subjective experiences of city life.

3.5 Home away from Home: Churches as Spaces for Social Networking

The importance of social networks lubricated by conviviality among migrants cannot be undervalued in getting by in the city of Cape Town. In this struggle for survival, religion is a vital coping strategy and an important means to access social networks or connections. Spaces that

include religion (churches, mosques, rallies etc.), taxis, buses, sports (social soccer, rugby, cricket competitions), music concerts, universities, marketplaces, nightclubs, hotels, bars, and restaurants, among many others, have the potential and the possibility of generating conviviality (Nyamnjoh, 2017; Chekero, 2017). During our conversation, migrants revealed that religion is an important form of survival; emotionally, psychologically, and otherwise. The building of social networks is premised on the agility and ability of migrants to actively participate in the church (Owen, 2015; Hay, 2014; Chitando, 2004). Religious adherence opens avenues of opportunities and networks that allow one to become connected to influential people and acquaintances. Religious involvement creates a space conducive to mingling and connecting with various kinds of people. This bridges the gaps, and links migrants into a higher-status circle and may connect people to a network of influence and power. However, as Wilhelm-Solomon et al. (2016) opine, moving into, and staying in, socially, economically, ethnically, and religiously diverse urban centres of the African continent comes with anxiety, a sense of insecurity, fear, and excitement in the hope of finding greener pastures and economic emancipation. This means that, in metropolitan areas and other smaller cities and towns, life will be reorganized in terms of social relations, and individualism. These avail a new understanding of practices of personhood and relationships and sensations of marginality and exclusion and the anxieties of leading a "good life" in precarious environments. In addition, urban centres and the opportunities and risks that living in them implies also provide spaces for sensations of pleasure, love, care, and intimacy, as well as experiences of suffering, alienation, and emotional drama (Dilger et al., 2020:3).

During my fieldwork, I attended three different churches[9] that I knew had a significant migrant population. In these churches, some congregants live in the surrounding neighbourhoods, and some come from far afield. In joining the church, some follow churches that they attended in their home countries. Some people join churches based on the lines of being Pentecostal or non-Pentecostal. In my observation, the majority follow where they feel there is a good number of migrants. They feel safe being among fellow migrants. One of the churches I frequently attended had three Sunday services – one in the morning (6 am to 9 am), midmorning to afternoon (11 am to 1 pm), and an

[9] I understand that Christianity is not the only religion that migrants subscribe to. Unfortunately, I had limited resources to study every religion. I also did not have succinct means. Thus, this chapter is just an entry point in the field of study, and it showed a gap on which future research can focus.

evening service around 6 pm. This church, which I will call Faith Ministries,[10] was frequented by migrants because of its flexible service hours and its accommodative nature to people of various religious backgrounds. The church was founded by a migrant called Apostle Fonks in 2001. It is an interdenominational church. As an interdenominational church, Faith Ministries includes and celebrates all different denominations, and their staff is usually comprised of people of varying religious backgrounds. The Faith Ministries tries to include practices from all denominations, usually offering prayers and services at all three times a day on Sundays to meet every individual's needs. This church is autonomous, but usually bases its worship on Christian doctrine and the Bible. Their focus is on the love and worship of God, not following the rules of any specific Christianity. The Faith Ministries wishes to include people from all over and from all different Christian faiths to join and hear the word of God. They focus on teaching people love, empathy, understanding, and faith, so everyone's lives can be full and happy. The church practices together with its service hours resonate well with the migrants. Most migrants who attend Sunday services also work the same day, especially the self-employed, hence the flexible church service hours are ideal. Locals also attend the Faith Ministries.

During my repeated visits to this church, I observed that transnational conversations are inherent. Such conversations are usually carried on after church, which most of my participants referred to as "after church caucusing", where people get to know each other better. One participant noted that "after the service, caucusing is important because we connect beyond spirituality, we get to know people who are highly connected." By getting to know each other better, it means they connect beyond the confines of the church gathering. Religious practices and the church play an important role in shaping the relationships and interactions between migrants and locals in Cape Town. Religious affiliations, imaginings, and religious language, structure the way migrants construct spaces, which make them feel at home, but away from home on either a temporary or longer basis. It also shaped the way migrants understood the city. Churches in South Africa have become sites of transnational and local networks which migrants draw on for social and spiritual capital, emphasizing a shared Christian identity and habitus (Hay, 2014).

[10] Pseudonym,

One Sunday afternoon after attending a church service, I had a conversation with Moses, a 30-year-old congregant and member at the Faith Ministries. When I asked him how he had benefited from being a member of Faith Ministries, he had this to say:

> This church is where my life took a positive spiritual and financial turn. I was not a believer when I arrived in Cape Town in 2015. However, by the grace of God, I met a friend at a time when I was looking for work. He invited me to church, and I accepted. My initial attendance grew into a regular occurrence, and I was eventually converted and became a full-time member, Christian, and congregant of Faith Ministries. My spiritual life was transformed when, for the first time in my life, I felt very close to God. During this time, I met a business owner looking for a sales representative. Church elders who were aware of my unemployment vouch for me because of the trust that was built based on a shared Christian identity. I got a job, and I'm still working there today. I was able to purchase a car, which I am currently driving. In this church, I was also married and wedded. I now have a lovely family consisting of a wife and a daughter. Thank you to my friend who introduced me and thank you to the church for allowing me to meet godly people who have become my employers and friends in Christ and beyond the church's walls.

The above information shared by Moses reinforces the idea that a shared platform allows migrants to create relationships and fellowship with others beyond the confines of the church congregation. The creation of relationships and fellowship is similar to ubuntu. Ubuntu, in that regard, is a mainstay key asset for the church in the context of migration and interculturality. A shared Christian identity and habitus allows migrants to reciprocally connect with ease and mutually benefit from such connections. Thus, by embracing migrants, the churches are characteristic of the true humanness implicit in ubuntu. The diversity of the church congregation, such as the Faith Ministries, which is made up of migrants from African countries, migrants beyond the African continent and locals, reflects the idea of not only religious spaces but cities, as places and spaces riddled with diversity. This, in turn, requires interdependence, co-reliance, or mutualism to mediate subjective experiences of city life (Brudvig, 2014). The dynamics of religion powerfully mould the experiences and social practices of people living in urban Africa, as well as African migrants who have moved to urban centres like Cape Town (Cole and Groes, 2016).

Being part of the family means one needs to constantly and actively participate in the church to cultivate new connections and maintain the existing ones (Owen, 2015). During the after-church conversations outside the church building, I observed that most of the congregants highly value church attendance and conversing about their successes, happiness and sorrows or social problems.

These edifying conversations, coupled with charismatic worship in Pentecostal churches, and home visits that are done by some congregants of non-Pentecostal churches, facilitate a sense of openness and familiarity (Wilhelm-Solomon et al., 2016; Dilger et al., 2020; Hay, 2014; Dube, 2017). These are expressed in interactions such as visiting each other in smaller groups to pray on certain weekdays and bodily practices such as hugging (although this became difficult during the COVID-19 pandemic) that can inspire free movement and freedom. One congregant told me:

> We do, in fact, visit each other in smaller groups in our homes. The goal is to determine whether one of our members is spiritually and physically healthy. This also allows us to connect not only on Sundays but also outside of Sunday services and away from the church.

My observations resonate with the above explanation by a congregant. They confirm that migrants do not benefit only from spiritual help when they attend church. They also gain a platform to create convivial relations that they can further transform as capital that allows them opportunities to access marriages, employment, other basic services, and for business owners to get clients.

Church activities and rituals also encourage undifferentiating bridging and bonding. In this way, the church draws from the philosophy of ubuntu in its attempt to bring about synergy and cohesion between migrants and locals. It is important to note that religion affects – and is affected by – the city. Religious beliefs motivate urban dwellers to engage in practices that result in the creative process of generating, developing, and communicating assemblages that are called cities (Farías, 2011; McFarlane, 2011). On the other hand, cities shape religion by confronting people with the need to permanently adapt their forms of religious belonging and worship to fluctuating urban circumstances and the often-ephemeral nature of city life resulting from mobility (Burchardt and Höhne, 2015; De Boeck and Plissart, 2014). Nevertheless, the process of integration into the church is not always a smooth one. There are stories of success and failure associated with forging relationships and the pursuit of personal and collective success by migrants.

3.5.1 Ghosted Migrants

One Sunday afternoon (25 August 2019), I had an impromptu focus group discussion just outside Faith Ministries in Wynberg. The group comprised male and female participants. The discussion started as an informal conversation between one of the migrant congregants to whom I had been introduced by my research assistants. More than ten migrant men and women, who had attended the midmorning-afternoon church service, ended up joining the discussion. Even more, people ended up joining, as the discussion became captivating because it was held in the English language among church members. The fact that the gathering was composed of church members having a discussion created a space in which people felt safe to share their experiences of life in Cape Town. As I will show, most participants in this discussion described sociality as a crucial tool, especially when accessing jobs and related opportunities.

In South Africa, for migrants to get either formal or informal employment, there are many barriers that one must encounter and negotiate or circumvent. In this case, an important way of survival is to make connections that can bring about work-related opportunities. A church is an ideal space in which one could foster such networks. The social capital generated in the church is thus inevitable – it connects those that are divided. It links people, spaces, and places. It inspires imagination and innovative ways of seeking and consolidating the good life for all. Spaces like churches, therefore, facilitate associations between South Africans and non-South Africans. In a study of the Bay Community Church in Cape Town, where local South Africans and African immigrants worship together, Hay (2014:42) discovered that the church makes migrants feel at home away from home. Space allows the negotiation of fears and misconceptions about non-South Africans. Churches in Cape Town have become sites of transnational and local networks, which migrants draw on for social and spiritual capital, emphasizing a shared Christian identity and habitus (Nyamnjoh, 2017). Such a shared platform allows migrants to create relationships that allow them to belong to various spaces at the same time. As a result of a shared Christian identity and habitus, migrants confirmed benefiting from their fellow church members with whom they worship together.

Cultivating social networks is one way in which migrants increase their expected returns and levels of well-being. The characteristics of the social networks they engage in shape the connections that migrants opt for and co-opt to get by in Cape Town. Despite the obstacles that characterize the job industry, migrants can craft social networks lubricated with convivial relations that create a sense

of mutualism and co-dependence. These networks, in turn, generate access to resources and job opportunities that might otherwise be unavailable. Migrants described the connections that they foster in the church as very crucial in providing solidarity and reciprocity. Churches offer solidarity, intermingling, and reciprocity among congregants. Results have shown the effectiveness of mutualism and social networks amongst migrant congregants who are in search of jobs through their membership in churches. One church member, named Grace, during our focus group discussion, narrated her story as follows:

> In the year 2015, I travelled to Cape Town, South Africa. Amanda, a friend, had invited me. I used to be a hairdresser and salon owner in my home country. However, the profits in this salon were not high. After many conversations with a friend over phone calls, WhatsApp, Messenger, and other platforms about how profitable professional hairstyling services for men and women were, I decided to close my home business to pursue greener pastures in Cape Town. My story may be similar to that of many other migrants, but it is distinct. Most migrants have spoken of how the people who invited them to South Africa and promised them a good life vanished once they arrived. I, for one, had a similar experience. Amanda became unreachable on her phone. All possible methods of obtaining her proved futile. At that moment, I realized I had become a victim of similar stories I heard about people being "ghosted" when they tried to visit friends or relatives in South Africa. I just had to think quickly and adapt to the new challenge. I immediately considered finding a church where I could seek assistance. I was wandering up and down the streets of Bellville. Amid this internal turmoil, I ran into Gabriel, who was emerging from a small food shop with a food parcel. Gabriel took me to Faith Ministries in Wynberg. This is how I discovered Faith Ministries and joined.

The explanation provided by Grace is revealing. In the stories that migrants told me, I learnt about the difficulties faced by those that have been "ghosted". Ghosting occurs when a person cuts off communication without explanation. In my study, many people told stories of how they were promised work and accommodation by their friends and relatives before they come to South Africa only to be ghosted upon arrival. In these circumstances, a relative or friend would not respond to a phone message or a call. These are stories I was repeatedly told by my research assistants; that in most social circumstances this happens to migrants. Faced with such challenges and inadequacies, most migrants, who fell victim to ghosting, confirmed getting help from churches. Migrants in this case seek ways of enhancing themselves through relationships with congregants in churches. They use their creativity and sometimes stories to forge solidarity to acquire assistance and sociality to feel at home away from home.

Apart from churches saving the ghosted migrants, it became clear during my research that those churches act as conduits for delivering networks that are important in order to get by. As already discussed above, churches enable the intermingling of people who are "strangers". The church presumes that anyone who is a Christian is not a stranger, no matter their other differences. In other words, religious identity bestows a belonging that cuts across, and is, in principle, more inclusive than, other identities. Such church characteristics are consistent with incompleteness and ubuntu. In this regard, ubuntu is hailed for its characteristics, such as generosity, hospitality, community, cohesion, co-dependence, mutuality and co-existence, which are vital for the migrants. This resonates with Kumalo (2018:162) who notes that, "[t]he church teaches a message that is consistent to this view of ubuntu for it teaches being kind to the stranger in your midst, remembering that Israelites were once strangers in Egypt, teaching hospitality, care and God's impartiality." The church thus is not only a space for worship but, also one in which transnational and local networks are created and maintained. It is also the hub where migrants withdraw social and spiritual capital based on their shared Christian identity and habitus (Nyamnjoh, 2017). Church members are likely to accommodate each other despite differences in nationality. They use their creativity and imagination to forge solidarity with fellow humans. Even though churches are essential locations for the development of connections, I shift to focus on the ways in which restaurants promote practices and conviviality that enable migrants to mediate their mundane experiences of urban life.

3.6 Restaurants as Spaces for Conviviality

Though I researched several restaurants in Cape Town, I am going to focus mostly on the Wholesome Meal restaurant located in the inner city because it was more frequented by migrants. It is located within walking distance from the train station and very close to a mall.[11] The ethnographic nature of my study and the location of the restaurant that is 'super busy' meant that I had to limit the number of restaurants that I visited and where I conducted research. My focus on this particular restaurant was the interconnectedness, details, subtleties and complexity of everyday interaction and social networks among people who frequently visited and dined.

[11] I am consciously avoiding giving the specific location of the restaurants to protect my participants' privacy.

From my observations, without consumers, restaurants are incomplete, even with customers they are still incomplete because they cannot provide every meal each customer would require. This means that incompleteness opens avenues of open-mindedness and fluidity. Restaurant owners constantly seek new and unique ways to satisfy their customers. It is through this quest to find newness that new recipes and ways of packaging and marketing the food are invented and reinvented. Restaurant owners have to know what is in stock and seasonal products that correlate with the customers' needs during that period. Incompleteness thus invites restaurateurs to accommodate new ways of improving day-to-day practice. However, satisfying every customer is just an illusion of completeness. Some customers will always make do with the available options.

People moving from country to country carry more than belongings; what they carry includes culture, sounds, and flavours. Migrant-owned restaurants are known for presenting foreign recipes and a good number of migrants come to dine. They are known for providing traditional food that is served in certain migrant home countries. Not only do they offer food, but migrants also feel at home away from home when they are eating their home country's staple food. In this sense, restaurants are places that offer a space for migrants and locals to interact despite differences. It is in these encounters, interactions and eating practices that formidable connections are forged. The narration below is one example:

> Bode is a 40-year-old man living in Woodstock, Cape Town. He has been staying there for over 12 years and is the owner of the Wholesome Meal restaurant I have referred to above. His position as a restaurateur did not come by accident. It stretches back to his early life in his home country. After the commencement of importing and selling non-perishable food items to fellow migrants and curious locals alike, he identified an increasing interest in his home country's cuisine and culture in Cape Town. Approximately 10 years ago, Bode opened his first restaurant in Woodstock. Because of its location, the restaurant was not busy and so its returns were paltry. Bode decided to move to the inner city where he established himself with a unique taste in Nigerian traditional cuisine and diners recurrently come back for the delectable food. The restaurant has become a focal point for migrants' food needs as well as a centre for employment creation. Bode has now expanded and opened several other restaurants across Cape Town.

In my observation, the diversity offered by Wholesome restaurant is similar to the concept of *gango* eaten in Zimbabwe. *Gango* is similar in status to *egusi* in Nigeria. *Gango* is a Shona word that roughly translates to "frying pan", It is a dish that is cooked in a large open pan with a variety of meats and vegetables mixed together. For these outdoor barbecues, a substantial crowd of

people gathers nearby. People from all walks of life get together for open barbecues to enjoy one another's companionship and food. *Gango* creates a platform where individuals can interact and conduct talks that strengthen relationships. People from many backgrounds congregate to dine at Wholesome Restaurant as well. Accidental and deliberate conversations happen throughout the process. As a result, having these conversations when various individuals gather is commonplace. A study by Meissner (2015) revealed that restaurants in South Africa have turned to hubs, where diversity and efforts to engage and re-engage are common. In doing so, vibrant social capitals of various forms are generated and dependent upon.

The social spaces afforded in restaurants, such as the Wholesome, unpack the practices and connections that inform the everyday life of urban migrants (Langevang and Gough, 2009). In spaces such as restaurants, co-presence of people of varying nationalities are routinised. With such routines, accidental dialogues are prevalent, and they facilitate socio-economic transactions across different nationalities (Katsaura and Abe, 2016). As I sat in the Wholesome Meal restaurant observing every time, I discovered that, in two days there would be newcomers invited or referred by someone who would have previously dined at the restaurant. In their quest for elusive completeness, they regularize themselves by facilitating conversations which lead to informal connections. Their connections will later translate into vital social networks that give rise to edifying opportunities and resources. However, not all encounters lead to connections. Some of the interactions also lead to misunderstandings. Misunderstandings may lead to people disconnecting or failing to connect. In some instances, the ultimate goal of visiting restaurants is not to connect with anyone, it is the love of food. Nonetheless, cross-linguistic dialogues occur in these spaces.

3.7 *Hukama igasva, hunozadzikiswa nekudya:* Food and Cuisine as Symbolic Expressions of Migrants' Sociality

Hukama igasva, hunozadzikiswa nekudya (relationships are incomplete until you share a meal) is a Shona language idiom which illuminates the idea of incompleteness and how humans seek to mitigate it through sharing of food. It explains that sharing food binds all forms of relationships ranging from relatives to friends. The sharing of food occurs between and among men and women in Cape Town. Sharing of food brought people together in this restaurant. It is a conduit in which

friendships are cultivated, relationships are nurtured, people celebrate milestones, mend conflicts, and feel gratitude for life. In line with this argument, Divine Fuh, an anthropologist at UCT, wrote in a short piece published on 31 May 2022 by an online newspaper,[12] *News 24*, "Amid autochthony struggles and political fights over resource control, food remains one of the only frontiers in which conviviality continues to hold across borders and identity differences." Van Esterik, (1982) and van den Berghe (1984) cited in Henrietta Nyamnjoh (2018), believe that food and cuisine – the inventory of food items, the repertoire of recipes, and the rituals of commensalism – are symbolic expressions of migrants' sociality, both in the intimate domestic sphere and in relation to the larger group that shares a specific culinary complex. The transnational production of locality and place is particularly relevant in diasporic foodways and foodscapes (Dawkins, 2009; Nyamnjoh, 2013). This is because it demonstrates the level of mobility and interconnectedness, as well as how meals connect places and the people who live in them (Komarnisky, 2009). At Wholesome Restaurant, food is the key element of the dining experience. Food brings people together and takes them from strangers to friends. One of the participants in this research noted that dining with strangers can be one of the nourishing and enriching experiences of travelling or staying in Cape Town. One of my participants, Luke, said the following:

> I realized that there is a high chance that my favourite food is linked to someone, somewhere. In most cases, I order similar food with some people periodically in this restaurant. Regardless of where you come from, how you grew up, or what you have access to, good food is the one thing that never fails to bring people together. The emotions that come from sharing food are closer to universal. Food connects every human from the stomach, and it conquers all, from language barriers to cultural differences.

Resonating with Luke's explanation above, there is a broader concept in the Shona language than ubuntu called *hukama*. *Hukama,* which may be loosely translated as "connection", denotes relatedness – relatedness to the entire cosmos. *Hukama* is significant among the Shona people. Relating to how food facilitates and strengthens connections, is the Shona proverb highlighted at the start of this section., Sharing of a meal is symbolic not only among the Shona but across cultures and ethnicities. Though my study is not specifically focused on the Shona-speaking migrants, I am borrowing the Shona proverb to elaborate on how, through food, social life is

[12] https://www.news24.com/news24/columnists/guestcolumn/opinion-divine-fuh-undoing-the-empire-to-decolonise-africans-must-learn-to-eat-each-other-20220531

enacted with and through others for strengthening social ties across differences. Relationships are made and sustained through sharing of meals. This is consistent with Carsten (1995), who notes that eating food is a fundamental component in the long process of becoming a person and fully participating in social relations. In her study of Malays on the island of Langkawi, Carsten (1995) observed that a person becomes complete kin through living, sharing and consuming food together in the house. Such perceptions are indicative of a view of incompleteness, interconnectedness and personhood. Regardless of social status, gender or class, the simple act of sharing food in a restaurant paves a way for forging bonds and social relations. In a cosmopolitan space like Cape Town, reaching out and making friends can be difficult. It might be more difficult to merely walk up to someone randomly lest they become suspicious of one's intentions. However, there are spaces where it could be possible to reach out to strangers. In the Wholesome restaurant, people, such as Luke, can reach out to strangers. I asked Luke if he was not scared that he would spook diners or be suspected of having sinister motives by reaching out, and he retorted:

> A restaurant, my friend, is a public place where people can talk freely. It doesn't matter why I'm here; maybe I need help, or maybe I'm hungry. Talking to new people and hearing their opinions on the meal's flavours is something I look forward to every time. Because I also own a restaurant in the downtown area, their opinions are particularly valuable to me. Therefore, I can improve my company with the aid of our conversations.

As I observed during my fieldwork, there is comfort in sharing a space like a restaurant even when dining with strangers. It is in these spaces that as food and drink flow, people open up and share stories of their lives, from their joys and successes to their fears and failures. In her book, *Eating Together*, Alice Julier (2013:11) comments that "dining together can radically shift people's perspectives: It reduces people's perceptions of inequality, and diners tend to view those of different races, genders, and socioeconomic backgrounds as more equal than they would in other social scenarios." It is not only about food, but the space afforded by food for edifying conversations and dialogues among people who would otherwise not talk to each other. According to Henrietta Nyamnjoh (2018), transnational foodscapes are constructed in migrants' neighbourhoods through restaurants and food shops that sell migrants' ethnic foods, ingredients brought back from trips to the home country, and food parcels sent by relatives and friends. Mata-Codesal (2010:10) believes that "[m]emories are created and re-created in a sensorial milieu; the senses have the ability to recall the original sensations, such as a sense of belonging." Migrant

shops and restaurants in host countries encapsulate the wholesomeness of home and work to create a transnational sense of identity while also retaining a sense of attachment and belonging to the home country.

Migrant men and women I conversed with in most restaurants I visited during my fieldwork indicated that, just as food nourishes and enriches the body, the conversations they exchange while in restaurants nourish the soul. Food could be shared with people that are strangers. This resonates with the ethics of ubuntu of caring, sharing and considerateness (Nyamnjoh, 2019). Restaurants can bring together strangers under one roof. In these encounters, interactions between people who do not know each other occur. One day Mukoma George and I were having lunch at Mai Mutsa's restaurant on Long Street. While enjoying our Zimbabwean traditional chicken and *sadza rezviyo* (pap made of finger millet meal) we recognized that across our table there was a prominent South African boxing champion who was also enjoying his rice and fish. We greeted him and told him that we were his fans. The athlete was humble enough to accommodate us. We had a lengthy conversation that included his sporting activities and other issues. He also bought two extra meals that we shared. It was his intimate act to share a meal with strangers. We realized that sharing food allowed us into the world of this athlete. We got insights into his life stories and about the boxing sport in Cape Town and beyond. I learnt that people embrace each other's stories, connect over food, and share their authentic side in the process. As people share food and unique dining experiences with strangers, they encounter much more than new flavours. Similar to what happened between Mukoma George and me, my research assistants shared similar observations when they noted that the exchange of enlightening dialogues gives migrants insights about various issues. They make migrants feel at home as they are connected by food.

In light of this discussion, Lin, Pang and Liao, (2020) assert that (re)producing or making home/ethnic foods while living in a foreign land, together with home food in their daily life and food practices of migrants are important in meaning-making. Also inviting people of a different nationality to taste one's ethnic food is essential in nurturing connections. In this way, when migrant men and women dine with strangers, they enrich and expand their world as an assured way of getting by in Cape Town. In other words, the consumption of food fosters the development of interpersonal relationships. Food and cuisine are also important central components in the process of developing a sense of belonging to a group. In light of this conversation, Dawkins

(2009) recognizes how food functions through sentimentality, memory, and sensual politics. This allows migrants to recognize and articulate their distinctiveness, individuality, and collective membership to a larger construction of social relations through the medium of food.

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have used the concepts of incompleteness, *hushamwari* and ubuntu to explore how convivial space is created through the interactions, encounters, experiences and social dynamics of migrants' daily life in urban Cape Town. I argued that convivial space in urban space materializes as a result of migrants' and migrants' and locals' incompleteness that inspires the negotiation of a shared physical space. The foundation of creating convivial urban spaces is established social soccer fields, churches and restaurants. These are bedrocks for the negotiation and promotion of social connections, *hushamwari* and ubuntu. That is, these types of urban spaces are interpreted as daily social activities and as social pleasure expressed in the physical and psychological context of people's urban spaces (Shedid and Hefnawy, 2021).

As the chapter has demonstrated, soccer was found to be an important space for the creation and maintenance of *hushamwari* social relationships among migrants and between migrants and locals. Social soccer in this study was found to have a remarkable ability to unite people, transcending linguistic and ethnic differences among players. By fostering acceptance of diversity and nurturing essential skills, social soccer cultivates a solid basis for a harmonious society, embracing participants of all genders including males and females among others. In these places, migrants create a space where they and the locals can forge and maintain strong bonds. These ties become social capital, which facilitates communication and connection across differences, boundaries, and hierarchies.

The importance of social networks among migrants in surviving in Cape Town cannot be overstated. Religion is an important coping strategy and a means of accessing social networks or connections embodied in ubuntu in this struggle for survival. As I have demonstrated, religious practices and the church are important in the relationships and interaction of migrants and locals in Cape Town. Religious affiliations and religious language shape how migrants create a space where they can feel at home away from home, whether temporarily or permanently.

Apart from churches, sharing common spaces, such as restaurants and the food they serve, bring people together. People cultivate relationships, celebrate milestones, resolve conflicts, and express gratitude for life in restaurants. Restaurants enable migrants to mediate their subjective experiences of city life through practices and conviviality. Restaurants and other food establishments have become focal points where passersby and residents meet and have accidental conversations. Connections are formed and translated into bonds in these dialogues, which can then develop into social networks. In light of incompleteness and ubuntu, food becomes a source of nourishment for social relationships.

CHAPTER FOUR

Borders and Boundaries in Daily Mobility Practices of Migrants within the City of Cape Town, South Africa

4.1 Introduction

This chapter draws on the concepts of "nimble-footedness", *hushamwari* and conviviality to investigate the ways in which the label, "migrant", creates and reinforces particular kinds of boundaries and borders in mobility and survival efforts. Specifically, the chapter looks at migrants' movement in Cape Town, to see how state and local borders affect intra-city refugee movement and how migrants deal with these obstacles to find localized protection and long-term survival strategies. This study breaks the impasse on the existing knowledge gaps in migrant and migration literature. Conventionally, the majority of the studies are inclined toward migrants' intercity movement between South African cities (Wessendorf, 2014, 2017; Potts, 2010). In these discourses, less attention was given to intra-city migrant movements. Thus, this chapter embraces a nuanced focus on the dynamics surrounding migrants' intra-city movements and how they navigate through the restrictions and blockages within the city. Here at the level of the city, migrants find numerous borders and boundaries that impede their movement, which can have huge ramifications for their ability to settle and engage meaningfully in communities and labour markets. These barriers can be in the form of national and local government policy, the discretion of individual law enforcement officers, as well as the actions of community and individual gatekeepers (Crawley, Garba and Nyamnjoh, 2022, Sichone, 2022).

Nevertheless, migrants in cities like Cape Town still regularly find ways to keep moving through the urban space, using numerous tactics and approaches to either negotiate through, around or entirely avoid these obstructions. Specifically, the chapter is interested in the movement of migrants in Cape Town, to gain a deeper understanding of i) how state and local level barriers impact intra-city migrant movement, and ii) the tactics adopted by migrants to respond to these obstacles, in attempts to find forms of localised protection and locate long term strategies to survive in these spaces. In taking this approach, the chapter attempts to tackle some of the existing knowledge gaps relating to the dynamics of migrants' intra-city movements in South Africa.

The first section of this chapter presents a selection of key contemporary borders and boundaries in Cape Town which have been created by state policy and government and law enforcement

officers. These include the increasing regularity of police roadblocks that are being set up in Cape Town, with the apparent motivation of locating foreign migrants, as well as strict lockdown and curfew procedures utilised to stop the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as community-based anti-immigrant movements, such as Operation Dudula. These barriers inhibit movement and have created real challenges for migrants in their attempts to navigate the city.

The second half of the chapter then shifts to reflect on the pragmatic strategies that migrants improvise in coping and adapting to these challenges. Here, human agency and mobility are interrogated and discussed under Nyamnjoh's (2013, 2017) concepts of "nimble-footedness", hushamwari and conviviality. For this paper, "nimble-footedness" refers to how migrants quickly learn to survive and maintain continuity or basic survival in an urban space riddled with borders and boundaries. This covers not only physical mobility, but also the virtual, social, and psychological movement of migrants within and out of Cape Town. Connected to this, migrants also regularly create social networks lubricated by convivial relations to foster senses of mutualism and co-dependence. Again, by adopting these social tactics and networks, migrants are in a position to negotiate the boundaries and borders in Cape Town. Finally, a mixture of this "nimble-footedness" and networking is often converted by migrants into social capital, which is then used to gain access to resources and facilitate migrants' attempts at achieving long-term goals.

In sum, the chapter offers important insights into migration, mobility and urban studies by investigating the social engagement and survival of migrants in the everyday contested urban space of Cape Town. I move away from binaries that have traditionally been at work when exploring movement and migration: dualisms between locals and foreigners, legal and illegal, documented and undocumented, xenophobic and welcoming. Instead, the chapter focuses on people's interactions on the ground to uncover how despite the wider social environment being hostile to "foreigners", individuals are able to develop and maintain mutuality among themselves through the formation of social ties that transcend nationality, that enables them to ultimately move through the urban space and locate localised forms of protection and belonging (Chekero and Morreira, 2020).

4.2 Blockages on migrant movements in South Africa

Through time and space, intercity and intra-city migrant movements have faced many blockages in South Africa. The commonly noted blockages include police roadblocks, lack of documentation,

arrests and deportation, COVID-19-induced lockdown restrictions, and the community-mobilised anti-immigrant movements like Operation Dudula among others. A worrisome factor is that majority of the blockages are mustered by the state and its functionaries. Ironically, the state's actions are in direct contradiction with the South African Constitution and the other migrant policies and related international pacts and agreements. According to Balbo and Marconi (2005), the issue of migrants is highly politicized hence making it debatable. In lieu of this, Crush (2005) also explained that, in other cases, migrants are referred to as "intruders". Both the state and locals perceive them as responsible for increasing urban problems, such as crime, overpopulation and unemployment (Landau, 2020; Landau and Wanjiku, 2018; Misago and Landau, 2022). As a result of these perceptions and experiences, migrants' challenges are seldom addressed through institutional structures and processes.

The conditions and experiences of migrants in South Africa influenced me to frame the two concepts, "borders" and "boundaries", which I used in this study. The borders and boundaries show episodes of strife and suffering amongst the migrants. In responding to the challenges, rational migrants thrive through the invention of pragmatic strategies for circumventing the restrictive borders and boundaries in South Africa. The commonly noted innovative coping and adapting strategies include transnational marriages, social capital, and friendship relations, inter alia. These strategies also act as safety nets during hard times or disasters.

4.3 Understanding Borders and Boundaries in the Context of Migrants

According to Newman (2006), borders and boundaries are lines between us and them. These two do not only keep people out, instead, they are used for defining wide-ranging aspects, such as identity, belonging, inclusion and exclusion, among others (Albert, 1998; Adegbeye, 2019). In this study, I interpreted borders as a means used to define wide-ranging limits of migrants in socioeconomic contexts. The limits or restrictions act as hurdles and impediments that hinder the migrants from accessing critical services and enjoying their rights as stipulated by the law (Brown, 2001; Brunet-Jailly, 2004). Secondly, in this study, I defined boundaries in the context of both geographical and social demarcations that exclude migrants. The boundaries in this context include, among other aspects, physical obstacles, including visible natural or man-made social, political, and economic infrastructure that restricts migrants' livelihood spaces, opportunities, and entitlements (Albert et al., 2001). These obstacles also act as impediments to spatial access in a

city. Generally, fixed boundaries can define who belongs to a place and who is to be excluded, as well as the location of the experience (McDowell, 1999) of exclusion (van Houtum, 2002; van Houtum and van Naerssen, 2002;). Boundaries can also be understood as permeable physical, social, economic, or cultural separations, which have the possibility of being transgressed and overcome. As a result, they are persistently shifting and transforming (see Kolossov and Więckowski, 2018; Houtum, 2005; Scott, 2011). This transformation creates the possibility of eliminating or diminishing them or reinforcing them even further.

Borders and boundaries have always been configured by movement composed of a multiplicity of hybrid objects, from infrastructure and technology to law and culture (Wood and Graham, 2006). These are illuminated by a system of surveillance, mobility control and boundary enforcement (Mbembe, 2017). Misago (2015) notes that restrictions of mobility apply to all, albeit not equally, through barriers, checkpoints, roadblocks and a complex passport and permit (visa) system,which are South Africa's main methods of spatial-social control (Weizman, 2010; Mbembe, 2017). Nevertheless, the outcome of these barriers and checkpoints is an unwelcoming environment for migrants. The mobility regime negatively impacts the migrants' movements in everyday life (Baumann, 2016; Harker, 2009). Yet, many migrants nonetheless insist on moving between their disconnected enclaves and into Cape Town spaces. Beyond contravening geographical borders, everyday movement can also be transgressive in its assertion of presence in shared urban spaces.

In this study, the consequences of mobility are presented in terms of the constraints of access to places or spaces. Constraints herein refer to the limitations individuals face in navigating and negotiating the city (Jiron, 2010; Ureta, 2008). Albeit that the possibility of accessing places and spaces by daily mobility exists, migrant urban experiences in cities involve confining effects. These effects reduce the possibilities that could be afforded to migrants through encounters and interaction. Having conceptualized borders, and boundaries, I now present migrants' lived experiences in negotiating the internal social borders and boundaries.

4.4 Borders and Boundaries in Cape Town

Travelling inside and between cities is extremely difficult for many migrants in South Africa. Numerous barriers emerge through government policy and practice at both the national and local levels (Morreira, 2016). Migrants face a variety of challenges in their fight for survival in South Africa, ranging from simple neglect to overt hostility and hatred (Chekero and Ross, 2018; Crush

and Tawodzera, 2014; Landau and Amit, 2014). The difficulties that migrants face in their daily lives are exacerbated by the fact that they are frequently invisible to state officials, whose requirements for immigration and residency can be difficult to meet (Goodwin-Gill, 2014). When trying to access public services, like health care and education, in South Africa, for example, migrants face widespread institutionalized xenophobia. Some schools do not accept migrants, particularly those who are not officially recognized as migrants (Chekero, forthcoming).

Further, when migrants attempt to seek medical treatment and are aware that they have the legal right to do so, they are frequently unable to access the services (Makandwa and Vearey, 2017; Landau and Freemantle, 2010; Nyamnjoh, 2006). This is frequently because individuals in gatekeeper positions, such as security guards or nurses, use their authority to exclude migrants by requesting documentation or declining to accept available documentation (Chekero, 2018). In addition to these common examples, several key barriers emerged during the study, including police obstacles relating to documentation issues and corruption and lockdown rules at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. These are discussed below, with a specific focus on their impact on the lives of migrants in Cape Town.

4.4.1 Documentation and Roadblocks as Internal Barriers to Migrants' Movement

In understanding internal boundaries and borders in Cape Town, a look at roadblocks is essential. Indeed, the ability to move freely within cities in South Africa has become increasingly complex for migrants with the rise of police roadblocks. Roadblocks are not, though, a recent development (Marks, 2011). Historically, they have been a typical approach to monitoring and controlling movement in South African cities and small towns. As noted by Rautenbach (1996), roadblocks have previously been put in place to help reduce crime in the country. Recently though, they have grown and altered in terms of their main objectives. In Cape Town, roadblocks play a significant role in establishing boundaries and/or serving as internal borders. Similar to other large cities in the country, roadblocks are regularly organized by law enforcement to actively seek out "foreigners". Certainly, the migrants whom I worked with in this research, felt that South Africa's Metro Police and the South African Police Services (SAPS) stage roadblocks to target mainly foreign nationals. The inference is that roadblocks are planned by the top police leadership to "weed out" undocumented foreigners, with the police targeting mainly minibus taxis which are well known for transporting foreign nationals.

In Cape Town, in the suburb of Bellville,[13] checkpoints are often used because it is where the majority of cross-border buses load and unload passengers who are travelling to or from Johannesburg, utilizing the N1 road, and the N2 road that links to Durban. Participants in this study suggested religion, language and ethnicity all played a role in being stopped and detained at these checkpoints, including allegations that they were targeted for being Muslim, being black and having a poor understanding of English. Indeed, even though the official reason for police roadblocks is promoted as reducing crime, the study found that, in Cape Town roadblocks are frequently targeting foreign nationals, including migrants for various reasons, such as lack of papers, lack of driving documents or just social profiling.

Motorists are stopped and searched on suspicion of wide-ranging crimes. These crimes include driving under the influence of alcohol, possessing dangerous firearms and drugs, transporting illegal and dangerous goods and, in recent years, transportation of illegal persons (for example, undocumented migrants). The majority of participants in this study believed that stops and searches were conducted at the officers' discretion. Officers anticipate that migrants will be driving worn-out and outdated vehicles. This is because they believe migrants lack belonging, and they cannot afford loans or money to purchase good cars. On the contrary, migrants felt that white people were occasionally stopped. One of my research assistants echoed similar sentiments with the majority of participants when she told me:

> White people are also occasionally stopped. This scrutiny is because white people are associated with tourism, meaning white people are viewed as tourists rather than migrants or "illegal" migrants. If they are stopped, they are usually not searched, and if they are, they are most likely only asked for their driver's license or subjected to a breathalyser as a standard procedure. On the other hand, depending on their status and affiliation, Black Africans appear to be subjected to much more intense scrutiny.

These worrying irregularities, inconsistency and selective application of the law are what many of my participants confirmed they are grappling with. In some cases, police do not necessarily set up roadblocks, but instead, ambush using unmarked vehicles. Uber drivers and Uber Eats motorcycles are the primary targets of the undercover traffic police, with the migrants I interviewed feeling that

[13] Bellville is a suburb of the Cape Town Metropole. It is located on the Cape Peninsula, east of Cape Town.

police surveillance of Uber vehicles and Uber Eats motorcycles was unjustified. They claimed that the reason for this is the general impression that the majority of Uber drivers and Uber Eats motorcycle drivers are non-nationals. I spoke with Alia, a 28-year-old male migrant driver who works as an Uber driver, about selective policing at random and mobile roadblocks. When I asked him about his interactions with the police during his working hours, he said the following:

> The police have discovered that approximately 80% of Uber and Uber Eats operators are non-nationals. We believe they harass us every day to prevent us from operating so that their fellow countrymen can get clients. We've learned to live, work, and encounter the police while running errands because this is our source of income. As a result, we operate at night, when we are less likely to be harassed. Even at night, however, the police remain our greatest impediment to our movements and work. We simply believe they are discriminating against and segregating us because they believe the Uber industry is primarily dominated by foreign nationals.

Alia's sentiments are not unique. They were also expressed by a large number of the participants I interviewed, with migrants believing that they are being profiled based on their belonging or lack thereof.

The most contentious issue surrounding stop-and-search operations, whether at roadblocks or checkpoints, is the discretion of police officers and lack of overall supervision, which result in selective policing. It is illegal for police to act without a mandate, yet similar to the observations of Bowling (2007), my research assistants indicated that many migrants believe that the police's discretion in such operations occurs with little or no direct supervision from police managers or commanders. When migrants and other migrants ask if they can speak with their superiors, they are constantly denied this opportunity. Furthermore, most of the people I interviewed believed that police officers frequently conducted searches without a thorough understanding of legal and constitutional requirements. Previous research suggests these episodes are not a new issue, but part of historical practice (Gould and Mastrofski, 2004). To circumvent the one-sided bias, I engaged and interviewed the police. Let me turn to discuss the interaction I had with the police.

4.4.2 South African Police's Experiences with Migrants

Most migrant drivers I interacted with during my fieldwork articulated their experiences with the traffic police and police in general from a victimhood perspective. They indicated that they feel

there is social profiling instigated by the police based on nationality. In recognising the incomplete nature of my research, I sought the side and experiences of the police with migrants and drew on them in their incompleteness. A review of the South African traffic police work under the National Traffic Law Enforcement (NTLE) was done. The NTLE was established in terms of the Road Traffic Management Corporation Act 20 of 1999 as one of the Road Traffic Management Corporation Functional Units. The primary function of the National Traffic Police Unit is to deliver coordination, planning, regulation, and facilitation of traffic law enforcement in respect of road traffic matters by national, provincial, and local spheres of government. This is done by ensuring driver and vehicle fitness, freight, and public transport. In addition to that, dangerous driving and intoxicated driving, among others, are regulated and checked. I intended to get their view concerning the claims made by migrant drivers that police arrest migrants based on belonging or not belonging.

Despite migrants insisting that many arrests on the road are based on social profiling, the police officers are of the view that the law itself arrests offenders. To get deeper insights into the police and migrant driver encounters and experiences, I conducted an interview with four traffic police officers who had stopped and searched my car while I was driving towards Cape Town CBD. I asked them if they selectively stop and search people because they appear to be non-citizens, and one officer retorted: “I, just like any police officer, do my work based on the constitution to uphold the law regardless of citizenship, nationality, or race.” These sentiments by the police officer expressed a consensus among other police officers I interviewed. They indicated that their objective as the police was to enforce the law. Hence their main mission is to prevent and combat anything that may threaten the safety and security of any community. They commented that they ensure offenders are brought to justice and participate in efforts to address the root causes of crime regardless of colour, creed, ethnicity, citizenship, or race. As one police officer noted: “We just bring offenders to justice without even considering nationality, race, gender or ethnicity. Regardless, we do not arrest people, but the law does if you break it.” The police maintained that their work and how they enforce the law have nothing to do with nationality, belonging or not belonging. The police I worked with confirmed that there is no selective application of the law. They maintained that no one can simply be arrested without having broken the law and cannot be

arrested without a reasonable cause. The police officers who participated in this research felt that migrant offenders try to use the police as a scapegoat in their quest of evading arrest.

4.4.3 Lockdown Regulations and Curfew as Borders

Since May 2020, COVID-19-induced lockdowns have also defined migrants' experiences and encounters in Cape Town. During the national COVID-19 lockdown Level 5, the government of South Africa suspended movement including that of Uber, meter taxis and private cars, and pedestrians during the curfews. Curfew meant that transport operators, a sector with many migrants could not operate after 10 pm or 12 pm depending on the level of lockdown the country was also involved in. South Africa used the COVID-19 Risk-Adjusted Strategy which encapsulated 5 levels (Department of Health, South Africa, 2021).

These measures, that were largely used to contain the pandemic's spread – border closures, lockdowns, physical separation, and limited onward mobility – undermined the very coping mechanisms that migrants typically relied on to overcome challenges (Ogude and Chekero, 2020). Under "normal" conditions, migrants' adaptation to health, economic, and social stresses and shocks is reliant on social networks (Chekero and Ogude, 2020). Yet, by halting the movement of people, goods, and money (including domestic and international remittances), these measures restricted access to social networks and eroded migrants' adaptive mechanisms.

In response to the pandemic, many African governments did implement some response packages. On paper and in rhetoric, governments sought to include migrants in these packages, but in practice they inadvertently excluded them. As described in 1.9, above, in South Africa, the government made significant efforts to assist the unemployed and vulnerable, but migrants and some migrants had difficulty accessing these subsidies. Garba (2020) argues that this is because migrants lacked the documentation required by the government to access state-provided social relief food parcels and the relief fund, and in some cases, COVID-19 healthcare. This inevitably placed many migrants and forced migrants in a worse position than nationals. Thus, with migrants losing their livelihoods, particularly in the informal economy, and civil society and international agencies unable to assist all, many were stranded and unable to meet their own and their families' needs.

When I interviewed Tapps, a 35-year-old migrant Uber driver, he noted: "It's a disaster, my friend, it is tough out there…." As an Uber driver in Cape Town, he was used to picking up passengers

across the city and from the airport for several trips a day. Despite Uber drivers being considered essential workers, they were not permitted to travel after hours under curfew laws. Many Uber drivers, including Tapps, confirmed falling into arrears on the rent-to-own agreements on their cars, with some seeing their vehicles repossessed, and others having to look for other streams of income.

Migrant-owned small businesses in the informal market also suffered, with many failing or on the verge of failing. This is because many of these businesses rely on migrants moving from one location to another to sell and buy goods. Achimwene, a migrant trader who sells a wide range of items on the sidewalks of streets and traffic intersections, said the immobility caused by the lockdown meant he could not move. "Because there was so little movement," he explained, "I was unable to sell anything. As a result, it was almost impossible for me to support my wife and our three children financially...." Many of the migrants, like Achimwene, who sell goods on the sidewalks of streets and traffic intersections barely make enough money to live on, and as a result of the lockdown, they had no other way of making a living.

Finally, some of the migrants interviewed believed that extreme levels of COVID-19 lockdowns in South Africa were used as a convenient opportunity to restrict the movement of migrants. Even though the pandemic affected everyone's mobility, including locals, migrants still felt that the pandemic was being utilised to stop migrants from working and force them into desperate situations, which might motivate them to leave the country. Lockdowns can slow down the transmission of COVID-19, and indeed, countries at times had no choice but to implement such measures. Yet, as the World Health Organisation notes, "such measures disproportionately affect disadvantaged groups, including people in poverty, migrants, internally displaced people and migrants, who … depend on daily labour for subsistence."[14] While not commenting specifically on the validity of the above statements by my participants, these views do nonetheless highlight the level of suspicion and mistrust that has accumulated within migrant communities, based on their everyday experiences with the state and state officials and the lack of support for them during this period.

[14] WHO (2020) Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Herd immunity, lockdowns and COVID-19.

4.4.4 Community Mobilised Anti-Immigrant Movements as Barriers and Blockages

Finally, a recent development has been the adoption of informal roadblocks from local-level organisations. Community-based movements, such as the xenophobic community organisation, Operation Dudula,[15] have utilised the increasing anti-immigrant feelings within local communities to wage campaigns against "illegal" migrants. This has involved setting up unofficial roadblocks to locate and intimidate foreign black Africans. The combination of these state and local-level approaches to blockages follows a history of migrant restrictions in South Africa (WHO, 2020). Mbembe (2017) sees this as the militarization and contraction of local borders, the tightening of rights, and the expansion of tracking and surveillance of people. As I have shown in Chapter One, regulation of movement in South Africa has a long history and it is based on incompleteness. While, during colonialism, European imperialists' incompleteness pushed or propelled certain types of mobility based on conquest by mobilizing "darker-skinned" populations for service and servitude, in post-apartheid South Africa, community-based movements use a similar logic to propel particular types of mobility based on belonging and non-belonging.

The movement's beginnings can be traced back to Johannesburg, but it has since expanded to other cities and regions across the country, including the Western Cape. Those responsible for organizing Operation Dudula, along with their followers, travelled to Cape Town. Operation Dudula agents in Cape Town informed six factories in Witsand, located outside of Atlantis, that they had seven days to remove illegal immigrants who were allegedly working for them. On Wednesday, August 10, 2022, members of Operation Dudula led a march through Cape Town, stopping at shops and filling stations along the way. They demanded that the businesses remove their foreign employees. The group delivered the curriculum vitae of jobless South Africans to the places of business and demanded that the individuals be hired within the next week. Unemployed young people braved the rain to join approximately 200 members of Operation Dudula in Kraaifontein, where they demanded that the city create jobs for them. One of my participants who was present at the march told me the following:

> The Dudula people I saw marching seemed to be very focused on their tasks. I just so happened to be working at a butcher shop when they arrived in Kraaifontein. I was really hoping no one would be able to tell I'm not a local. Imagine if they decided to murder me. I

[15] While there are many, I am going to focus on Operation Dudula which has recently grabbed the headlines.

> was there in 2008 when people were burned alive after being wrapped in tyres and set afire. The day after the Dudula visitors, I didn't go to work. For my boss, I concocted a ridiculous justification. In fact, I asked for a week of sick time.

In a situation very similar to the one described above, many of the migrants with whom I worked expressed their fear of community-organized anti-immigrant movements. The reason for this is that the vast majority of them are violent and they take people's lives. As the anti-immigrant movement tensions in Cape Town were heightened through Operation Dudula, the majority of the migrants I worked with also expressed the fear of being publicly outed as "foreigners". Even though the horrifying movement against African migrants lasted considerably less time in Cape Town than it did in other parts of the country, it nonetheless defined local interpretations. Migrants were cautious about being too openly identified as non-nationals due to recent incidents of violence against non-citizens. For instance, a Zimbabwean national named Elvis Nyathi was a victim of a mob in Diepsloot, Johannesburg, and was murdered; this was framed by the media and the state as just a crime (*Daily Maverick, April 7,* 2022). As a consequence of this, migrants' movements are restricted; additionally, the existence of such blockages or the threat of such blockages causes migrants to alter their routines or use more covert methods to navigate the city.

4.5 Negotiating Boundaries and Borders in Cape Town

The second half of the chapter turns to explore the ways migrants negotiate boundaries and borders, such as police roadblocks, lockdowns, and curfews in Bellville. Nyamnjoh's concepts of "nimble-footedness" and conviviality are adopted to gain a more nuanced understanding of how migrants strategically navigate the city, through their responses, practices, and social encounters. The two concepts were chosen because they were found to be well-equipped to unpack and explore the data that emerged from my fieldwork and case studies. Nimble-footedness can be simply defined as one's ability to move the feet swiftly and effectively. I borrow the concept from Nyamnjoh (2013), who introduces it through his study of the Mbororo Fulani in Western Grassfields of Cameroon, who are subjected to borders and boundaries through complex postcolonial politics of rights and entitlements, in which juridico-political citizenship is frequently challenged at local and regional levels by claims of autochthony. In this study, I refer to nimble-footedness as the ways migrants create the ability and agility to navigate and negotiate the challenges and opportunities they meet in Cape Town. According to Goffman (1959), migrant performances lead to practices in which visibility and invisibility become strategies that migrants must employ to adapt their experiences.

In situations like these, migrants develop tactics that are time-sensitive, and they must "watch for opportunities that must be seized" (De Certeau, 2011). As a result, tactics and mechanisms for contesting, avoiding or removing borders become central to the lives of migrants.

As part of these tactics, a migrant quickly learns to accommodate fellow migrants and locals alike, all in the interest of survival. The formation of critical social networks such as *hushamwari* by accommodating one another is what I refer to herein as conviviality. Illich (2003) describes the convivial society as a post-industrial, localized civilization made up of "independent people and main groupings". As Nowicka and Heil (2015) point out, Illich's convivial order of "independent individuals and main groups" is similar to the fundamental convivialist concept of mutual help, which is present in families, friendship networks, and voluntary organizations. Building on this work, Gilroy (2004) sees conviviality as affirming variety but rejecting communitarian notions of racial and ethnic difference. For this study, conviviality is therefore understood as the processes of interaction and cohabitation that make multiculturalism an everyday part of the social life of migrants.

By bringing the two concepts together, the following sections show how the nimble-footedness of migrants enables them to create social networks lubricated by conviviality. Migrants, both on an individual and group level, invest in collective action as a social safety net to reduce their vulnerability. These ideas will be explored further in the following two sub-sections. Ultimately, this chapter argues that nimble-footedness and conviviality encourage migrants to experiment with new ways of thinking, living socially, connecting, reconciling, and networking, not only with their fellow countrymen but also with people from other countries, to respond to problems, and mediate their subjective experience of city life.

4.5.1 Nimble-Footedness as a Response

What regularly differentiates migrants' movement in Bellville from that of the locals is a lack of legal, social and economic belonging.[16] As a result, their daily life is often characterized by various

[16] With this argument, I am not presuming that locals do not lack belonging as pointed out by Misago (2015), but as the ongoing debates about who may move to and live in the Western Cape continue to show, this is not true for all. There are still strong continuities with apartheid thinking even for locals where the minorities face exclusion similar to that of migrants. In that regard, I am making a claim that life is differently qualified, and one needs to factor that

kinds of borders and boundaries. As a way of navigating and negotiating the city, they must know when, where and how to move and when not to make movements. This is what Nyamnjoh (2013) frames as "nimble-footedness" and is used in this study to cover not only physical mobility, but also the virtual, social, and psychological movement of migrants within and out of Bellville.

As noted above, during the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown measures included restrictions on mobility, curfews, social and physical distancing, and mask-wearing. A core element was the introduction of a curfew, which meant that people and businesses were not able to move or operate past 10 pm or 12 pm depending on the level of lockdown the country was involved in. This unearthed the incompleteness of human nature that is inherent in people, particularly migrants in this case. As a response, some Uber drivers quickly embraced moving goods, through the Uber Connect delivery service, or grocery and pharmacy deliveries on Uber Eats. Other drivers deployed alternative innovations, including business deliveries. In addition, despite the efforts by the government of South Africa to curb transmission of the coronavirus by halting human movement, the intra-city movement continued. Certainly, even though many people were staying at home, migrants whom I interviewed confirmed seeing growth in certain industries and the continued movement of people during curfews.

In this climate, breaking curfew rules for migrant taxi and Uber divers was a method of making an income and surviving. Staying at home and observing curfew regulations could mean a complete loss of livelihood. Boss Yasolo, a 38-year-old man and a metered taxi driver, expressed the following: "If we sit at home and say there is a curfew what becomes of us?" People like Boss Yasolo and Tapps regularly broke lockdown rules by continuing to operate their businesses that required movement. While the curfew and other lockdown regulations made it more challenging, migrants continued to move around the city in a process referred to as "Vaya-Vaya". Vaya-Vaya is slang that means to move fast in a meandering way. In this way, people were forced to take risks, feeling there was little choice but to subvert the law. People are not always confined or limited by structural factors when attempting to normalize things even when the environment is abnormal. Boss Yasolo revealed: "If I stop after the curfew I will suffer, however, I earn more after the curfew

into the picture to avoid a problematic binary "local"/"non-local" which completely belies the persistence of colonial and apartheid structuring logics in the navigation of the city for many people, not just migrants.

because there are no more taxis and users, you are likely to have five customers where you would have one or none." Thus, the curfew remained an obstacle but could also be seen as an opportunity. Some participants made more than they would have made before COVID-19. In light of migrants' inadequacies being made clearer by the effects of the pandemic and their subsequent coping mechanisms, one could say that, instead of absences, incompleteness is caused by possibilities. Nyamnjoh demonstrates how, using Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* as an example, "we constantly strive to overcome the constraints of our own limited experience and look to those claiming the status of seers and frontier beings, those endowed with larger-than-life clairvoyance and the ability to straddle worlds, navigate, negotiate, and reconcile chasms." Migrants sought to activate themselves to compensate for the deficiencies of mobility brought on by the pandemic, allowing them to find new ways of coping and adapting to the new challenge (Nyamnjoh, 2015:8).

Yet with the curfew being a clear border that limited the movements of everyone, including locals and migrants, it became particularly difficult for migrants without papers to survive and remain invisible to law enforcement officers. As a result, some were arrested and detained for the double offence of breaking curfew rules and a lack of papers. The case of long-term detention (without deportation) is a common phenomenon in Bellville, with the costs associated with deportation formalities often resulting in lengthy periods of detention. One participant confirmed that her three cousins, who were detained in April 2020, were released seven months later after she paid ZAR15,000 for them to be released.

In sum, to understand how to live in a city like Cape Town, migrants must first learn to read it (De Certeau, 1984). This section depicts a situation where the movement of migrants can be restricted, yet they find ways to penetrate borders and boundaries that are meant to impede them. Thus, navigating Bellville is an urban living experience in which migrants must acquire expertise and methods that allow them to traverse the space and cross boundaries in daily life (De Certeau, 1984). Migrants' nimble-footedness allows them to make decisions on where to go and how to get there, as well as whether or not to leave the house at certain times. While a curfew is a border that can limit movement, it is also a porous and permeable border that migrants can translate into an opportunity in their livelihood struggle and strife. As a result, the curfew has improved our knowledge of the borders' intrinsic porousness (Pophiwa, 2010).

Finally, it is important first not to over-romanticize these responses; they remain precarious and are fraught with danger and often come with the real risk of long-term detention. Second, these responses and strategies are mainly forced on the migrants due to structural issues, where most were not eligible for government grants or able to access other public services. As participants noted, many of them had gone through harrowing experiences when crossing borders to find forms of safety and protection. Now in South Africa, there was little choice but to find new ways to survive, with one participant observing: "We survived dealing with the immigration officials, police and army patrols along the border, now inland starving is not an option."

4.5.2 Conviviality and Social Networking as a Response

Building on the nimble-footedness of migrants, conviviality is a reaction to incompleteness, manifested through the city's complicated and dynamic everyday encounters. Through conviviality, social networks are created through everyday interactions among migrants and local communities (regardless of family and friend networks) (Nyamnjoh, 2017). For example, in negotiating boundaries and borders in Cape Town, migrants from African countries need to possess a wide range of social networks (including transnational networks). Mutual contact is paramount for survival when under threatening conditions. By relying on mutualism or co-reliance, migrants can negotiate exclusion from access to livelihood spaces, opportunities, and entitlements and navigate life in Cape Town or get by (Landau and Amit, 2014; Landau and Freemantle, 2010).

To develop a more nuanced understanding of the role of conviviality in the context of migrants in Cape Town, as well as understand how it emerges, it is useful to unpack how these social networks emerge through ubuntu, social capital, specifically, the axioms of bonding (within a social group), bridging (between social groups), and linking (between different hierarchical levels) (Putnam, 2000). First, when roadblocks were set up, individuals used their connections and networks to communicate as well as to get information. Participants in the study confirmed using bridging and linking social capital by making *hushamwari* connections with police officers. These connections were formed through everyday activities, such as meeting at religious gatherings (such as churches or mosques), restaurants, or social soccer platforms. At these events, finding similarities and

connections between migrants and certain police officers had the goal of breaking down barriers and creating mutuality. By communicating closely, migrants were better able to anticipate obstacles and devise plans to address and reduce any risks. One of my participants, Bra Eddie, admitted to learning about roadblocks from a police officer friend:

> An operation involving multiple law enforcement agencies focused on undocumented migrant nationals in Maitland. A friend of mine who works as a police officer at Maitland police station informed me the day before the operation. I also had the opportunity to inform my friends about the news.

Bra Eddie was not the only one who took advantage of the *hushamwari* relationship. The majority of the migrants I worked with confirmed that they developed and maintained social relationships with the police through *hushamwari*. *Hushamwari*, in this case, embodies what Nyamnjoh (2018) refers to as "conviviality" that lies at the heart of Southern African personhood. *Hushamwari* is closely related to the ubuntu concept of interdependence. As Nyamnjoh (2022), puts it, ubuntu and conviviality insist on interconnections and interdependence. Bra Eddie gained access to information about roadblocks as a result of the development and maintenance of *hushamwari* with the police officer, allowing him to anticipate and plan to avoid being arrested. As a result, *hushamwari* built bridges that connected Bra Eddie to spaces of information. This information could then be shared further, with collective action putting migrants in a better position to detect borders and boundaries, as well as adapt to, and mitigate, risks (Uphoff, 1997). *Hushamwari*, in this way, sparked creativity and new approaches to finding and maintaining a good life for all.

Second, during the COVID-19 lockdown in Cape Town, migrants relied heavily on convivial social networks to send some of their limited available money and goods back "home". Networks with truck and bus drivers, couriers (*omalayitsha*), funeral homes, and *hushamwari* networks were discovered to be critical in connecting capital in migrant remittances. Migrants also relied on informal institutions, such as independent brokers, to send remittances. For example, at the start of the COVID-19 outbreak, Edmund was saving money to buy a second car. COVID-19, rather than solely being understood as a challenge, presented itself as an opportunity for Edmund, to earn more money (I will explore the story further in Chapter Six). He quickly became an informal solo remittance service provider, assisting many migrants with sending their available remittances. To

achieve this, Edmund used his essential work permit to travel around the city during the lockdown to assist people and charge for his services. Thus, social networks were translated into social linking capital that connected people to Edmund, with mutual trust emerging as a core element of this endeavour. Without Edmund's assistance, many people would have been unable to send money to family members.

Third, migrants in Cape Town made use of bonding relations to legitimize and regularize their belonging. Bonding relationships allow for convivial relations to be created in local social gatherings, such as social soccer, social parties, money-rotating schemes and cooperative groups. In these groups, migrants learn to navigate through the complexities of everyday life in Cape Town. They help one another socially, economically, and in other ways as an assured way of survival. During my fieldwork, I frequented a place called "Home of Soccer", a five-a-side soccer park located in Bellville. Migrants of various nationalities and locals alike frequented the place. During one of my visits, I had an interview with the 28-year-old mother of one, Miranda, a migrant who plays women's soccer:

> Despite our differences in language and nationality, we have found peace in playing soccer. Mostly we use the English language as it is universal and makes our connection easier. Some people prefer other sporting activities, but I just believe football possesses the ability to bring people and communities together. By bringing people together, soccer teaches them how to accept differences, cooperate, and build valuable skills that lay the foundation for a positive society. I am working as a waitress at Food Inn Restaurant. I got a link to the job during my regular visits to Home of Soccer. I met Maria, a refugee, while playing and she introduced me to her boss who needed a waitress. That is how I got employed until now.

Associations such as social soccer enable migrants and locals to carefully negotiate and mitigate potential threats to health and life (Mangezvo, 2015). They also allow people to bypass boundaries and borders resulting from their migratory status, and, in doing so, foster cohesion and unity (Van Leeuwen, 2010). Soccer forges a way for people like Miranda to develop a *hushamwari* with locals. *Hushamwari* in that regard is a carefully cultivated conviviality with an aim to build and nurture new, social relationships. Associations, such as social soccer, were seen as platforms where migrants could create and sustain the social bonds of *hushamwari* with the locals and fellow migrants who attended. They create relations that migrants later transform into linking capital that connects them with a range of service networks. In Nyamnjoh's (2017) terms: "It is about building

bridges and linking people, spaces and places, cross-fertilizing ideas, and inspiring imagination and innovative ways of seeking and consolidating the good life for all and sundry". In this way, football in Bellville is not just a sport but a space in which relations are made and maintained. Conviviality eliminates boundaries that separate people from one another and promotes harmony even in unusual places. Buttressing that, Chekero and Morreira (2020) note that conviviality allows the formation of social bonds across nationalities in a way that mutuality can be realized among people where the wider society remains antagonistic to foreigners. It allows us to think about space in terms of nimbleness and connection, movement, and relation simultaneously (Nyamnjoh and Brudvig, 2014; Wise and Noble, 2016).

In sum, social relations and networks can be cultivated and sustained across and beyond nationality, bringing unity by bridging divides and facilitating interconnections among migrants and the host community (Wiesel and Bigby, 2016; Vertovec, 2007; Wessendorf, 2014). In this way, through forms of conviviality, social capital, ubuntu, and *hushamwari* are transformed into vital relations that are pertinent to accessing basic amenities and information. It is important, however, to note two final points here. First, these approaches and processes can appear quite calculative on the part of the individual. Often born out of necessity, this may be the case on occasions. Nevertheless, it was also apparent through the fieldwork, that, frequently, elements of social capital emerge via acts of conviviality without specific forethought; meaning, these tactics often bring about opportunities (and thus are ultimately reinforced) but without any specific "master-plan" in place to achieve a specific goal. Second, again it is important not to over-romanticize these behaviours. Relationships or connections between migrants in Cape Town are certainly not independent of tension and conflicts. Unhealthy relations and altercations in the form of racism, ethnocentrism and xenophobia or other forms are regularly prevalent between refugee and migrant groups, and between migrants and local communities.

4.6 Conclusion

Using the concepts of conviviality, ubuntu, *hushamwari* and nimble-footedness, this chapter has investigated the dynamics of the migrant movement within Cape Town to gain a better understanding of how state and local level boundaries and borders impact intra-city migrant movement; as well as the tactics used by migrants to respond to these obstacles, in an attempt to find forms of localised protection and long-term survival strategies in these spaces. Borders and

boundaries are expanding in cities such as Cape Town, South Africa, with migrants' movements restricted even in critical situations, such as access to hospitals, government offices, key livelihood spaces, and places of worship.

The chapter focused on three specific examples: police blockages and lockdowns, curfews associated with state-based responses to COVID-19, and community-based anti-immigrant movements, such as Operation Dudula. These forms of barriers and blockages were chosen because they have emerged as three dominant barriers affecting the lives of migrants in Cape Town in recent years. The chapter demonstrated that, regardless of their overarching goals (which may be for the public good, such as being part of public health responses or reducing/preventing crime), roadblocks and curfews had (and continue to have) a huge impact on how migrants navigate the city and access livelihoods and key services. This is due, in part, to the fact that migrants are frequently overlooked in terms of public policy and planning when the state assesses the impact of policy on the poor or potentially more vulnerable members of society. For the migrants I interviewed, these boundaries and borders in combination with others based on belonging and non-belonging and local hostilities, mean movement in the Cape Town metropolitan area *are* characterized by blockages.

Despite this, migrants continue to devise methods and strategies for crossing borders and negotiating boundaries. This chapter has shown how migrants embrace nimble-footedness to form social networks lubricated by convivial relationships by drawing from, and expanding on, Nyamnjoh's work. In forming social networks through nimble-footedness, *hushamwari*, conviviality and ubuntu, built on incompleteness, are key. The ability and agility of migrants to navigate and negotiate the challenges and opportunities that they encounter in Cape Town are referred to as nimble-footedness. This is frequently accomplished through ubuntu, conviviality or the formation and maintenance of *hushamwari* social networks across apparent differences. By looking at migrants' lives through these two lenses, it helps to remove ambiguity by portraying migrants as rational individuals who rely on a wide range of interconnections, inseparable entanglements, and creative interdependencies to sustain their way of life. In turn, the social networks that form, provide migrants with resources and allow them to move around the city. This can foster a sense of mutualism and interdependence, as demonstrated above when the same police

officers who are expected to arrest and deport undocumented migrants and migrants were providing information to migrants about upcoming police raids.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Mobility and Practices of Migrant Women in the City of Cape Town

5.1 Introduction

Incompleteness draws our attention to the gendered nature of mobility and migration. Hence, this chapter focuses on the daily intracity movement of migrant women from African countries who live and work in Cape Town. In particular, it focuses on the experiences of migrant women (ranging from vegetable vendors to hairdressers and domestic workers (whom I define as house helpers) to investigate how migrant women in Cape Town negotiate urban space, as well as their interactions with and within it. I examine migrant women's movement in the city to see how they are impacted by challenges such as exclusion, local hostility, gatekeeping, xenophobia, structural violence, harassment, mugging and armed robberies, as a result of their mobility in freedom and/or in constraint. Subsequently, I explore the coping mechanisms women migrants employ to find localized protection and long-term survival strategies.

The focus on women is motivated by their frequent mobility in their efforts to survive and thrive in Cape Town, a city that, despite its claims to be cosmopolitan and welcoming, is marked by the violent demarcation of belonging. Another motivation is that, while migrant women have access to city space, their experience of cities is vastly different from that of their male counterparts, due to several factors limiting their ability to move freely (Phadke, 2013; Viswanath and Mehrotra, 2007). These factors include a lack of safe and dependable modes of transportation, as well as a lack of space and a sense of belonging (Phadke, 2013). Likewise, Mbiyozo (2020) observed that, in South Africa, migrant women face triple discrimination with xenophobia, racism and misogyny. Although migrant men face similar challenges, migrant women face them more acutely due to their vulnerable situation. This is consistent with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2014), which observed that women are more vulnerable than men in many situations, particularly in developing countries like South Africa (Nyamnjoh and Brudvig, 2016; Ncube, Bahta and Jordaan, 2019).

In light of this context, I draw attention to the incompleteness of migrant women which informs their daily activities in Cape Town and what they engage in to sustain and, if possible, enhance

their own and their families' lives. I investigate how women survive despite the life-threatening constraints they face in their daily urban interactions. I contrast survival with the creative strategies employed by migrant women in Cape Town in their daily mobility and encounters. Surviving is examined through the lived experiences of migrant women and the survival strategies they employ to overcome health and life-threatening risks. I argue that the need for conviviality and social networks is fueled by migrant women's incompleteness, mobility, encounters, compositeness, debt, and indebtedness. Migrant women succeed by forming informal networks and being nimble-footed. They accomplish this by utilizing a variety of social networks, such as *hushamwari,* inspired by ubuntu as well as other platforms (including digital), which provide them with access to both physical space and information. The concept of friendship or *hushamwari* in this chapter is equally important to explicate the mobility and social formations of women in the city.

In summary, this chapter investigates how migrant women from African countries, who have settled in urban Cape Town, navigate and negotiate space, as well as their relationships within and with it, using four groups of women as examples: mobile vendors, mobile hairdressers and mobile house helpers. . The chapter also investigates how social relations, social networks, and individual dispositions influence migrant women's mobility, determining whether they confront or avoid the borders and boundaries they encounter.

5.2 Migrant Women's Experiences in Cape Town

Cities offer both opportunities and barriers to those attempting to make a living through migration or trade (Yasmeen, 2016). Cities should therefore grant residents the right to move freely within them and work in and around them in safety and dignity. According to Viswanath and Mehrotra (2007) urban spaces provide migrant women with anonymity, which is necessary for escaping the patriarchal boundaries of family and community while they are away from their home countries. While the city provides women with such freedom, gendered violence against women in Cape Town limits their ability to freely engage with the urban space. Nonetheless, migrants are not always helpless victims. As this chapter will demonstrate, migrant women have agency that is strengthened by social networking, allowing them to improve their situation.

Cape Town's urban transport system and spatial policies have not yet managed to enshrine gender equality fully and innovatively as a practice (Wilson, 2017). Elsewhere, in India, an online

newspaper Engage EPW (2019) expressed that the infrastructure issues curtail the movement of women in the city, their work, and their education – their complete participation in city life. According to migration and mobility studies, women's spatial range is limited, making them anxious about moving around in new or unknown areas (Phadke, 2013; Viswanath and Mehrotra, 2007; Whitzman, 2006). In the same vein, Tara (2011:71) argues that "the physical structure of a city reflects and reinforces inequalities of its social structure through not being equally accessible to both the genders". This has compromised to a greater magnitude the mobility of many women including migrant women whose livelihood strategies are dependent on being mobile on daily basis. Studies on mobility have long established the need to account for cultural diversities and effects when formulating policies (Teffo and Zuidgeest, 2019; Nyamnjoh and Brudvig, 2016). How women negotiate public space in Cape Town, as elsewhere in Africa, is influenced by the cultural expectations that the general society imposes on them. These include the way a woman walks, talks or dresses. Without safe modes of transport, women are more likely to conform to restrictions that limit their access to space.

More so, lack of belonging is a huge obstacle that constrains the mobility of migrant women in Cape Town. Belonging broadly inspires a sense of security, access to employment and opportunities (Owen, 2015; Amisi, 2006). It lays and reinforces a foundation for indigeneity. Belonging and not belonging have been key issues creating tension between locals and migrants, limiting the movement of migrants (Chireka, 2015). While mobility into South Africa has intensified, Cape Town which is referred to as the Mother City (Chidester, 2000) has not always been welcoming to migrants (Cirolia, Hall and Nyamnjoh, 2021; Maringira and Vuninga, 2022). Similarly, this study discovered hostility towards non-nationals by South Africans, including government and law enforcement officials. Hostility against migrants included, among other things, discrimination in both formal and informal work and social spaces (see also Landau, 2008; Neocosmos, 2010). My study established that it is common for foreign nationals to be verbally attacked for not belonging and not using local languages in their daily interactions, including while walking on the street. Just like elsewhere across South Africa, a common and hurtful insult thrown at foreigners is the label "*kwerekwere*," a derogatory and slang word used by Black South Africans to mean "foreigner" (Nyamnjoh, 2006; Neocosmos, 2010).

Despite the presence of the aforesaid barriers and obstacles to the mobility of migrant women and migrants in general, they still move in and out of the city. Their life is instructed by the risky nature of the city together with what they do to survive in these risky environments. This is what Nyamnjoh (2013) describes as "nimble-footedness". As a way of navigating and negotiating the city, they must know when, where and how to move and when not to make movements. In some cases, this study establishes that migrant women choose to be "visible" or "invisible". Migrants' visibility or invisibility (being in the right place with the right attitude, time and with the right people) creates an opportunity to manoeuvre strategically in each situation (Landau and Freemantle, 2010). Navigating the city is an experience in urban life where one possesses, or acquires, experience and strategies that allow the urban space to be negotiated and borders to be circumvented or encountered in everyday life (de Certeau, 1984). Migrant women who participated in this study confirmed that they make prudent decisions about where to go and how to get there. In some situations, they also conformed, opting not to leave the house at certain times. They creatively think and put thought into resources and ways of moving knowing "safe" and "unsafe spaces".

5.3 Migrants Navigating and Negotiating the City of Cape Town

Migrant women also survive by circumventing boundaries that are both obstacles and opportunities. Chabal (2009) argues that, in this way, Africans – and, as I show, migrant women – exercise agency to circumnavigate the borders and boundaries that confront them. These are the adaptive and innovative strategies migrant women deploy to negotiate mobility processes and their associated risks, shocks and stresses. I draw attention to the micro-picture of what migrant women do daily to sustain, and, if possible, better themselves and their families in Cape Town. Migrant women survive through informal networks and are nimble-footed. They get access to space and information through various social networks and various other platforms. I show how they draw on activities that are not entirely economic but made up of socio-cultural aspects that are vital to understanding migrants' everyday lives, mobility and practices in metropolitan Cape Town. In relation to Chabal's notion of "surviving", I show how social networks are knitted together by similar social traits and collective activities. Let me begin with the daily mobility of migrant women working as vendors in Cape Town.

5.3.1 The Mobility of Migrant Mobile Vendors

One Friday evening, I was having a conversation with Mama Santo in Wynberg, a town 15 kilometers from central Cape Town that serves as the main transport hub for the city's southern suburbs. Wynberg was a small farming community that quickly grew into a garrison town during the colonial era. During this time, Wynberg served as a convenient halfway point between Table Bay and False Bay, resulting in a commercial hub. It gave farmers an alternative to the Cape Town market. Wynberg is now one of Cape Town's busiest commercial districts. It is also known for its open-air theatre, Chelsea Village, and excellent restaurants.

In addition to formal business activities, Wynberg is also home to informal business activities. Street vendors, flea markets, food markets, and laundromats are examples of Wynberg's informal commercial enterprises, but the neighbourhood is also home to a variety of other small businesses. These establishments are categorized as “informal businesses” due to the fact that they are almost never registered at the national or regional level and rely almost exclusively on cash transactions. In Wynberg, as in other areas of Cape Town, migrants and locals alike engage in the practice of informal trading in and around crowded places, such as train stations, taxi ranks, and the streets of the Central Business District (Williams, 2015). They also do not contribute to the government in the form of tax payments, and the bulk of their employment is conducted on an informal basis. The vast majority of migrants who participate in unofficial economic activities are subject to occupational exclusion, which causes them to suffer a loss of resources necessary for the maintenance of their way of life (Jakobsen, 2005).

Mama Santo started her business in the informal sector. Mama Santo is well-known and respected for her warm personality. Tino, a friend of mine, introduced me to Mama Santo, her vegetable customer. Tino preferred to buy from Mama Santo because her products are both affordable and fresh. Furthermore, she provides vegetables based on the needs of her customers (for example, individual items over pre-packed sizes, and in terms of preferences of taste, price and variety). Furthermore, because she is mobile, she can reach out to townships and informal settlements that are geographically distant from central business districts, where formal trade typically operates. I made it clear that I wanted to work with her while also researching how she interacts with her clients, who are both migrants and locals.

When I asked Mama Santo how she started her business in Cape Town on our first Saturday together, she told me that she started her vending business in Wynberg in 2015, when she moved to Cape Town. Maria, a friend who had moved to South Africa in 2010, had offered her a job. Mama Santo was unable to obtain the job that Maria had promised her when she first arrived in South Africa. Second, the company Maria worked for decided to relocate to Germany, forcing the owner to close the shop. Mama Santo was unable to find work due to her circumstances. She worked hard to find work and was eventually hired as a cleaner at a foreign-owned supermarket in Wynberg.

Maria, who was also unemployed at the time, began selling vegetables at the Wynberg taxi rank. Mama Santo said it was worthwhile because Maria was able to pay her rent and send money home. Mama Santo was filled with inspiration and motivation. She began saving money to start her own vending business, and after six months of hard work and saving, she had enough. Maria helped Mama Santo start her vending business in three ways. She first introduced her to the wholesalers from whom she would be purchasing large items. Second, she assisted her in finding a location for the launch of the business. Third, she showed her how to run a business. So, fitted with the necessary armour, Mama Santo launched her company. Mama Santo eventually purchased a wheelbarrow, which she used to transport her vegetables and sell them in Wynberg neighbourhoods. The mobile business eventually paid off, and she was able to purchase the Nissan she is currently driving. Since 2015, Mama Santo has had consistent clients who have become friends and family. She is supplying churches, restaurants, and supermarkets with all of the vegetables they require.

Mama Santo's story resonates well with what many migrants I worked with, and my research assistants, repeatedly shared. Many of their stories indicated how the informal economies have become the livelihood mainstay for both migrants and local South Africans. It is also plausible to note that the informal economy is not exclusively a migrant territory. Some South African engage in informal business activities around taxi ranks, train stations and other public gatherings. They also rely on migrants as their customers, clients and patrons. In these socio-economic spaces, locals and ordinary migrants share knowledge and skills related to survival through informal economic activities, such as selling fruits and vegetables (Maringira and Vuninga, 2022; Steinberg, 2006).

Such interactions and conversations suggest the possibility of conviviality and ubuntu (see 1.10 above). Conviviality and ubuntu unlock the potential of people involved by encouraging individuals to demonstrate compassion, reciprocity, dignity, humanity and mutuality in the service of constructing and preserving communities. Working at a taxi rank, or train station, and moving around looking for customers benefits Mama Santo's interaction with a diverse range of people. Her job allows her to travel around the city, visit various social and physical spaces, and meet new people. Connections are formed with new people she meets; the majority of these are critical to the growth of her business as well as her social life. She taps into her customers' networks, some of whom have become close friends, where *hushamwari* emerges, and family (including both migrants and locals), as I observed during my time working with Mama Santo. I also observed that some of her customers visited her at her place of residence. Sometimes she would reciprocate by visiting her clients at their places of residence. Some of these visits would be business-oriented but some would be social visits in which they would be "catching up". Such visits, when equated to social networking, can shift our focus from the individual toward sociality (Duru, 2020). Mama Santo also told me that, :visiting each other is what makes people human. *Musha haungave musha kana usina nevaenzi* [which simply means a household is not complete until it has visitors]." In a more nuanced manner, this is similar to the African personhood or the concept of ubuntu which means a person is a person through other people (Samkange and Samkange, 1980; Ramose, 1999; Comaroff and Comaroff, 2001). For Mama Santo, being human means people have to visit each other beyond the confines of business. Visiting each other creates space for forging and maintenance of connections that could be transformed into friendships. Visiting each other nurtures and strengthens social ties. My fieldwork experience confirmed that people of various backgrounds form and maintain connections based on common interests, lifestyles, tastes or business, as shown by the story above.

The concept of friendship or *hushamwari* in this chapter is equally important. As I have shown through the experience of Mama Santo and Maria, *hushamwari* embodies more than just a connection between two or more people. It means social relationships and the cultivation of conviviality are key in migrant women's lives in Cape Town, despite all the boundaries and borders they meet in their everyday encounters and interactions. This is important also when they are excluded by the state and marginalized by the locals, particularly when they are undocumented. The concept of friendship embodies conviviality (Gilroy, 2004, 2006). Conviviality is more about

building and sustaining relations, as shown by Mama Santo and her clients visiting each other. Such acts are fundamental to being human, both socially and biologically. They are essential for reconstruction, renewal and regeneration (Amin, 2012; Noble, 2013).

As shown through the social process of visiting, conviviality in Cape Town unfolds and materializes in public and private spaces which are imagined to be free from state influence (Banerjee, 2001). In this case, the operation of informal businesses is free from state influence, as shown by people like Maria and Mama Santo. Their experiences demonstrate how, beyond the state's influence, social connections and economic relations are cultivated and sustained between migrants and locals (Maringira and Vuninga, 2022). Interaction in shared physical space allows for space and possibilities for diverse people to connect through various relationships in pursuit of livelihood opportunities (Wessendorf, 2014; Wise and Velayutham, 2013; Wise, 2016). As shown through Mama Santo's story, conviviality focuses on commonalities rather than differences; it stresses what makes people work and belong together rather than what can separate them. Nowicka (2020:21) notes that the emergence of conviviality results from the ability of people to navigate this diversity, which is aided by a specific material infrastructure that slows traffic and invites dwelling.

Mama Santo's business allows her to meet various people with various beliefs and different tastes in vegetables. Her experience resonates well with the majority of women I worked with. Central to migrants in the business of selling vegetables and running small businesses, conviviality is the seedbed where relations are moulded, and conflicts managed. Toleration and co-existence lie at the heart of conviviality (Gilroy, 2006; Lapina, 2016). In doing this research, I also paid immense attention to the small business language used by migrant vendors and local South Africans. The business language is formulated in such a way that it increases the connection between themselves and their customers. Their language is very polite and persuasive which continuously keeps them connected. Indeed, ethnicity and religion could not be ignored in their everyday lives and business encounters, but what took precedence was the bonding, intimacy, solidarity and conviviality in the interest of business continuity and a collective sense of belonging.

Apart from Mama Santo, I conversed with other participants, who are customers. They indicated that they attend their vendors' customers' parties (customers who became friends), visited their religious places, and attended funerals. One of Mama Santo's clients indicated: "When you create

connections with the right people, they support you during difficult times such as the death of a family member or in sickness they visit you in the hospital." Participants confirmed support for each other during funerals. Some confirmed receiving mutual help and assistance from one another and their families in the event of death or illness. Such acts reflect the solidarity among migrant women and locals created through relations made in the informal economy and reinforced by visiting.

Conflicts can sometimes escalate to violent fights especially in the event that a customer fails to pay for the goods they have been given on credit. These were commonly noted issues that were found to be making relations fail and some people fall out of the socio-economic circles. Nonetheless, all these solidarities, pleasures, tensions and conflicts made migrants feel they belong. The powerful sense of belonging predominates their ethnic, class, and religious identity differences despite the tension (Ross, 2015). Belonging allows for the cultivation and maintenance of networks essential to migrant vendors' mobility. The sense of belonging and the relations they have within the city and with the city allow them to calculate their mobility and execute their business plans. Such knowledge about the city and the connections has allowed them to learn about safe and unsafe places and how to avoid them.

5.3.2 The Mobility of Migrant Mobile Hairdressers

Apart from migrant vendors such as Mama Santo, I interacted, interviewed and worked with migrant mobile hairdressers. I included mobile hairdressers because their mobility and experience of the city are different from those that are fixed in one place. The mobile hairdressing profession necessitates working outside of the confines of a beauty shop or a hair salon. Migrants I worked with in this industry told me that hair service is sometimes required inside the comfort of their clients' homes or a house. In most cases, their services are most needed at events such as weddings. Mobile hairdressers may be required for the bride and bridesmaids' convenience to avoid travelling to the salon to have their hair fixed. For these reasons, my participants confirmed that they travel to the homes of their clients to provide their services. Apart from homes, they confirmed that their services are required in hospitals, prisons, and other public institutions. Every hairdresser must have the necessary personal qualities and skills to be successful in the hairdressing industry. The nimbleness to use their hands effectively and safely to sculpt hair and afford the perfect looks for a specific customer, as well as the eagerness to learn new things, are required.

A mobile hairdresser must be extra cautious, skilled, and equipped with all necessary tools and materials when providing services outside of a salon. Similarly, the ability to be cautious, skilled, and equipped is useful not only for hairdressing but also for accessing space and making connections that can lead to hairdressing opportunities. Migrant women I worked with pointed out that they do not attend to every client who calls. There have been numerous reports of people being raped, murdered, robbed, or trafficked. As a result, they must be cautious enough to know when and where to go, as well as when and where not to go. They must be aware of safe and unsafe areas, as well as who is genuine and who is not. All of these are qualities that a migrant hairdresser should possess to navigate both the physical and social spaces safely.

Migrant hairdressers who advertise their services online stated that they use their judgment to determine whether a potential customer is genuine or not. They also use internet platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, to conduct a quick background check on the client, even though these platforms are ineffective and insecure. The majority of participants, however, stated that the bulk of their customers are people they already know and have worked with. They developed relationships with them that go beyond hairdressing. They have become friends and frequently visit each other. Migrants observed a snowball effect when some of their existing customers linked them to other customers. This makes hairdressers safer. To learn more about how migrant women navigate and negotiate urban space, I spoke with Anele, a migrant hairdresser from Rondebosch. I first met her when she came to my house to plait the hair of the sister of one of my housemates.

During the plaiting process, we talked about how she moved to South Africa from her home country in 2016 after finishing her studies in beauty therapy. During her time in South Africa, she was employed by a business known as Elegance Beauty Therapy. Her job allowed her to interact with people of various races and socioeconomic backgrounds. In meeting with these people, accidental conversations would begin. In one of the conversations, a client suggested that Anele start her own business, but Anele was hesitant because she did not have the funds to rent a building. Naledi, a South African woman, who was one of Anele's clients, suggested that Anele become a mobile hairstylist. Mobile hairdressing required little effort, but a few essential tools were required. During our conversation, Anele noted that the following:

> On my quest to become a self-employed mobile hairdresser, Naledi served as my first customer. She recommended me to several of her friends as well. From 2017 till the present, we became close and remained together. Thanks to the friendship bond I have with Naledi, I now have twenty regular clients. Even though I am anxious to see more new customers, I only do so on recommendations to protect myself from getting robbed, raped, or killed. In the vicinity of Rondebosch, Mowbray, Claremont, Wynberg, Cape Town city, Camps Bay, Hout Bay, and Century City, I work.

Anele's story is similar to that of many of the migrant hairdressers with whom I worked. It emphasizes the importance of mobility in migrants' daily survival and socialization. Anele's services as a professional hairdresser range from ZAR700 to ZAR2,500 per head, depending on the style desired and the distance travelled. When asked how she keeps her money safe when she gets paid to visit a client far away from home, Anele said she uses Uber or a meter taxi. She stated that she always uses Mr Mudhikwa, a migrant meter taxi operator. Anele's use of a well-known network (Mr Mudhikwa) could be compared to social capital. Social capital, according to van Meeterea and Pereira (2013), is the capital that migrants use to help them get by, such as Anele's networks. This is also similar to the concept of ubuntu. The story of Anele and Mr. Mudhikwa is instructive because it demonstrates the power of incompleteness, ubuntu, and conviviality. According to Nyamnjoh (2022:268), "we [are] self-consciously incomplete beings, constantly in need of activation, potency, and enhancement through conviviality and Ubuntu relationships with incomplete others." Ubuntu can be seen as a social organizing principle that encourages a life of mutuality, obligation, and reciprocity. This is in order to keep up with incompleteness, which ubuntu acknowledges. As Anele and Mr. Mudhikwa have demonstrated, ubuntu places a strong emphasis on the ongoing practice of sharing (or giving) in order to keep a healthy equilibrium of reciprocity between oneself and other people.

Recognition of incompleteness and the formation of social networks help migrant hairdressers in this study reduce risks when moving around by using transportation operated by people they know. When she is unable to reach Mr Mudhikwa, Anele is incomplete. To enhance the incompleteness of mobility Anele uses Uber, she resorts to public transportation, despite her concerns about her safety. This is consistent with Wilson's (2017) observation that Cape Town's urban transportation system and spatial policies have yet to enshrine gender equality fully and innovatively as a practice. Women's movement in the city, their work, and education – their full participation in city life –- are hampered by infrastructure issues. The majority of the mobile hairdresser participants shared similar stories to Anele. Aside from their travel challenges, the bonds of obligation and reciprocity

they have with their clients are central to the bulk of their experiences. According to studies, their profession allows clients and hairdressers to have intimate conversations and relationships aside from providing hairdressing services (Chugh and Hancock, 2009; Shortt, 2015). This resonates with Chireka (2015) who observed that, beyond hairstyling and beauty therapy, the profession includes listening and managing emotions. Hairdressers who took part in this study confirmed developing more than just "commercial friendship or connection" with their clients. One of the hairdressers told me:

> I have some customers with whom I have a special relationship. Because of the constant interaction, clients end up disclosing more information about their lives and families. They have become like family to the point where we visit each other, go to church together, and share sad and happy stories. I've started a new family away from home.

Such sentiments as the above are closely linked to the concept of conviviality in its everyday meaning. In its most common sense, conviviality refers to happy gatherings, good company, and feasting (Dunlap, 2009; Freitag, 2014). In the long run, relationships are cultivated in which people visit each other's homes and exchange gifts.

The main feature of these social connections is their availability of resources. In this case, resources include, among other things, information about new hairstyles and clients, ideas, and money. Putnam (2000) also refers to resources as social capital. Putnam (2000) defines social capital through three axioms: bonding, bridging, and linking. The resources or social capital of a social network are critical to its continuity and flow. Migrants can find information here by consulting established migrants who have been in the network for years (Mhandu, 2020). The interdependence, intermingling, and exchange here are complementary to Marcel Mauss' (1954) classic work, which is based on the functions of gifts in the maintenance of social networks. According to Mhandu (2020), "the exchange of ideas and gifts can enable the development of social capital in a network although types and nature of capital differ as they interchange through networks". Gifting and exchange, according to Mauss, strengthen social networks, relations, and connections. However, the value of the relationships or connections outweighs the value of the gifts themselves.

The characteristics of the social networks which migrant women build up, shape the connections that they can co-opt to adapt and facilitate resilience against exclusion, structural violence, robberies and other shocks and stresses. Chabal (2009:137) notes that "exchange in these networks

is overwhelmingly the main source of income for most Africans and in this case for migrant women". Migrants who earn a living in this way necessarily depend on the bonds of obligation and reciprocity. My findings confirmed that migrants rely on the networks they build with their clients which are typical of bonding capital brought together by links of loyalty, moral obligation, and reciprocity. As I showed through Anele's story, women try to activate the networks to which they belong and also attempt to invent new ones in their everyday encounters and interaction with their clients and also non-clients. They further create new ones when they are referred to new clients by their loyal and trusted customers with whom they have long-established mutual connections.

Many of my participants confirmed visiting the affluent houses in Camps Bay, which they never thought they would access. Such visits are necessitated by referrals and links. Relating to this idea is Nyamnjoh's (2017:264) work which pointed out that conviviality that is maintained by a sense of community affirmation through network-based relationships allows people to engage horizontally and vertically. As shown by Anele's connection with Naledi, social networks are one way in which migrants reduce costs of living and increase their expected returns and well-being. The characteristics of friendship connections and their culture shape the connections that migrant women use to access clients and other spaces. Conviviality bridges divides and facilitates interconnections that help migrant women to link and bond despite the diversity in socio-demographic characteristics.

5.3.2.1 Migrant Hairdressers Connecting and Job Marketing through Digital Technologies

When migrants settle in South Africa, they often face difficulties in integrating and finding job opportunities (Steinberg, 2006). Digital technologies, in particular, mobile cell phones, have become a tool which migrants embrace to promote their well-being, connect with people and find jobs or market their expertise. In my study, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook were digital platforms that were found to be instrumental in advertising the work of the hairdressers I worked with. Migrant women confirmed posting pictures and videos of their products and samples of hairstyles on social media platforms to attract clients. Some confirmed having WhatsApp contact numbers of their clients in which they periodically send their clients pictures of new hair products, hair pieces and styles. One migrant woman had this to say:

> I constantly make sure to create new hairstyles and promote them on my Facebook and Instagram sites. Additionally, I use WhatsApp to talk to my clients. We either exchange images of hairstyles or hair products or we have informal video chats to catch up. The collection of clients I have consists of locals, migrants, and students, with no particular clientele categorization. Since I can stay in touch with my existing clients and try to attract new customers by posting far more advanced haircuts, social media has made my life simpler.

Comparable stories were repeatedly told by my participants and my research assistants. These stories confirmed that digital technologies are vital in the daily economic and social survival of migrants (Witteborn, 2014; Leurs and Ponzanesi, 2018). Apart from that, the same WhatsApp platform also kept hairdressers in constant and close contact with their clients. Such proximity and continued communication ensured by mobile phones play a significant role in the development of social capital. More so, mobile phones facilitate the exchange of information and sharing of knowledge and support, progressively impacting migrant belonging and expected economic returns. The ability to link up with other migrants and locals alike is significant in encouraging and aiding in establishing bonds of trust and mutualism. In a related study of refugees in South Africa, Vuningoma et al. (2021) discovered that mobile phones enable refugees to develop ties in their uncultivated environment and provide options for taking part in several services. Migrants and locals know each other resulting in mutualism and stronger social connections. On the brighter side, mobile phones have been found to be a cost-efficient and effortless way of communicating through social media (Hay, 2014; Nedelcu, 2012).

Moreover, mobile phones are essential in navigating the city for a mobile hairdresser. If one is to visit an area that they are not familiar with, they use their mobile phone to get directions. Hairdressers like Anele confirmed using Uber as a form of transport that is ordered directly from a smartphone and paid in either cash or a bank card. Uber is one way hairdressers confirmed using in their navigation of the city. Technologies enhance the mobility of migrants. Not only do migrant women visit clients, but they also visit their friends and family outside the clientele circle. Such mobility aided by technology allows for connectedness and sustaining of *hushamwari* social networks between migrant hairdressers and their families. In her study of a group of migrants in Cape Town from Malawi and Zimbabwe, Hay (2014) discovered that migrants make use of information communication technologies (ICTs) to overcome structural exclusion by cultivating and starting convivial networks. Hay (2014) lauds the importance of ICTs in the negotiation of conviviality. Migrants can negotiate boundaries and borders, such as border control and local

hostilities, through forging convivial networks. ICTs are essential in enabling the negotiation of intimacy and distance as shown when hairdressers keep close contact with clients, family members and friends.

5.3.3 House helpers: Migrant Domestic Workers Navigating the City

Domestic workers or maids, referred to as "house helpers" in this chapter, are not a new phenomenon, particularly in Southern Africa. Scholars such as Anthias (2000), and Tronto (2002) revealed that housemaids have long been established in the struggles, encounters, and interactions of colonial South Africa and beyond Africa. Borders and boundaries in the social order, such as structural violence, exploitation, and subordination, punctuate maids' daily struggles. Nyamnjoh (2005) discovered that migrant maids, particularly those from Zimbabwe, face vicissitudes of ultra-exploitation in post-colonial, multicultural, and pluralistic South Africa. While acknowledging these scholars' magnificent works, this study goes a step further and focuses on how house helpers negotiate space and navigate the city. Unlike previous studies, this chapter focuses on mobile domestic workers, as opposed to maids who either lived at their workplaces or commuted every day but worked for a single employer. The migrant house helpers I am focusing on here are mobile and work for multiple employers. The fact that, even though the state and the city administration seek to separate insiders from outsiders, the need to attend to the challenges of incompleteness imposes a disposition of conviviality, however conjunctural, between insiders and outsiders (employers and migrants) through domestic work. Incompleteness implies that people are not singular and unified in form and content, despite the fact that their appearance may suggest otherwise. This is true even if they have a consistent appearance. As a result, incompleteness is what inspires migrant women and their employers to form convivial relationships with each other even though the state and the city administration seek to separate insiders from outsiders. A connection can be made between the ideas of conviviality and ubuntu in the formation of relationships. Conviviality can be understood as a mode of sociality that can take on a variety of registers. On the other hand, ubuntu has strong ties to a conception of personhood that emphasizes the collective over the individual. The idea behind this school of thought is that an individual's (migrant employee) humanity is inextricably linked to the humanity of other people (employers), regardless of whether or not those other people are members of their immediate community.

Further, I demonstrate how incompleteness engenders an understanding of resilient globalized capitalist structures and gender and power assumptions that have tended to privilege men in access to public space while domesticating women. In addressing the challenges of incompleteness, I demonstrate female abilities and capabilities that challenge both private and public spaces. Domestic paid work and domestic workspaces have been transformed by some women into a new transactional profession. As domestic paid work evolves, various types of house helpers have emerged. Au pairs have emerged in the world in recent years. An au pair is a young adult between the ages of 18 and 30 who travels to a foreign country for a set period to live with a host family. While learning the language and culture of the host country, the au pair assists the host family with childcare and light housework. In Cape Town, this study discovered that an au pair is permitted to drive her employer's children to school, the movies, shopping, and other leisure activities. This has called into question the conventional view of women as people who can only manage domesticity and cannot exercise their agency in public. Their agency has also demonstrated their nimbleness in being and becoming (Nyamnjoh, 2013).

While I acknowledge the existence of au pairs in Cape Town, my interest is not in them; rather, I am focusing on helpers who work for between 5 and 10 employers on a verbal rather than written contract. In this study, migrant housekeepers are agile in their work strategy. They understand how to manage their time and work schedule effectively. Migrant women in Cape Town develop the ability to navigate and negotiate the domestic workspace as well as the general urban space. They have to navigate not only the physical borders and boundaries of the city, but also a variety of obstacles on their way to work, on their way home after work, or when moving through the city or the neighbourhoods in which they live. For example, one migrant helper who works in Claremont told me:

> My brother, it is difficult for a woman to travel, especially if you are a foreigner like me. You must be aware of the mode of transportation you are taking because even in taxis (minibuses) you can be mugged or raped at gunpoint. You must also work harder and faster to have enough time to go home. There is a lot that I always think about before going to work, at work, on my way home, or just walking around the city. Being a migrant woman is difficult.

The above experience is telling. Once again it illustrates that migrants must know when, where, and how to move, as well as when, where, and how not to move, to navigate and negotiate the

space (Yeong and Huang, 1998). Similarly, migrant women can choose to be “visible” or “invisible” depending on the circumstances.

As I show later through the experience of migrant house helpers – structural violence, lack of documentation, local hostilities and related obstacles – have made it more challenging, but they have continued to negotiate their way to sustain their lives and livelihoods (Jinnah, 2020). In this complex and fluid situation, which is being adjudicated by the state and the community at large, ordinary migrant helpers quickly understand how to accommodate both their employers and fellow migrants, all in the interest of maintaining continuity and preserving their lives (Nyamnjoh, 2013). To be more precise, migrants create networks with these various categories of people to make ends meet or to meet ends. Nevertheless, they just do not randomly create networks with any person in their proximity. In an interview with Roxanne, a migrant helper who stays in Maitland, she told me: “Brother. You cannot befriend or connect with anyone at random. Some people have ambiguous ulterior motives. They can destroy you simply because you are a migrant.” As a result, when migrants encounter and interact with diverse people, they demonstrate an acute sense of perspicacity. Despite it being difficult, they try to connect with people. all in the interest of overcoming arrest, detention or deportation. In that context, social networks play a pivotal role in negotiating shocks and stresses, accessing work and navigating the city.

In further understanding the experiences and strategies of migrant house helpers on how their social maps are structured and how they negotiated space in Cape Town, I spoke to Roxanne, who works in the neighbourhoods of Rosebank, Rondebosch, Newlands and Claremont. Roxanne indicated that these places are easy to work in. She stated that these locations are simple to work in. This is because university and college students primarily reside in them, and they have become the majority of their employers. This simplifies her job because she usually only has to clean a two-bedroomed apartment for one employer. Daily, Roxanne usually works in three to four apartments.

After moving to South Africa in 2010, Roxanne found work as a cleaner for a company that offered transportation to and from her place of residence to her place of employment for the day. Even though she worked in a large number of homes, she was only paid monthly. To put it another way, her pay was set, and as a consequence, she decided to leave the company in the end. She started on her own once she had gained sufficient experience. She began her career as a mobile house

helper by going door-to-door and soliciting employment opportunities. Some people would offer her work, while others would turn her down because they were suspicious of her, particularly since she is a migrant. As more time passed, she began to develop a clientele that she would visit once every two weeks. As Roxanne explained it, her story went like this:

> One of my clients, Ms. James, owns a huge complex in Rondebosch which has ten apartments occupied by students. She introduced me to students who are now my employers. I clean their 3 to 4 apartments after every two weeks and they pay me instantly, unlike the cleaning company where I had a fixed salary date. I stay in Maitland, and I commute daily to work. With recommendations and referrals from the people I work for, I have more clients and I intend to open a cleaning company but without a fixed salary day.

Roxanne's experience is revealing. The exclusion of women from manual jobs (such as construction), lack of work or residence permits and marginalization in public spaces are some of the reasons most migrant women embark on domestic paid work (Jinnah, 2020). As Yeoh and Huang (1998) suggest, paid domestic labour is not a new phenomenon. Over the years domestic work has transformed (Pande, 2012). Migrant women I worked with confirmed that the students have become employers of migrant house helpers like Roxanne. With accelerated mobility and migration, South Africa is now receiving more migrants including international students. In Cape Town, most of the neighbourhoods surrounding the University of Cape Town, such as Rondebosch, Rosebank, Claremont, Newlands, and Mowbray, are home to a substantial number of students. Because most students are nomadic, they do not wish to stay with the house helpers, rather they prefer helpers who visit once a week or bi-weekly and this has contributed to the transformation of domestic paid labour in a way.

While the previous scholars on domestic paid work focused on how documentation was a huge obstacle in the daily lives of migrant women (Nyamnjoh 2005, 2006; Tronto, 2002; ILO, 2016), my study has discovered that house helpers, such as Roxanne, who work for student employers, do not necessarily need to have documentation. While other scholars have focused on how migrant women engaged in domestic work continue to be exploited around the globe (Triandafyllidou, 2013), bonds of obligation, reciprocity and trust are key in their daily workspaces. These, over a prolonged time of working together, assist in cultivating not only economic ties but *hushamwari* relations and social networks. The client and worker relationship gradually becomes more than just professional ties. People become friends and fictive kinship emerges. Roxanne indicated: "I have people whom I call siblings but not related by birth, adoption, or marriage." This kind of

fictive kinship has emerged over the years that Roxanne and her employers have worked together. With this fictive kinship, there emerge strong social connections. As Roxanne related: “Some of my employers have become family. We go together to church, feast together and go to the movies together.” According to Diphoorn and van Roekel (2019:7), “whereas kinship refers to formal and fixed social relationships with clear expectations and obligations, friendship embraces uncertainty and ambiguity as central.” Chekero and Morreira (2020:37) note that “[p]ractices of huShamwari – forming formal, reciprocal friendship relationships that are somewhat ‘like kin’ – made it possible to eliminate some of the ambiguities and doubts migrants such as Roxanne faced.” This is similar to conviviality. Ivan Illich (1973) observes that conviviality is predicated on the concept of individuals working together. Illich’s (1973 as cited in Nowicka 2020) convivial society, is predicated on a social economy, which is predicated on the sharing, combining, and development of resources and capabilities through new forms of interaction, service models, and educational approaches. Roxanne also shared an experience in which she travelled to her home country with one of her employers whom she refers to as her sister. Conviviality manifested in this way demonstrates a recent development concerning the changing nature of domestic work.

Previously, employers of domestic workers and employees were concerned with the uncertainties that plagued their lives, as noted by Nyamnjoh (2005) and Yeoh and Huang (1998). Using the conviviality framework, we see people like Roxanne and her employers form reciprocal friendships that are a little “like kin”. Transnational social ties and connections are formed in a way that encourages increased mutuality among different kinds of individuals. Social gatherings with friends, eating, drinking, dancing, or listening to music, as accurately stated by Nowicka (2020), are all activities that serve to reassure our membership in a specific social group. In this sense, conviviality, as defined by Gilroy (2004), is the acceptance and affirmation of diversity without reenacting racial and ethnic differences. Further, Nowicka and Vertovec (2014:2) define conviviality as “an analytical tool for asking and exploring how, and under what conditions, people constructively create modes of togetherness”. Now I turn to discuss the experience of female migrant Uber drivers.

Mutual contact is paramount for their survival even under threatening conditions. The value of conviviality is reinforced by its character, which supports the pursuit of commonality and sameness as the antidote for bridging various divides. In this study, as elsewhere, conviviality is

demonstrated in the ways migrant drivers interact with people of different nationalities in their everyday movements and encounters. Conviviality is acknowledged for ushering in favourable platforms for migrant women to forge a new society in South Africa (Wise, 2005; Wright, 2015). This means that, when migrants settle in South Africa, their existing socio-demographic identities will no longer be a priority. The new encounters will create, re-create, direct and re-direct the pace, space, speed and direction of newly forged relations amongst them and their surrounding environment. The newly established convivial relationships and survival strategies function as answers to their lack of belonging, absent safety nets, and unavailable social networks. Thus, improved convivial-based adaptation is applauded for reinforcing companionship, reciprocity and social cohesion amongst migrant women and people they encounter in their daily mobile encounters.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has interrogated how migrant women from African countries who settled in urban Cape Town navigate and negotiate space and their relationships within it and with it. In doing so, the chapter has demonstrated how incompleteness engenders an understanding of resilient globalized capitalist structures and gender and power assumptions that have tended to privilege men in access to public space while domesticating women. Through ubuntu and conviviality women have challenged the school of thought that confines them to domesticity. They have done that by engaging in spaces that are predominantly occupied by men, such as Uber driving. Thus, conviviality provides spaces and opportunities for conversations that are mutually edifying and take place across a variety of social divides, hierarchies, and differences in status.

Through examining the experiences of migrant female vendors, hairdressers, house helpers and Uber drivers, this chapter has interrogated the intersectionality of gender, power, domesticity, mobility, incompleteness, ubuntu and conviviality. Migrant women survive structures of exclusion and confinement to domesticity through social networks lubricated by conviviality. They display their agency by forging connections with different people, in different spaces and times. Migrant women in South Africa experience infinite episodes of daily frustrations and exclusion from opportunities and alternatives. This comes atop of unjustified control of their being and how they move in the streets through societal expectations.

As I have shown, the life of migrant women is instructed by the risky nature of the city together with what they do to survive in these risky environments. As Mama Santo's and Anele's experiences have shown, the way migrant women navigate and negotiate the city is strategic. What differentiates their movement from that of the locals is that they lack belonging. As a result, their survival is characterized by various kinds of borders and boundaries. As a way of navigating and negotiating borders and boundaries they face, they must know when, where and how to move and when not to make movements. This is shown through Roxanne in the way she makes her movements going to and coming from her clients. Getting by, getting ahead and navigating the city is an experience in urban life where one possesses, or acquires, experience, strategies and social networks/connections that allow the urban space to be negotiated and borders to be circumvented or encountered in everyday life.

CHAPTER SIX

The Mobility of Migrant Remittances during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Cape Town

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter incompleteness, ubuntu and conviviality draw our attention to the mobility of migrant remittances in South Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic. It examines the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on migrant remittances, livelihoods, and income sources and the subsequent strategies migrants used to send remittances during the COVID-19-induced lockdown. Lockdown measures, such as mobility restrictions, curfews, and social and physical distance, had a negative impact on people's lives, livelihoods, and remittances. In particular, unprotected workers in the informal economy, self-employed people, women and especially migrants were found to be disproportionately affected by the pandemic because they are not protected by social security or labour laws (International Labour Organisation, 2020; United Nations Development Programme, 2020). In that regard, the way remittances were mobilized was hampered, particularly during the Levels 4 and 5 lockdowns, when interprovincial and international travel was prohibited in South Africa. Unemployment and limited income meant lower remittances. Migrants did not have enough money to send home or purchase goods for repatriation. Furthermore, remittance services were jeopardized as providers were forced to adapt to the lockdown. As a result, the channels available for sending remittances became fewer, slower, and/or more expensive. In the face of these difficulties, migrants managed to survive by utilizing social networks to send available money and goods home.

By using specific examples of truck and bus drivers, couriers (*omalayitsha*), funeral companies, and friends, this chapter offers a unique set of tools for thinking about movement, mobility, and social networking in the precarious context of the pandemic. In doing so, it examines how the aforementioned categories were useful and inventive ways for migrants to send money during the COVID-19-induced lockdown. Social capital and social networks played an important role in the transfer of funds or goods. During the COVID-19 lockdown in Cape Town, migrants relied heavily on social connections with truck and bus drivers, among others, to send money and goods back home. Migrants in Cape Town also used informal institutions, such as independent brokers to send money. This chapter concludes by situating remittance mobility in a context where movement is restricted, but individuals can negotiate and overcome obstacles that seek to impede and halt the

movement of goods, services, money, and people through the connections shaped by ubuntu. In this regard, incompleteness, ubuntu, and the concept of inclusivity are crucial factors in determining the success or failure (of kin left behind) of migrants, even in the face of obstacles such as navigating the hurdles of mobility and migration imposed by states, as well as the unexpected, such as pandemics. In this chapter, rather than concentrating on the quantity of remittances, I highlight the fact of remittances that are sent informally and formally as an indication of relationality.

6.2 Remittances and the Pandemic Context

Despite efforts to reduce regional transmission rates, people, goods, ideas, and services, as well as the virus itself, continued to move (Khalid et al., 2022). Migrants used both money/banking mobile applications and physical cash transfers across the border (Mazza and Fasani, 2021). However, there was a drop in remittances at the start of the pandemic-induced lockdown due to an initial lack of clarity on whether remittance providers were classified as essential services (e.g., World Bank, 2020). Some retailers that provide in-person remittance services and accept cash were impacted. This increased their vulnerability because they had to adapt to policies, such as complete closure, reduced working hours, the requirement to make an appointment before any visit, and social distancing rules. This had a negative impact on the number of customers who could be served each day. Nonetheless, goods and money remittances continued to flow through people who violated lockdown rules by illegally migrating. Border closures during the lockdown made migration more difficult, but migrants from African countries continued to cross the border illegally into and out of South Africa (Mutendi and Chekero, forthcoming).

This study found that remittances from South Africa to other African countries and communities are resilient. This is despite predictions that these flows would plummet dramatically in the early months of the pandemic (e.g., World Bank, 2020). The World Bank (2020) predicted that remittances to low- and middle-income countries would fall by 7% to USD508 billion in 2020. In 2021, the currency was expected to fall another 7.5% to USD470. The main reasons for this decline were weak economic growth and employment levels in migrant-hosting countries, low oil prices, and currency depreciation in remittance-source countries against the US dollar. Despite such predictions, my research found that remittances from South Africa to other African countries remained resilient. This resilience provided desperately needed external financing and assistance

to low-income households. The resilience was predicated on migrants' creative and resilient strategies they employed in sending money concurrently to subvert the effects of measures to contain the pandemic.

Remittances were immobilized to a significant extent, especially those remittances in kind, such as clothing, groceries, and building material, among other things. Elsewhere, Ogude and Chekero (2020b) noted that diaspora communities in the Global North (as well as in major host countries like Uganda, South Africa, and Kenya) were largely affected by lockdowns and experienced job losses and illness. COVID-19 containment measures resulted in the disruption of much-needed remittances in migrants' home countries across the African continent. Khalid et al. (2020) found that, for example, the remittances from South Africa, other African countries and European countries that sustain more than 40% of Somalis, were rapidly diminishing. Related to this, the restrictions also negatively affected cross-border trading. In this regard, Chikanda and Tawodzera (2017) observed that between 30% and 40% of intra-regional trade in Southern Africa is made up of cross-border trade between Zimbabwe and South Africa and, undoubtedly, this was devastatingly affected. Cross-border trade between South Africa and regional countries has been a source of food and livelihood for many communities. The closure of South African borders severely affected the multi-sited livelihood strategies of many migrant informal traders (Mutendi and Chekero, forthcoming). According to Chikanda and Tawodzera (2017), female traders constitute sixty-eight per cent of all informal traders in the region and these were affected the most by the closures.

6.3 The Meaning of Remittances for Migrant Senders

Remittances are an integral part of human history, migration and livelihoods. For migrants and their families, remittances are symbolic. They embody a deeper meaning that is more than just mere money or goods. Strong traditions of mutual assistance, the obligation to family, and altruism are the pillars underpinning remittances and their meaning to both the sender and receiver. How migrants interpret the meaning of remittances is relevant to the depth of how they mobilize and circulate them. Migrants send home part of their earnings in the form of either cash or goods to support their families. Out of 40 migrants that I worked with and interacted with to gather data on remittances, 29 people confirmed regularly remitting money. They were sending an average of R1,470 per month. The majority confirmed sending money in three ways: namely, Mukuru, one

of the largest money remittance businesses operating in Southern Africa, through a network of friends who would be travelling home, and through independent brokers such as Edmund (ED). (I will show later in this chapter.) Table 6.1 below shows the number of participants and the average amount they would send in each month of 2020.

Table 6.1: Number of participants and the average amount they sent in each month of 2020. Source: Field data, 2020.

Year	Month	Number of participants who sent money	Average per month
2020	January	30	R1 200
	February	33	R1 500
	March	15	R800
	April	12	R700
	May	17	R850
	June	15	R900
	July	20	R1 000
	August	34	R1 400
	September	38	R1 500
	October	34	R3 000
	November	35	R1 800
	December	29	R3 000
Total average per month			R17 650

The actual total of financial remittances sent in each month was difficult to collect. However, migrants I worked with confirmed that the money they send monthly fluctuates depending on their earnings for the month in South Africa. Such practices of sending money to support families back

home have been growing rapidly in the past years and now represent the largest source of foreign income for many developing economies (Mazza and Fasani, 2021).

However, the existence of remittances and their mobility cannot only be explained in terms of foreign income for developing countries. One can explore them in terms of gift and market economy. Remittances among migrants from African countries demonstrate an entanglement of social forms being called upon as a means of making and maintaining connections with family and friends back home. It is possible that the act of sending money and taking on such a responsibility is a direct result of ubuntu. Ubuntu's foundation rests on the principles of group solidarity, collective humanity and dignity, in which personhood is seen as collective rather than the individual. In this situation, the humanity of a migrant is inextricably bound up with the humanity of others, such as the family and friends to whom they send remittances. Among migrants I worked with, remittances mean more than just quantity or quality. On a related note, Mauss' (1990) works on Northwest Coast, Indigenous Americans' gift-giving feasts and gift-giving helped in developing the way that social scientists explored and understood the nature and function of the economy, kinship, and religion. In light of Mauss, Ferguson (1985) established that, among the Lesotho migrants working in South African mining and industry, the mainstay of the rural economy is cash remittances but cash itself does not have symbolic value. Cash is converted to cattle which has symbolic meanings and sentimental cultural value. Accordingly, Nnyanzi (2015:397) further explored the functional value of remittances when he said, "The economics of remittances further contend that the recipient households of remittances may use the money not just to access necessities like food, clothing and healthcare, but also to make investments and improve their welfare consumption." The same authority argues that, apart from the nuance of the economics of remittances, altruism and self-interest are key motivators for remitters to African countries. In her study of migrant women and money rotation, Ross (1990:7) noted that money among migrant women is regarded as a womanist economic system. Similarly, remittances (both money and goods) in this chapter act as a means through which money can be classified as different from ordinary home finances or household goods.

The majority of migrants I worked with indicated that they send money to their families and close kin. Indeed, some of them confirmed sending money to their friends. This was also confirmed by

my key informants, who are employees of Mukuru, including Sonia, Grey and Lessy. This is also evident in that when one is sending money via Mukuru, they have to create an order. To create an order, questions about the gender of the receiver, the relation between the sender and the receiver and the purpose of the money are asked. More importantly, a pool of suggested answers to choose from is provided. For example, some of the questions asked are as presented in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: Questions asked when completing a money order at Mukuru. Source: Fieldwork, 2020.

Question	Provided Responses to Choose from
Please choose your recipient's gender.	1>Male 2>Female
How do you know this recipient? Tabitha is your...	1>Child 2>Grandparent 3>Parent 4>Sibling 5>Spouse 6>Family Member 7>Friend 8>Self
Please choose the purpose for this order:	1>Gift 2>Family expenses 3>Education 4>Medical expenses 5>Building (housing) expenses 6>Rent 7>Travel/tourism

	8>Farming

During my fieldwork, some of my key informants gave me access to read through some of the data Mukuru head offices in Cape Town had gathered by asking the questions in the table above. However, I was not allowed to take away the data or to take photos. They indicated that it was the policy of the company that the personal data of their clients be kept private. Data from Mukuru resonated well with what my participants told me. It indicated that the biggest proportion of the gender receiving money is women. More so, findings indicated that the response to the question, "How do you know the recipient?", was mainly from family members, spouses and parents although data showed that some of the categories also received money periodically. The answers to some of the question regarding the purpose of money were family expenses, education, medical expenses, building (housing) expenses and farming.

For migrants, the main recipients were family members, spouses or a parent. The determinants of remittances were also crucial. Most migrants indicated that they send money for family upkeep and also as another way of securing and consolidating their belongings in their absence. In doing this, they not only send money, but sometimes they remit building materials, beds, chairs and other household furniture. These incidents are similar to those observed by Ferguson (1985) among the Basotho people of Lesotho. He discovered in his research that Basotho migrant men in South Africa invested in cattle in their homesteads to secure and consolidate their belonging in their absence. Ferguson (1985) and Lucas and Stark (1985) developed a theoretical position and subsequent debates on the determinants of remittances based on this viewpoint. They discovered that altruism, self-interest, and contractual arrangements are major determinants in their household-level study. When remitting, a migrant considers the adverse conditions of his household back home, such as drought, poverty, and other related challenges. There is no obligation in self-interest; the remitter only assists regularly. According to contractual agreements, the sender is required to send money at predetermined intervals.

Since most of the migrants I worked with sent money and remittances in kind to their families, spouse and family members, I equate their remittances to the practice of ubuntu. These incidents are not a new phenomenon, instead, they have been recorded as occurring throughout history by scholars such as Mauss (1954) who highlighted the intrinsic nature to be philanthropic and building

longstanding relationships through exchanging of goods. However, in this study, there is no direct reciprocal exchange of money or goods between migrants and the receiving community. In a related context Ferguson's (1985) study of the Basotho men in South African mines and industries discovered that the remitters rarely receive anything in return. Their money will be converted into livestock, especially cattle which was referred to culturally as men's animals. On the other hand, non-grazing livestock, such as chickens, was culturally regarded as women's animals. However, the money used to acquire livestock was sent by men from abroad. In the same manner, the majority of migrants in this study confirmed sending money and not receiving anything in return. One of my participants said:

> My brother, I only send money and people back home do not even confirm that they have received the money; they cannot even send a message or a quick phone call that we have received the money you send. Thank God, I can be informed by Mukuru through messages that they have collected the money.

The solution to this riddle can be found by researching Southern African cosmology and philosophy. The concept of personhood may help in significant ways in discovering the meanings associated with remittances. The act of bringing a moral being into the world is inextricably linked to the concept of a person's moral development (see Chimuka, 2001; Mawere, 2010). The development of an ethically sound human being requires a connection to one's social world, which includes both the living and the deceased. Chimuka (2001) defines an ethical person as one who exemplifies *hunhu*. When Chimuka refers to *hunhu* (2001:27), he is referring to humanity, and he commends the admirable qualities that it possesses. In South Africa, the moral philosophy of ubuntu is conceptually comparable to *hunhu*. Samkange and Samkange (1980) believe that the two concepts are interchangeable. However, according to this study, sending and receiving money and goods is sufficient for migrants and their recipients to establish and maintain relationships. Therefore, a person's humanity is inextricably linked to the humanity of others, even though those others may or may not be a part of the person's immediate community. This is the central tenet of *hunhu* and ubuntu, which propound that personhood should be viewed as collective rather than individual and that the guiding principles should be group solidarity, collective humanity, and dignity.

Money that is sent by men who participated in this study is received by their wives or their mothers. In some cases, it is other family members. However, most of the senders expressed distrust of their

family members because of previous encounters in which the money they sent had been misused. Most of them indicated that they preferred to send money to their wives. This resonates with the study of Ashton (I967:180 cited in Ferguson, 1985) which discovered that "Money in the household generally falls into the category of 'household property, a class of property in Sesotho law and custom jointly administered by the man and his wife, her authority being subordinate to his' hence those married." In this chapter, I argue that remittances take us beyond broad stroke ideas of ubuntu to give us an operationalizable toolkit with which to think differently about how people work to sustain convivial relationships with their families and how to remain connected with their home communities. In further probing the meaning that migrants attach to remittance, I had a conversation with Makaz, a 28-year-old migrant living in Mowbray. He had this to say:

> Remittances are more than just money and goods that we send home. It is an expression of love and responsibility, and a responsible man takes care of his family. It does not matter if I send small gifts or a small amount of money; it is the effort that I put into sending money that matters to my family. In this way, they also get to feel the love and care I have for them. Sending back home is like depositing in a bank because, as a religious person, I genuinely believe that the smile [sic] I put on my family's face [sic] is enough to reciprocate blessings that would open doors of opportunities in my hustles.

This narration reflects forms of solidarity and intimate connection that migrants have with their families. Although there is no direct reciprocation of money or goods sent by migrants in South Africa, some migrants, like Makaz, believed that, by remitting you can receive blessings in return. They believe in non-material reciprocity, which is a reward for sending remittances. This can be related to the works of the sociologist Mauss (1990) on gift-giving in which he explained that this gesture represents obligation and reciprocity. For Mauss, gift-giving is a ritual that fulfils several important social obligations. He held the view that giving a gift is an organising principle of social cohesion and it acts as social glue. Thus, gift-giving in the form of remittance in this study is a way to establish and strengthen connections. Sending remittances is a moral transaction connected to individuals or group social relationships and it is an economic operation. Mauss explores concepts, such as honour, reciprocation, exchange, contract, counter-gift and prestige, and these are key in gift-giving. Comparably, remittances are a means for augmenting obligation and solidarity between the migrant sender and the receiver. It is reasonable to note that remittances (both cash and kind) embody a deeper meaning.

Makaz's sentiments on blessings are similar to what Mauss observed in the case of Northwest Coast American Indians, Melanesians, and Polynesians. Mauss uses the concept of the *hau* or spiritual power of the gift that makes the gift receiver beholden to the gift giver. Similarly, Makaz believes that, by sending remittances, he will receive blessings in return that can open doors for livelihood opportunities. Just like Makaz, the majority of migrants I worked with believe that, if one does not send remittances and if they forget about their families, bad luck will follow them. This could happen in the form of not getting livelihood opportunities, sickness or other related misfortunes. On a related note, Mauss uses the *hau* or spiritual power as the basis for reciprocation and refusal to do so could often lead to warfare, mistrust, and broken alliances. For Mauss, failure to reciprocate brings dishonour, conflict, resentment, and mistrust. Transactions in the form of remittances transcend the divisions between the spiritual and the material in an almost magical way. Just like Mauss, many migrants I worked with believe in the obligation to give, receive, and reciprocate. The very act of sending and receiving remittances is a way in which convivial relations are created and nurtured. The key pillars on which conviviality is based are the interconnection and interdependence of the sender and receiver. This is tied to ubuntu, which suggests that humans depend on other humans for their development (Christians, 2004).

6.4 The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Migrants' Remittance-Related Activities

The disruption of cross-border remittance flows ensuing from the COVID-19 pandemic hit migrants from African countries living in Cape Town and their families hard (Rugunanan, 2020; Mobarak, 2020). This stems from them not belonging (Chekero, 2018) and largely being in informal employment. Rugunanan (2020) notes that migrants that are in the informal sector are more vulnerable to job loss and loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic than those in the formal sector. Most migrants in South Africa from African countries fall in the category of the informal sector. More so, the migrants are excluded by the government measures that assist in the event of job losses and they engage in jobs and income activities that often cannot be done remotely. Amid such calamity, migrants end up unemployed, suffer from reduced income and are stranded in South Africa with little to no support, or capability to support their families. As noted above, Garba (2020) argues that, in South Africa, the government made no significant efforts to support unemployed and the vulnerable migrants and they struggled to access government subsidies as they lacked the documentation. Documentation was a pre-requisite by the government

to access state-provided social relief food parcels and the relief fund, and, in some cases, migrants were denied access to COVID-19-related health care (Garba, 2020).

Such episodes of exclusion constitute a great chunk of what I present in this chapter. Nonetheless, the focus here is more on how these episodes and experiences of exclusion reveal how social relationships were formed and maintained among migrants for survival. I explore how migrants navigated space and their relationships within it. I delve into the creative schemes that migrants employ to cushion and subvert the effects of their institutionalised exclusion. I examine the importance and efficacy of structures with economic foundations as the means both for creating and keeping networks and for enabling support during a precarious period of the coronavirus pandemic. However, it is prudent to first examine stories of migrants losing their jobs and being stranded in the throes of the pandemic and the subsequent coping mechanisms deployed to cover limited income and access to remittance services. Similar stories were repeatedly told during my fieldwork. As an example:

One Sunday morning when I was doing my fieldwork at a shop that sells brooms (including homemade ones), mops and other cleaning materials, I met Given. Given is a migrant who owns a small business that sells the aforesaid items. However, intrigued about how he manages his business at a time when it is difficult to make movements, I decided to embark on participant observation. I started moving around with Given assisting and observing as he sold his items. He is one of many migrants, who fled their home countries, escaping civil wars, political instability and economic chaos, among a cocktail of push factors. He left his home country with his two brothers in search of greener pastures five years ago. Once he arrived in South Africa, Given stayed in the township of Mabopane, Pretoria before moving to Cape Town where he currently resides. Because of the nature of his business, he must be a street hawker to make a good sale. This means he must walk door-to-door every day selling his items in places around Claremont, Newlands, Rondebosch, Rosebank, Mowbray and even the inner city of Cape Town. Just like any other person, Given was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The containment measures that were put in place to fight the pandemic – the nationwide lockdown, social distancing, and restricted movement – affected his informal business enterprise. It ran dry. Given is one of many migrants in South Africa, who saw their small businesses collapse as a result of the lockdown, leaving them

stranded and unable to meet their needs and those of their families back home. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Given used to remit back home. At home, the money he sends helps in two ways. One, it helped him in building a 3-bedroomed house. Two, the money he sends assists in providing necessities such as food, clothing and healthcare for his mother, his child and his wife. In sending money, Given makes use of a network of friends that would be travelling home, through bus operators, or he uses Mukuru.

Given's experience resonates with many migrants who participated in this study. Stories of migrants – especially the undocumented – facing a heavier burden than local workers when they lost their jobs or small businesses were repeatedly shared. Migrants expressed that they lack the social safety nets that can be employed to cope with vulnerability stemming from the pandemic. Most migrants with whom I worked unveiled and confirmed their lack of access to healthcare. Healthcare is important for migrants like Given. This is so because the poor working conditions they face puts them at a higher risk of contracting the coronavirus through moving door-to-door than those that are completely immobile. Experts believed that the virus that causes COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person. The virus most often spreads through people who have symptoms. But it is possible to pass it on without showing any signs. Some people, who do not know they have been infected, can give it to others. This is called the asymptomatic spread. You can also pass it on before you notice any signs of infection, and this is called the pre-symptomatic spread. Apart from the predicament of their small businesses collapsing, migrants like Given also expressed their fear of the heightened arrests and deportations during March and April of 2020.

As shown by Given's COVID-19 pandemic experience, the restrictions put in place by the government of South Africa to curb its spread further affected the physical mobility of migrants in their attempts to access remittance service providers, especially during the strictest level of the lockdown, Level 5.[17] The majority of Mukuru employees, including Sonia, confirmed a temporary reduction of remittances sent during this level of lockdown restrictions. To get insights on how the pandemic affected the flow of remittances, I asked, Lessy, who also works for Mukuru. Using a snowballing approach, Lessy connected me to three other Mukuru employees, including Grey, an executive in the company. Mukuru is a FinTech payments business that specializes in helping people send money home to their families. Its clientele is centred on low- and middle-income

[17] https://www.mict.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID19-Presentation.pdf

migrants, who typically send money to their families to cover basic living expenses. Their clients would otherwise rely on informal channels, such as buses, taxis, friends, and family to remit back home.

During our informal conversation, Grey commented that COVID-19 had an acute impact on their services during the Level 5 lockdown. This is because, during this period, people were unable to access shops and service spots that assist them in sending or receiving money. Mukuru clients use Checkers, Pick n Pay, Shoprite, Pep Stores, and Mukuru branches to send and receive money. All these channels were inaccessible during the Level 5 lockdown. Also, the decrease ensued from the initial lack of clarity on whether remittance providers were classified as essential services. Some of the retailers offer remittance services in person and use cash as the instrument. This made them more vulnerable as they had to adapt to policies put in place that included complete closure, reduced working hours, the need to make an appointment before any visit, and social distancing rules. This impacted the number of customers that could be served daily. However, this mostly applied to smaller outlets, larger shops, such as Pick in Pay and Checkers, remained largely functional albeit under certain strict conditions. All this contributed to a sharp decrease in remittances in the first few months of the lockdown. After a while, the percentage of the remittances sent increased.

Grey's analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on remittance service providers corresponds well with the CEO of Mukuru's analysis. In December 2020, 'Prosper Africa,[18]' a U.S. Government initiative to increase trade and investment between African nations and the United States, had an interview with Andy Jury, the CEO of Mukuru. When asked about the impact of COVID-19 on Mukuru, Jury had this to say:

> The COVID-19 crisis created a very sharp incentive to speed up innovation and bring products to market. We developed new access points, drove new partnerships and launched new products…. For example, we launched Mukuru Groceries through a partnership with a grocery-focused retailer in Zimbabwe. We brought our skillset and expertise in terms of remittances and partnered with retailers to create grocery packs. … Sometimes you get stuck in the "tyranny of the urgent" cycle, and COVID-19 had such an acute sort of impact....

Despite the decrease (and later rise) in the number of remittances sent via Mukuru, it is important to note that COVID-19 also stirred innovation among remittance service providers. Digital, remote

[18] https://www.prosperafrica.gov/blog/entering-new-markets-in-africa-an-interview-with-african-fintech-company-mukuru/

access solutions were created and availed during the lockdown. The COVID-19 measures in South Africa under Level 5 lockdown affected both ends of the remittances channel. Firstly, the service provider had to cut hours of service, others had to shut down completely. Secondly, the mobility restrictions coupled with limited public transportation made it difficult for customers to reach branches and cash-in/out agents. There was limited awareness and adoption of digital channels, which presented severe challenges to many migrants' and their families' abilities to send and receive remittances. The reduction of migrant incomes resulted in a remittance fall. This directly correlated with the decline of revenues of remittance service providers, though provisionally. My study found that the unstable exchange rates and unexpected flows made it difficult for remittance service providers to manage their liquidity. Forced closures and remote working also posed challenges to providers' ability to continue operating.

Remittance service providers, such as Mukuru, Hello Paisa, and World Remit, among others, were worried about their customers' health and safety but faced challenges in transitioning clients to digital channels due to a lack of digital readiness in the market and face-to-face customer verification obligations. However, Mukuru bypassed this structure by incorporating WhatsApp into their service delivery. In addition, the lack of identification documents, adequate financial awareness, access to digital technology, and digital literacy amongst migrants and their families translated to an increased reliance on informal remittance channels when access to formal channels was restricted. In that regard, migrants whom I worked with expressed their reliance on social networks to send money and goods back home. Let me turn to discuss how migrants used social networks to send money.

6.5 The Mobility of Remittances during the Lockdown in South Africa

Although the movement of both cash and kind remittances was affected by the pandemic, remittances were noted to be resilient as a steady source of revenue for those back home (Shastri, 2022; Kpodar et al., 2021). This is because they continued to flow despite the containment measures that made it difficult for migrants to get income and send their remittances. In line with this discussion, it is important to note that the COVID-19 pandemic had another impact on both sending and receiving nations in that remittances fluctuated (Shastri, 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic threatened to dry up remittances which are a vital source of income for poor and fragile households and countries. The lockdown measures such as the restriction of mobility, curfews,

and social and physical distancing impacted negatively on people's lives and livelihoods (Ola, 2021; Geddes et al., 2020). These measures were meant to curb the spread of the coronavirus but ended up undermining migrants' coping mechanisms (Chekero and Ogude, 2020a).

Most migrants work in the informal sector and/or are self-employed. Measures that were put in place to contain the spread of COVID-19 halted the movement of goods, money (including domestic and international remittances), and people, thus crippling migrants' opportunities to gain income (Kpodar et al., 2021). However, migrants in this context tend to be affected more than locals. This is because most migrants did not have safety nets like locals who were supported by their governments. For example, South Africans were given The Special COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress of R350 per month.[19] This was given to South African citizens, permanent residents and refugees registered with Home Affairs, and everyone outside of these categories was excluded.

In Africa and Europe, the unemployment percentage was higher among migrants than among locals (Mazza and Fasani, 2021). Consequently, the revenues of migrants were directly and significantly impacted at a time when their friends and families back home needed more support. The COVID-19 pandemic did not only disrupt migration flows, but the flow of remittances was also negatively affected (Bossone and Natarajan, 2020). The overall number of migrants, who were potentially able to send remittances, decreased. In the same vein, the operation of remittance services to some extent was devastatingly interrupted.

Migrants have continued to use informal ways to remit to their home countries. There are two ways of sending remittances: i.e., the formal and the formal channels. Informal remittances are typically generated privately, through unrecorded channels. Initially, when legal money transfer services were unavailable or scarce, migrants had to rely on friends and travellers to do the job. There may be no empirical data to account for the number of informal remittances that take place globally, but this does not negate the fact that it continued to be an option for a plethora of reasons. For migrants in South Africa, it is cost-efficient and safer (as I will show through the business of ED). Informal remittance channels have been driven by the lack of trust in legal money transfer services.

[19] https://www.gov.za/COVID-19/individuals-and-households/social-grants-coronavirus-COVID-19

The majority of migrants I worked with expressed fear and mistrust of legal service providers. This is because some think that, if they reveal their personal information, the legal service providers may be linked to the authorities, which may lead to some undocumented migrants being arrested or deported. Zimbabweans, Malawians, and Mozambicans, among other migrants, made use of trusted informal diasporic transporters and the transporters have a longer history of doing the same (Tawodzera and Chikanda, 2017; Nyamunda, 2014). Among Zimbabweans, these transporters are commonly referred to as runners or *omalayitsha* (Ncube, 2020; Nyamunda, 2014; Rukema and Pophiwa, 2020). People rely on them to courier groceries, money, and other essential goods in and out of South Africa (Ncube, 2020).

6.6 The Role of Social Capital and Social Networking in Sending Remittances during the COVID-19 Lockdown

6.6.1 Edmund (ED) as an Independent Broker

Here, I take up again the story of Edmund, who likes to be called by the name "ED" begun in Chapter Four. He was born outside South Africa but became a naturalized South African citizen living and working in Cape Town. He was assisted by a close friend, who became his father figure, to acquire documents in 1997 when he left his home country at the age of 20. On his initial arrival in South Africa, he worked in different towns and cities in the Limpopo province including Tzaneen, Polokwane, Giyani, and Linyenye. He also worked in Pretoria and Johannesburg in Gauteng Province. Eventually, he moved and settled in Cape Town. His movement to Cape Town was motivated by work. The company he was working for in Johannesburg relocated to Cape Town and he was allowed to relocate with the company. After 10 years of working in South Africa, Edmund got a permanent residence permit. How he later got citizenship status remains a mystery, as he was not comfortable sharing. ED later got married and his wife stays in his home country. His wife frequently visits him in Cape Town.

As I related earlier, ED used the COVID-19 pandemic to improve his income-earning ability by becoming an informal solo remittance service provider. At the height of lockdown restrictions where non-essential travelling was barred, ED took advantage of his essential work permit[20] to travel back to his home country. He took with him ZAR50,000 that he had saved to buy a second

[20] During Levels 4 and 5 of lockdown in South Africa, only people who worked in essential services were allowed to travel and were given actual physical permits that allowed them to travel without hindrance.

car to give to his wife back home. Upon arrival at the border, ED could not legally cross the border – his essential workers' travelling permit only worked within the South African border. ED waited until late at night and used illegal ports of entry and exit to cross to Zimbabwe. It was such a huge risk travelling with such a hefty amount of cash as there are reports of robbery and murder among migrants illegally crossing borders at these ports. However, ED trusted his gut and fortunately made it to the other side of the border unharmed. His journey home took two days.

ED left the money with his wife and came back to South Africa using the same illegal routes. In doing all this, ED had a business plan, to advertise to fellow countrymen in Cape Town that they could send their money back home conveniently without the need to use Mukuru or any other channels that needed "papers". ED would charge 15% of any amount that a person in South Africa wanted to send home. After receiving the money and details of the receiver, ED would call his wife and supply the details of the receiver. In effect, ED set his wife up with an amount of money that they could then disburse locally, and he would receive the money plus 15% in South Africa. In instances where a person wanted to send money in person and travel and pay cash in-person to ED, he could give them a South African bank account number where they could deposit the money. In cases where a person had no access to a banking facility, ED would travel door-to-door to collect the money and complete the transaction. However, the door-to-door service was only provided to trusted clients whom ED knew personally. Edmund named his business "ED Express". It was a convenient service that helped many migrants bypass the boundaries and borders in the form of mobility restrictions during COVID-19. Ed noted that 30 to 35 people would receive money from his wife. The R50 000, which he had left with her, would last for five weeks. This means that an average of R1 400 per week would be sent and collected in this period.

ED's story is not unique. The majority of migrants that I interacted with confirmed using ED's and similar services provided by independent brokers in South Africa. A selected number of migrants who possessed the capital to start similar businesses seized opportunities during the pandemic. It was a very convenient service for migrants. Because the business was informal, people like ED considered it "risky". This is because, in the event of theft or robbery, there was no compensation. More so, because it was a business that used informal ways to remit, this could be equated to

money laundering.[21] There was a high chance that ED could get arrested. In addition, the informal business was not on any kind of insurance. In the event of loss or seizure of money, ED would not recover it. To prevent such scenarios, ED expressed that he mostly worked with people that he knew back home and in South Africa. Some people who used ED's service were not known to ED. Such people tapped into their capital with those that were known to him to send money. They confirmed making use of people who were connected to ED as a point of contact. Such connections were vital in accessing ED's services. In most cases, friendship connections played a pivotal role in accessing independent brokers because most of them worked only with people that they knew and trusted.

To tease out more information about remittances, I went further to ask ED how he envisaged the creative and innovative idea of providing a remittance service. ED had this to say:

> I had money, sitting idle in my bank account and I realized that I would not make any profit from it if I just kept it there. I also thought that people were struggling to send money home because of the countrywide lockdown. I took it upon myself to help my fellow countrymen as well as make profits out of my money…. My service is situated at the heart of my rural community. Unlike most remittance services situated in towns and cities, my service makes it easy for clients to get their money without the cost of travel. I intend to include the remitting of goods, especially groceries and building materials shortly.

The above narration by ED shows how connections materialize in the face of uncertain times. Migrants recognized their incompleteness and sought ways of enhancing themselves through relationships with ED and other informal remittance service providers to forge solidarities (Nyamnjoh, 2020). As I show through ED's story, social capital is translated into networks that afford migrants the opportunity to send money conveniently. Through lockdown measures, migrants were restricted from moving, but on the other hand, the mobility of money was enhanced.

Social networks are essential in fostering migrant connections in South Africa. It is important to note that social networks are premised on social capital. Social capital is transformed into vital relations that are pertinent in accessing remittance services. Vital relations are related to the concept of *hunhu* or ubuntu. The story of ED shows how some people, whom ED did not know, were able to send money and this means that human beings are inextricably bound to one another.

[21] My intention is not a form of exposé anthropology. Instead, I seek to explore how money and goods can be circulated through connections at a time when remittances and people are expected to be immobile. In this sense, then, my study takes the ethico-moral questions of how connections and relations intersect in the crafting of social worlds.

Concerning the concept of ubuntu, Nyamnjoh (2015) argues that "Ubuntu's precepts and workings are severely tested in these times of rapid change, accelerated nimble-footedness, and multiple responsibilities." In times of COVID-19, ubuntu's working was tested where migrants relied on fellow migrants to send remittances. In this case, vital relations, which are premised on ubuntu, have roots in human sociality and inclusivity. For Bolden (2014) and Muller (2008), ubuntu expresses the fundamental interconnectedness of human existence. Vital connections are realized in the way in which people are connected and interconnected and worked together in pursuit of sending money during the pandemic. In this way, ubuntu motivates stable connections among migrants in Cape Town.

6.6.2 Truck Drivers as a Means of Sending Money

ED's story does not entirely capture how money was sent to various African countries during the total lockdown in South Africa. Truck drivers played a prominent role in aiding the remittance of money and goods during this period. During the lockdown, selected truck drivers classified as essential service workers were granted special travelling permits. Such permits allowed them to travel and cross the border even when the border was closed to the rest of the population. One day, while I was having a conversation with ED, he told me that he was intending to go to Milnerton to meet his uncle. He indicated that he wanted to give his uncle, a truck driver, some money (for his remittance business) and groceries for his family. The uncle transported essential goods because he had a travelling permit which allows him to travel with ease. I accompanied ED to Milnerton and had a conversation with his uncle. I asked him about how he was helping migrants with remitting their monies and goods, and he had this to say:

> My friend, I am a person because of others, thus I am obligated to help. I have so far received money from more than ten people which I must deliver to their families and friends once I reach home. Some have given me groceries too. I charge a certain fee for sending money goods. For the money, I charge 10% of the total amount that one wants to send. For groceries, it depends on the weight of each bag. For 20kg or more, I charge between ZAR300 and ZAR1000. However, I do not take money and groceries from people that I do not know. I once did this, and it nearly cost me my job. Thus, I only deal with those that I know.

I further asked how he would cross the border with such amounts of money and groceries and what the customs officials would say. ED's uncle mentioned that "over my years working as a truck driver, I have developed helpful relationships with a few customs officers." ED's uncle uses these

ties to easily cross the border. He assured me that he does not transport any illegal or illicit things, thus he is not reluctant to help his people.

During my conversation with ED's uncle, Lucy, a 35-year-old migrant woman, arrived with a bag of groceries that she wanted to send home. At this point, I realised that Uncle was making a business out of transporting goods and money. I had an impromptu conversation with Lucy and asked how she knew Uncle. She indicated that she is related to ED who then introduced her to Uncle. What I realized is that Uncle worked closely with ED. It dawned on me that a web of connections linked these people. For one to access Uncle's services, they would have to be part of the inner circle. To get access to the inner circle one had to have connections. We can note that the connections are cyclical and, if well-nourished, they enhance migrants' lives and efforts of sending money and goods back home.

6.6.3 Bus Drivers (Kevy) as Conduits for Remitting

While some participants, including ED, made use of truck drivers to send money,[22] Mama Juju, one of my research assistants, made use of buses. Even though buses were not part of the essential services, people could still travel and send money or goods through them. The buses would confront and circumvent the police and roadblocks depending on the situation.

Kevy is a bus driver who works for Yellow Line (pseudonym) cross-border bus services. Mama Juju was introduced to Kevy by her uncle who works in Durban as a cross-border bus driver. Mama Juju's uncle and Kevy were friends (hence, *hushamwari*) who worked for the same bus company but travelled different routes. Mama Juju's uncle would go to Durban while Kevy went to Cape Town. Mama Juju and Kevy used to communicate through WhatsApp until April 2020 when they physically met. One Sunday morning Mama Juju went to Belville to send groceries with Kevy. It was the first time she met Kevy. She called him before leaving Mowbray where she stays to confirm if the bus was leaving on that day. Kevy reassured her that the bus would be leaving around 4 pm. For Mama Juju to get space to put my groceries on the bus she was supposed to be at the loading bay in Belville early, around 10 am. The loading bay is a parking space adjacent to the fuel station. Upon her arrival, she made another call. Since she had not met Kevy in person

[22] https://www.knomad.org/COVID-19-remittances-call-to-action/
https://voxeu.org/article/defying-ods-remittances-held-during-COVID-19-pandemic

previously she was not aware of who he was or how he looked. She stayed in her car and gave Kevy directions to where she was parked. A dark of complexion man in his early thirties appeared from the crowd that was gathered around the Yellow Line bus; it was Kevy. He introduced himself and told Mama Juju to bring the groceries. He also told her that her uncle had already told him about the groceries.

When Mama Juju took the groceries to the bus, there were many people. Some were waiting to board the bus to return home, and some were there to send money and goods. Kevy was not working alone. He had three assistants who helped him with collecting money and making sure they wrote down everything that they were given. Another fascinating thing was the innumerable number of calls Kevy received during the 40 minutes Mama Juju spent with him. People were calling asking for his services. Some would call trying to explain how they knew him through being introduced by friends and relatives who personally knew Kevy.

With the number of calls and clients that Kevy and the company were getting, it was important for Kevy to first assist those that he knew. As time went by, the police came. They threatened to arrest Kevy and impound the bus since Kevy and the crew were violating lockdown regulations. Kevy was taken by the police and in 20 mins he was back. He had bribed them by giving them a certain amount of money. Mama Juju asked if he was going to make it to the border since interprovincial travelling was banned, Kevy retorted that "money talks". In other words, he was saying he was going to bribe his way down to the border. Before long, the bus was loaded, and everything was set and ready for the journey.

Mama Juju's story is telling. Many participants I interviewed shared similar stories. A few buses were still operating even though interprovincial and cross-border travelling was banned. It speaks volumes about the vitality of connections in remitting during the lockdown period in South Africa. By "vital" here I mean to draw attention both to the necessity of these relations and also to their role in sustaining life (i.e., vitality). This demonstrates the pivotal nature of *hushamwari* relations and reciprocities that are instrumental to sending remittances among migrants in Cape Town. It is important also to note that vitality is premised on two pillars: motivation and resilience (Ryan and Frederick, 1997). Motivation encapsulates the migrant goal of sending remittances and remaining connected with their families back home. On the other hand, resilience refers to the ability to deal with constraints and challenges in life, livelihoods and in remitting.

Social connections are vital in the process of remitting back home against lockdown odds. As noted by Heering et al. (2004:324), "social capital theory assigns importance to the functioning of interpersonal social networks between migrants in receiving countries and relatives in sending countries". As Mama Juju's story has shown, social capital is essential through *hushamwari*, relationships of mutual trust and obligation with closed migrant social networks and ties. Coleman (1988) notes that social capital, which is a structured form of social relations between migrants and migrants, is an important resource available to migrants. Coleman's work is useful in elucidating the nature of resources within different networks and the extent to which they are made available because of norms governing expectations of obligation and support. Without clients, Kevy and company cannot operate and, without Kevy and company, migrants cannot repatriate and cannot connect with their families back home.

Social ties are effective when they link people to those who have resources. Bourdieu (1986) argues that networking is "the product of endless effort" required "to produce and reproduce lasting, useful relationships that can secure material or symbolic profits". Similarly, Nyamnjoh (2021) noted how African communities have, through the ages, negotiated and navigated questions of being and belonging through a myriad of encounters with one another, as well as with people from elsewhere and those they have come to know and relate to through their mobility. He argues that being and becoming are permanent works in progress.

6.7 Migrants' Obligation and Reciprocity in Remitting

Findings from this study have shown that informal channels of sending money, such as independent brokers, bus drivers, truck drivers and *omalayitsha* were conveniently reliable during COVID-19. Such networks were based on obligation and reciprocity. Once the sender pays their money to the carriers/couriers which are the truck or bus drivers, the carrier/courier is obliged by the social bond and moral obligation to deliver the money or goods. Moral obligation herein is similar to what Scanlon (1998) refers to as "what we owe to each other". For example, if ED is given the money, he owes the receiver and is obligated to give them service. Similarly, if a truck driver, an *omalayitsha* or a bus operator is given money or groceries and is paid for the service of transporting such, they have an obligation to transport everything safely and deliver to the intended receiver.

Moral obligation is one of the most familiar features of our lives. It is common to hear someone demanding that their money or goods are delivered. For example, I heard Lucy telling ED: "You see I have paid your uncle an extra fee; make sure he gives my mother these groceries." This means that, once the sender pays the transporter, the transporter shoulders the duty to deliver to the receiver the money or goods sent. Blaming the transporter or the transporter accepting blame if they fail to live up to their promise is equally common. In relation to this, Lucy went further to say to ED: "Last time I gave some truck driver my groceries and when the groceries reached home, some items were broken. I do not expect this with your uncle." In effect, migrants who sent their remittance home using informal channels rely on the bonds of obligation and reciprocity. My findings have confirmed that migrants rely on their proximity and networks with the carriers brought together by links of moral obligation and reciprocity, such as the link between Lucy and ED.

Social networks based on these values are intricately linked to the concept of *ubuntu*. Ubuntu expresses the interconnectedness, common humanity, and responsibility of individuals to each other. The most important question, in this case, is: "How do migrants send their remittances without being shortchanged by bus drivers, truck drivers or *omalayitsha*?" The answer perhaps lies in what Marcel Mauss describes as a "'paradigm of the gift' between people that make them allies …". For Mauss, humans acknowledge each other. Acknowledging each other is where conviviality takes precedence. Conviviality, in this case, would mean the acknowledgement of common humanity and sociality as the basis of mutuality and convivial co-existence. As I have shown, conviviality is an extension of *ubuntu*. Concerning this, Desmond Tutu (2004:25) once said the following:

> A person is a person through other persons. None of us comes into the world fully formed. We would not know how to think, walk, speak, or behave as human beings unless we learned it from other human beings. We need other human beings to be human.

Thus, the concept of ubuntu unlocks the capacity of migrants, truck drivers and bus drivers to express mutuality, dignity, humanity, and reciprocity among themselves (Poovan, Du Toit and Engelbrecht, 2006:23-25). Without each other's service, the process of remitting could be incomplete. Migrants, bus operators, truck drivers and *omalayitsha* alike needed each other to stride toward completing the process of remitting. However, the process of remitting is never-ending. It is an enduring permanent work in progress. Because they need each other's services and

need to be connected to their home countries, migrants seek connections with fellow migrants and locals who have services and technologies that can assist in their remitting process. This is demonstrated through the story of Daison, where migrants sought his services to repatriate the mortal remains of their loved ones together with goods and groceries.

Where migrants as social beings depend on one another not only to get by but also to get ahead, we see the interdependency of human beings become the order of the day. Taking a page from Mauss (1990), we can say that the practice of sending remittances is influenced by a culture of dependency as well as mutual ties, both of which have the potential to be empowering. There is a connection between interdependence and interconnection, as well as how conviviality develops as a result of sending remittances. In the process of trying to send remittances, people look for ways to connect with one another. In this sense, conviviality and sociality serve as a framework through which we think about the operation of social networks among a variety of individuals. Transferring money in this manner is the safest and most reliable option. As a result of this, social networks are no longer considered merely a means to an end, but rather, ideally, an end in and of themselves.

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter has used the concepts of incompleteness, ubuntu and conviviality to present a distinct set of tools with which to think about movement, mobility and social networking in the tenuous circumstances of the pandemic. It has shown that remittances (both cash and kind) embody a deeper meaning. In keeping with ubuntu, strong traditions of mutual assistance, the obligation to family and altruism are key in defining the meaning to both the sender and receiver. The idea then is that despite, being in the diaspora, one must focus on maintaining mutuality rather than difference. Remittances act as a means through which money, goods or groceries can be classified as different from ordinary home finances or household goods. Although there is no direct reciprocal exchange of money or goods between migrants and their receiving families, the sending of money and goods embodies the ethics of ubuntu and conviviality, that is, to build and sustain relations.

However, the lockdown measures, such as the restriction of mobility, curfews, and social and physical distancing, impacted people's lives and livelihoods and remittances. The way remittances were mobilized was affected especially during the lockdown of Levels 4 and 5, where interprovincial and international travel was banned. Firstly, unemployment and limited income

meant reduced remittance. This meant that migrants did not have enough money to send home or to buy goods to repatriate. Secondly, remittance services were compromised, as providers had to adapt to the lockdown. As a result, channels through which remittances could be sent became fewer, slower and/or costlier. Migrants faced a wide range of challenges that compromised their income, but they managed to survive by using social networks as a means to an end. In that context, social networks played a pivotal role in sending home the available money and goods.

Migrants translate social capital into networks that afford them opportunities to send money conveniently. Independent brokers, such as ED, were key players in remitting money, while bus and truck drivers and funeral home drivers were instrumental in remitting goods and groceries and dead bodies during the lockdown. For migrants, the use of truck and bus drivers in sending remittances depended on the bonds of obligation and reciprocity. My findings confirmed that migrants relied on their proximity to, and networks with, the couriers. Such networks based on reciprocity and obligation are intricately linked to the concept of ubuntu. Ubuntu expresses the interconnectedness, common humanity, and responsibility of individuals to each other. Once the sender pays the courier – in this case truck or bus drivers – the courier is obliged by the social bond and moral obligation to deliver the remittances. In this case, social networks are both a means to an end and an end in themselves.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Challenges of Migrants' Relationships and Strained Social Networks

7.1 Introduction

This chapter draws on incompleteness, and the opportunities and challenges that come with conviviality, ubuntu and hushamwari. I examine how connections, ubuntu and conviviality are weakened and strained over time due to the everyday conflict that arises between co-tenants by looking at it through the eyes of migrants and their experiences. Beyond conflicts, the sharing of physical space and materials among migrants living together is closely related to what Gilroy (2006) terms "multicultural conviviality". Multicultural conviviality expressed the everyday experiences of living with difference, hybridity and taken-for-granted aspects of life (Vaillant, 1995) boundary crossings, and a joyful appreciation of the syncretistic spaces between various cultural traditions where routine practices generate "networks and experiences of belonging" (Neal and Walters, 2008:282). Such everyday lives are shaped by the nourishing everyday interactions and encounters across social boundaries and this information could be a form of everyday "conviviality". However, social connections are not devoid of tension, friction and conflict.

The commonly noted cause of conflicts included but were not limited to untidiness, conflicts regarding the smell of food, and conflicting religious beliefs, values and practices. The religious beliefs and practices of co-tenants that differed with one another sparked disagreement that had a significant impact on fuelling conflicts that led to the gradual weakening and breaking down of social connections. The economic, social, and religious outcomes of migrants in Cape Town are affected by their social networks in a wide variety of ways, ranging from access to opportunities to the basic social services, inter alia. However, even though urban scholars have discussed the process of creating and maintaining social networks (Wise, 2005; Thrift, 2005), the challenges that come with conviviality, ubuntu and *hushamwari,* and that networks are not perennial are poorly understood. One aspect of this problem is investigated in this study: i.e., the relationship between and among co-tenants and changes in social networks.

Even though social networks play a significant role in assisting migrants in adjusting to their new lives and gaining access to opportunities for earning a living, this chapter argues that just because networks do exist does not mean that everyone has easy access to them. In addition to this, their existence does not last forever. In this context, it is essential to emphasize that despite the presence

of ubuntu and conviviality, social networks, relationships, or connections are not immune to the development of tension or conflict, implying that networks and humans are incomplete. People leave networks, become disconnected from them, and some are unable to connect at all. This is especially true of those who are physically connected in public places like hair salons, taxi stands, markets, and places of worship, among other common places that were disconnected by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Wise (2009:42) notes that "in the shared places, there are varying degrees of intolerance and cross-cultural discomfort" and this can shape the way people connect, fail to connect or fall out of connections completely. Although migrants might be creatively skilled at navigating social relationships, this chapter observes that the order that came about is unpredictable.

7.2 Challenges of Social Networks

Much of the literature on migration and mobility has tended to assume that migrants who travel and cross borders have available access to various forms of social networks including friendship and kin networks to ease their mobility and settling process (Landau, 2014; Hay, 2014; Mushonga and Vupenyu, 2021). However, this is not always the case. This chapter argues that there is a need to pay attention to how migrants fail to access networks and how some fall out of relationships in varied social locations, with diverse people. This study discovered that several reasons and factors limit migrants' access to social networks. A range of reasons attribute to how and why some fall out of the social relationship. These include the conflicting religious beliefs, practices and values, among others.

Rather than concentrating my attention on a wide range of factors that establish the failure of social networks and falling out, I have chosen to focus on one key factor that is central to this discussion: everyday conflicts among co-tenants. I acknowledge that numerous factors affect migrant social networks, nevertheless, I chose to focus on the aforementioned factor. The reason for focusing on this one is driven by the fact that more invaluable data was explored on this one than all others combined. Learning from my fieldwork, the intersection of this factor and my data is the most effective way of building up a clear picture of migrants' daily urban lived experience in the Cape Town metropole. It is also to show how migrants' urban social life is complex, intricate and never void of tensions and conflicts. I endeavour to demonstrate how social connections are key in everyday life encounters but are not durable, readily available and accessible to everybody.

Attention is stressed on how and why networks are transient, and some people fail to connect. To understand this discussion better let me begin by contextualizing migrants' everyday encounters and social networking.

7.3 Everyday Conflict and Conviviality between Co-Tenants

Everyday conflicts and tensions between co-tenants and neighbours are common. While migrants are known to rely on social networks for survival and to get by, this study discovered that conflict over untidiness, conflicts regarding the smell of food, and conflicting religious practices weakened and muted social ties among co-tenants. It is important to note that conviviality does not imply the absence of conflict but is necessitated precisely because of conflict. The migrants I worked with were forced to share physical space and material resources because they were co-tenants. During my fieldwork, for example, I met Adana and Nneka. The two ladies of different nationalities who regarded themselves as friends, shared a two-bedroom apartment in the Maitland neighbourhood of Cape Town. They also used the same kitchen and utensils. Adana mentioned that they "also shared the lounge as well as the bathroom. More so, [they] also split electricity bills, toiletry bills and the helper's salary." In some instances, they would watch television together in the lounge. This is consistent with ubuntu wherein solidarity and collective humanity are its backbone. Nevertheless, what I present here seems to be the ordinary way of living that people do. People laugh and fight. Co-tenants have divergent religions. However, what sets this chapter apart is that I am dealing with people who are of diverse backgrounds and are trying to know each other. More so, I look at how the failure to co-exist in one space leads to some people failing to connect and some falling out of their social connections. These connections are necessitated by living together. And living together does not mean mere sameness. People can live with differences but can also fail to co-exist in the same space. I strive to demonstrate that relationships are not independent of tension and friction. Everyday conflict in shared social and physical spaces is a reality and in this space of ordinariness, how people live together is always unpredictable. To demonstrate this, let me begin by demonstrating how a lack of tidiness can lead to conflicts that weaken social connections.

7.3.1 The Politics of Tidiness as a Catalyst for Breakdown of Social Connections

In this study, lack of cleanliness was found to be one of the major causes of conflicts among co-tenants. For example, conflict and tension ensued between Adana and Nneka because the latter's

lack of cleanliness led to the weakening of the *hushamwari* relations that the two had created soon after meeting and sharing an apartment. Adana told me that

> [t]he disorganization of Nneka was too much for me to bear. She is incapable of properly flushing the toilet, and as a result, the bathroom is always a mess. Imagine for a moment a grown woman who is unable to clean up after herself. When our lease is up, I'm moving out, and I'll be looking for someone else to share an apartment with.

Similar experiences were widely shared by participants I spoke with. They indicated that hygiene was a concern among several households. I also witnessed this in many households I visited during my fieldwork. Similar to Adana and Nneka, some migrants who participated in this research confirmed that failure to properly flush the toilets is among the major reason which ignites conflicts amongst co-tenants. This rhymes well with Simiyu et al. (2020) who noted that the relationship among users and the lack of cooperation contribute to the low levels of cleanliness of shared sanitation facilities.

In my several visits to many households, I also learn that, apart from flushing the toilets, cleaning the toilet on a regular basis was also a problem. Some migrant families who shared houses made use of a duty roster. A duty roster is a schedule of cleaning tasks assigned to members of the household. Duty rosters were organised to prevent individuals from being assigned the same duties and to maintain the tidiness of the sanitary facilities. In many cases, my study found that each family would be responsible for cleaning for a week or two. I also found that it was common for one family to complain about the untidiness of the toilet when the other family is on duty. Stories of people running away from their duties were recurrently shared as well. Herein, we can use this instance to think in terms of "ordinary ethics" (Das, 2012), about how people would relate to each other after such conflictual acts. Concerning ethics, Lambek (2010:1 cited in Das, 2012:133) expressed this:

> Human beings cannot avoid being subject to ethics, speaking and acting with ethical consequences, evaluating our actions and those of others, acknowledging and refusing acknowledgement, caring and taking care, but also being aware of our failure to do so consistently. As a species, given our consciousness, our socialization and sociality, and our use of language, we are fundamentally ethical.

In essence, it is expected that, when staying together and sharing material and physical space, mutuality and sociality are achieved. On the opposite side, this study found that a lack of cleanliness leads to severe conflicts. In relation to this, Simiyu et al (2017) established that such

conflicts end up in people being evicted from their houses. After the eviction, more conflict would ensue from paying back rentals and deposits. In most parts of Cape Town, for a person to sign a lease agreement, they have to pay a deposit fee. They will be paid back their deposit once their lease agreement ends. Usually, an outgoing inspection is done to see if the property is still in the condition, it was when the tenant moved in. If it is not in good condition, some money will be deducted from the deposit fee to fix the damages.

One Saturday morning during my frequent visits to Mama Juju's place, I found that one of their neighbours, who lived at the house next door, was loading her belongings in a truck, relocating. I asked Mama Juju for the reason for her relocation in the middle of the month, and she explained that "the lady was involved in a huge verbal fight with her co-tenant and the lease was promptly terminated." I had the opportunity to speak with a lady named Lydia and enquire about the problem. She told me:

> My brother, they just hate me because I run a successful business. I always clean the house and buy cleaning supplies regularly. I should leave, and I will not return; I have deleted their contacts, and I will have nothing to do with them.

After discussing with the other tenants who were left, they indicated that the fights were sparked by Lydia who refused to diligently do her toilet cleaning duties. This did not sit well with other tenants which led to a verbal exchange of harsh words. Shared facilities' routine maintenance is the cause of conflicts in many households or workplaces. This resonates with Longva (2012:3) who argues that, "during times of conflict, migrants' flexibility for action is severely restricted, and their status as victims overshadows their status as social agents, active devisers and users of strategies of accommodation and self-empowerment." In this study, I argue that the concepts of ubuntu and conviviality capture this everyday living together more accurately. These concepts do not preclude the existence of disagreements, which can be voiced either discursively or through direct, physical action. Gilroy (2004:xi cited in Rabo 2012:145), who is concerned about postcolonial cities other than Cape Town, writes that conviviality "does not describe the absence of racism or the triumph of tolerance," but he hopes that "an interest in conviviality will take off from the point where 'multiculturalism' broke down." My assertion is that conviviality is a fruitful concept to interpret the day-to-day civility and co-existence of migrant co-tenants in the city of Cape Town. People do not necessarily need to love one another in this regard but they do need to accept the fact that they share certain spaces. As I demonstrated with Lydia's story, even though

conviviality and ubuntu are commended for their role in the establishment and maintenance of social connections, there are circumstances in which they are vulnerable to external threats. This leads to strained social relationships and some people falling out of networks.

7.3.2 The Smell of Fish as a Cause of Conflict and Straining of Social Networks

Apart from untidiness, the smell of food, such as fish, was also a common cause of tension between migrants and local South Africans sharing accommodation. My research assistant, Mama Juju, told me that, in 2018, she left a house she was sharing with the landlady and a Congolese family in Mfuleni. Her landlady had strict rules, and among them, was that Juju, as a young child, was not supposed to cry at night. Mama Juju said, "The living arrangements were so difficult. If Juju cried at night, the landlady would come knocking hard on my door." In retrospect, Mama Juju also complained about the bad smell of fish that the landlady prepared regularly. Mama Juju indicated that "the landlady would complain about Juju but the smell of the fish she cooked would take days to clear."

Mama Juju told me that, one day, her husband went to the landlady to complain about the smell of fish. This did not go down well with the landlady who announced the following day that rentals had gone up by 40%. Mama Juju and her husband felt that this was an indirect way of pushing them out of the house. Before all the complaints, Mama Juju's family and the landlady used to stay together peacefully. They used to watch television programmes together. They also used to attend church services together. They would go for Sunday service which included the whole family. Wednesday services, however, were for ladies only. However, as time went by, conflicts arose between them. The smell of fish caused people like Mama Juju's husband to complain. Such experiences between migrants, and migrants and locals provide grounds for conflicts. As a result of Mama Juju's experiences, a picture of the complexities and nuances of social life has emerged, as well as what has been referred to in other contexts as the "multi-vocality of place" (Grasseni, 2009:37). In the context of these migrant encounters, inclusion and exclusion, conviviality and conflict create untenable contradictions in one-dimensional accounts of migrants' lives. These contradictions are part of a larger set that spans several distinct but mutually intersecting social realms (Karner and Parker, 2011). Many of the migrants I worked with expressed tensions that were similar to those in Mama Juju's story. Such accounts shed light on shifts in human connection, which are frequently perceived as deterioration in a sentimental way. These shifts are

frequently couched in loss narratives, anxieties about the present and future, and undeniable local tensions (Karner and Parker, 2011; Harris, 2014). Furthermore, the study shows that such ambiguities define several significant social realms that are important in the lives of migrants. Everyday interactions and relationships are marked by both conflict and conviviality, and new alliances that cross national boundaries.

7.4 The breakdown of *Hushamwari* as a Result of Conflicting Religious Beliefs, Values and Practices

Apart from the smell of food and tidiness, conflicting religious beliefs and religious practices sparked conflicts. On this issue, I came across Isaac, a 32-year-old man from Malawi, with whom I was linked through Mama Juju. Isaac became a close friend of mine and I used to visit him regularly on weekends. Isaac told me that he works in a construction company owned by a fellow migrant. The company has huge numbers of foreign nationals. Tapping into his social capital, Isaac introduced me to some of his co-workers and their families. Isaac, unfortunately, could not become my research assistant because of the demands of his work. He only became a very resourceful friend who would link me with potential participants and, when he is not working, he would accompany me during my fieldwork. As he is a person who knows many people, it became so easy.

Isaac stays in Salt River with his friend Elias from Malawi too. Elias is a devoted Muslim, who unlike Isaac does not drink alcohol or smoke. He also does not eat pork. Isaac is the opposite of Elias and claims to be a Christian. He drinks alcohol and eats pork, and these two men share a room in which there are two beds in that single room. Their conflicting religious practices are a cause of concern on a daily basis. Elias complains about Isaac. He told me, “Whenever I am observing my times of prayer, Isaac will be making a lot of noise.” Also, he complains that Isaac burns some incense as part of his religious practice and the smell is not pleasant. On the other hand, Isaac complains about Elias. Isaac told me, “Elias does not understand. He does not want me to drink at home but we both pay the same amount of money for rentals.” Elias, on the other hand complains about Isaac, and how he makes noise playing the radio with too much volume when he is drunk. Elias also complains that

> Isaac brings different women once he goes out for drinking. My privacy is invaded, and my physical and social space is shrunk by the presence of various unknown women that Isaac always brings.

Moreover, the pork that Isaac enjoys much does not sit well with Elias. Since these men share a refrigerator, their food ends up mixing, hence creating resentment and tension. Elias claims: “My religion forbids me to eat anything contaminated with pork and each time Isaac puts his pork in the refrigerator, I would not be using it.” This puts pressure on him to buy perishables that he must use in a day. He complains that this puts him “out of budget”. It is clear that the complaints between Isaac and Elias are based on conflicting religious beliefs and practices. While Isaac claims to be a Christian, Elias indicated that he is a Muslim. Their religions have different restrictions and laws regarding food consumption. Their squabbles went on for 14 months until Elias moved out and found another place to stay. Isaac ended up staying with his girlfriend. The two have been in contact but their communication is mostly about work and not social.

Religious traditions are an important element of the world’s cultural diversity and are deeply intertwined with many other cultural traits. In relation to these views, White, Muthukrishna, and Norenzayan (2021:1) reinforced this by saying, “Beliefs, values, and practices centred around these traditions have been hypothesized to foster a superordinate shared identity, with a corresponding package of cultural traits, shared across geographic and ethnic boundaries.” While the above may be true, my study shows something dissimilar. The experience of Elias and Isaac demonstrates that conflict and breaking social connections are possible and they are ignited by conflicting religious practices, beliefs and values. Unfortunately, this is not new and unique to Elias and Isaac. Many migrants I interacted with shared similar stories in which migrants and migrants, and migrants and locals disagree on religious practices, beliefs and values.

Such conflicts help to shed light on a particular narrative of “othering and belonging”. Concerning religious-based conflicts, Barkey (2018) observes the notion of othering and belonging as the by-product of religious-based conflicts. People sharing accommodation are forced by their coexistence, to mediate and negotiate their otherness. Despite the religious otherness, and cultural, ethnic and spiritual struggles, spaces of coexistence allow for cohabitation, hospitality, and tolerance. In line with this are the characteristics of ubuntu that allow for co-existence, co-dependences and tolerance. The act of sharing accommodation and accepting each other in religious diversity is central to Arabic and Christian faiths. Religious tolerance entails a partial belonging, based on the willingness of the powerful in society to grant acceptance. Sharing, tolerance and acceptance are also key corners of conviviality and ubuntu. As Kumalo (2018:162)

puts it: “With ubuntu as a philosophy of life, Africans would be expected to be kind to migrants and much more embracing of other people’s cultures.” However, Elias and Isaac’s experiences demonstrate that living together while having different religious beliefs, practices and values is contested. For Isaac and Elias, their living together was infested with conflicts and tension. This indeed highlights the failure of living with difference and diversity. In relation to this, Barkey (2018) observes that the numerous ways in which the discourse of courteousness and inclusion has been shattered have weakened religious diversity and unity in diversity.

The coexistence of individuals and groups, as well as the sharing of religious sacred sites, is common and done in the interest of preserving and manipulating diversity. The more open individuals are to ethnic or religious differences, the more likely it is for coexistence to be cultivated and the sharing of accommodation to be feasible. While this is correct, the experiences of Elias and Isaac and the majority of migrants I worked, suggest otherwise. It shows that, sometimes, the religious difference can lead to people falling out of social circles, and social connections being weakened. Because the word “religion” means “that which binds together” etymologically, to say that religion builds strong communities (Cady, 2016) is justified. If religion did not have this effect, it would not be religion. But one must still ask if the practices that build up particular communities – churches, mosques, synagogues – also contribute to the building up of more inclusive communities, such as neighbourhoods, cities, and the nation. In the same manner, Lima and Putnam (2010) observes that people with strong commitments to particular religious communities are also good neighbours and good citizens. Conversely, my study shows that differing religious beliefs and practices failed to bind Isaac and Elias, their *hushamwari* was strained and eventually broke down and similar stories were repeatedly shared by my research assistants and participants.

According to Parker and Karner (2011), the presumed effects of transnational solidarities and diasporic politics, as well as the relationship between religion and social capital, have come to dominate discussions not only in the media but also in academic circles. There is a new dominant discourse concerning the relationship between religious minorities that assumes multiculturalism has failed. Religion and business are therefore important contexts within which everyday local interactions, including both forms of inter-ethnic conflict and forms of conviviality, take place. This points in the direction of more general questions regarding the inclusions and exclusions of

local networks. The findings of this research demonstrate instances of composite interactions between social relationships and religious practices, beliefs, and values, which call into question the concept of *hushamwari,* social networks and the assumed unity of religion (Putnam, 2010; Bobrowicz, 2018). My findings suggest that religious practices and social networks can be both culturally inclusive and exclusive.

The stories that I gathered from my participants and those that my research assistants shared shed light on contradictory tendencies of boundary maintenance and fragmentation in religious solidarities. As I have demonstrated through the stories of Isaac and Elias, such ambivalences define and redefine many social realities that are significant to the lives of migrants on a day-to-day basis. They provide context for the everyday encounters, interactions, and relationships that people have, as well as the ways in which these things demonstrate the breakdown of conviviality through disputes. Indeed, such politics are shaped by the failure of crosscutting-religious connections (Dube, 2017). Studies on migrants and social networks have led researchers to conclude that religion's lived realities range from exclusive discourses of identity on one end of the spectrum to meaningful inter-faith dialogue on the other end of the spectrum (Hay, 2014; Owen, 2015). Both the failure of co-existence in this study and the intersecting ambivalences defy clear-cut taxonomies of individual migrants and are always integrated.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how connections, *hushamwari,* ubuntu and conviviality are weakened and strained over time due to the everyday conflict that arises between co-tenants by looking at it through the eyes of migrants and their experiences. Untidiness, conflicts regarding the smell of food, and conflicting religious beliefs, values and practices sparked disagreement that had a significant impact on fuelling conflicts that led to the gradual weakening of social connections. Lack of cleanliness was found to be one of the major causes of conflicts among co-tenants. For example, conflict and tension ensued between Adana and Nneka because the latter's lack of cleanliness led to the weakening of the *hushamwari* relations that the two had created soon after meeting and sharing an apartment. Apart from untidiness, the smell of food, such as fish, was also a common cause of tension between migrants and local South Africans sharing accommodation. In this context, migrant encounters, inclusion and exclusion, conviviality and conflict create untenable contradictions in one-dimensional accounts of migrants' lives.

What I learnt from this study is that, even though social networks such as *hushamwari* are instrumental in fostering migrants' adaptation to new life and accessing livelihood opportunities, just because networks exist does not mean that they are readily available to everyone. Moreover, they are not perennial in their existence as shown through the experiences of Adana and Nneka, Elias and Isaac, and Mama Juju and her Congolese co-tenant. In this regard, it must be underscored that social networks, relationships or connections are not independent of tension and conflicts. People fall out of networks and disconnect and some fail to connect.

Religious traditions are an important part of the world's cultural diversity, and they are inextricably linked to many other cultural traits. According to White, Muthukrishna, and Norenzayan (2021:1) cultural traits are well explained thus: "Beliefs, values, and practices centred around these traditions have been hypothesized to foster a superordinate shared identity, with a corresponding package of cultural traits, shared across geographic and ethnic boundaries." While the above may be true, my research indicates otherwise. The experience of Elias and Isaac shows that conflict and the breaking of *hushamwari* relations are possible and that they are fuelled by opposing religious practices, beliefs, and values.

Although migrants may be creatively skilled at navigating social relationships, the order that came about is unpredictable. This chapter also noted that power relations are always present in common places where migrants interact and encounter. According to Wise (2009:42), "there are various degrees of intolerance and cross-cultural discomfort in shared spaces which can shape how people connect, fail to connect or fall out of connections completely."

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

8.1 Incompleteness as a Conduit to Convivial Social Networks

In this chapter, I critically engage with the empirical chapters' findings and discussions. I show how, within the incompleteness of access to space and livelihood opportunities, migrants use conviviality and mobility as a strategy to navigate and negotiate urban spaces in order to make ends meet. Social connections are created, recreated and co-created during this process, which serves as a catalyst for their transformation. This chapter contends that, while the possibility of daily mobility exists, increasingly, urban experiences in cities involve a simultaneous confining effect for migrants, limiting the possibilities afforded through encounter and interaction. In this regard, this study sheds light on the complexities of urban migrants from African countries in South African cities by examining their social navigation in-between "boundaries" and "borders". As stated in the introduction, the goal of this ethnographic research was to gain a more nuanced understanding of people, mobility, social networks, ideas, and space. To accomplish this, I posed a key question:

> In what ways from the migrants' (from African countries that often find themselves in more precarious economic and social situations) point of view do mobilities – of people, things and ideas matter to get by or mediate migrants' subjective experiences of city life?

This research question allowed me to see some of the pressing issues surrounding migration and mobility through an ethnographic lens, confirming the importance of anthropological research, or fieldwork rooted in ethnography. As a conclusion to the thesis, this chapter brings together everything I learned during the fieldwork and wrote in the thesis to consider contemporary applications of anthropology in South Africa. The data support the argument that mobility as a response to incompleteness can serve as a foundation for the formation and maintenance of conviviality, ubuntu, *hushamwari*, and other types of social connections. I have demonstrated, through the application of the main conceptual framework of incompleteness, that the movement of migrants from other parts of Africa into and within Cape Town, South Africa, presents both opportunities and challenges. Their mobility, the movement of things, services, and ideas all act as a mediator between their individual experiences of city life and the city as a whole.

I engaged with the ideas of incompleteness, conviviality, vital relations, ubuntu, *hushamwari*, and nimble-footedness in an effort to understand the dynamic of how the social relations identified in the thesis are created and co-created through mobility. I discovered a strong link between conviviality, *hushamwari*, and ubuntu when I was researching these three concepts. In a nutshell, incompleteness can be defined as the desire of migrants to better themselves in the course of searching for improved life chances. This journey is marked by a number of important themes, including incompleteness, mobility, conviviality, *hushamwari*, conflicts and tension. The social connections that are housed within the various migrants' social structures can also be viewed as being encapsulated by the quality of conviviality. I give some thought to the connections that can be made between the various ideas relating to these concepts that I have brought together. In order for these concepts to materialize into reality, I put the principles of African flow into practice. If the flow is a significant part of how we conceive of social life, then we are able to cultivate a livelier conception of how incompleteness and conviviality shape mobility and relationships. This may invigorate ideas about ubuntu, *hushamwari*, and other concepts. The concept of flow plays a significant role in how we think about people's social lives.

Personhood and relationships, particularly those that emphasize inclusivity, interconnection, and interdependence, are at the heart of both the discussion and the findings. The findings have shown that there is a requirement for conviviality that is predicated on the inherent characteristics of normality, such as incompleteness, mobility, encounters, compositeness, debt, and indebtedness. This study illustrates the formation of individual and collective relationships of migrants, with a focus on migrants' social networks and the capacity to coexist, as well as an openness to experiencing life in a variety of forms. Migrants share apartments, meet in churches, meet in various social gatherings where connections are formed, and sociality is experienced. The concept of incompleteness implies that individuals, and in the context of this study, migrants, are not singular and unified in both form and content, even though their appearance may suggest otherwise. Therefore, migrants are motivated by incompleteness to form and create relationships with other humans to enrich themselves through these interactions. The formation of relationships is analogous to the ideas of nimble-footedness, conviviality, ubuntu, and social networks.

Conviviality can be defined as a social mode that can exist in a variety of registers. Empirical data have shown that, for migrants to survive in Cape Town, they must be adaptable enough to accommodate not only one another but also the locals. On the other hand, ubuntu is associated with the concept of collective personhood rather than the concept of the individual. This school of thought holds that an individual's humanity is inextricably linked to the humanity of others, whether or not those others are members of their immediate community. Fluidity, compositeness of being, and the ability to be omnipresent in whole or in fragments characterize the reality and ontology of incompleteness, as well as the ethic of conviviality and ubuntu that it entails. These characteristics are demonstrated by the ability to be omnipresent in whole or in fragments (Nyamnjoh 2017, 2019, 2020, 2022). These characteristics are necessary for comprehending the concept of incompleteness. It is critical for both conviviality and the formation of social networks that we recognize and accept our practical limits.

While incompleteness is a natural part of human life, conviviality encourages us to accept it. Conviviality encourages migrants to reach out in order to meet new people and learn about new ways of surviving. In this study, migrants meet in associations such as social soccer, and these forge pathways for the emergence of conviviality. This allows them to be more effective in their relationships and social interactions. Nyamnjoh (2018) uses the concept of "frontier Africans" to discuss how Africans – in this case, migrants – cope with change and continuity "by reaching out, taking what they encounter, and bringing various dichotomies and binaries into conversation". Nyamnjoh uses the English idiom "throwing the baby out with the bathwater" to illustrate this point. He suggests strategies for knowledge production, such as an interdisciplinary approach. Collaborations across disciplines of knowledge are typically referred to as interdisciplinary. In this study, I borrow and use the term interdisciplinary not only in terms of collaboration or conversation among migrants from various backgrounds and nationalities but also in terms of making use of any types of connections or social networks for livelihood and sociality.

Incompleteness in the lives of migrants is activated when they do not have access to means of livelihood and channels through which remittances can be sent, particularly during the period of COVID-19. In addition, the incompleteness of the migrant population in Cape Town with regard to gender manifests itself in a variety of ways. The obstacles that women have to overcome in

order to gain access to the opportunities for making a living in the city are the source of their incompleteness. On the other hand, the shortcomings of men are mitigated by the globalized structure, which privileges them in terms of access to space and mobility in the city, while domesticating women. This structure also privileges men in terms of access to power. In this regard, incompleteness draws our attention to the gendered nature of mobility and migration.

8.2 Nimble-Footedness as a Response to Incompleteness

The research suggests that the reader use reality and the concept of incompleteness as a model and prism (Nyamnjoh, 2021) to gain an understanding of how migrants navigate and negotiate the city. The state of being incomplete animates or stimulates migrants' agility. In the context of this study, "nimble-footedness" refers to the rate at which migrants acquire the skills required to survive and maintain continuity or basic survival in a bordered and bounded urban space. This includes not only physical mobility within and outside of Cape Town but also virtual mobility, as well as social and psychological movement. In this context, migrants frequently form social networks lubricated by convivial relations in order to foster a sense of mutualism and co-dependence among the members of these networks. Again, migrants in Cape Town are able to negotiate boundaries and borders because they have adopted these social tactics and established these networks. Migrants frequently build social capital through a combination of "quickness" and networking. This social capital is then used by migrants to gain access to resources and to facilitate the pursuit of long-term goals. In this study, I refer to migrants' ability to navigate and negotiate the challenges and opportunities that they face in Cape Town as "nimble-footed". Migrants must understand when, where, and how to move, as well as when, where, and how not to move (Mbembe, 2017). As a result of their responses to the complicated and dynamic everyday encounters they encounter, a migrant quickly learns how to accommodate fellow migrants as well as locals, all in the interest of maintaining continuity and ensuring survival (Nyamnjoh, 2013; Mutendi and Chekero, forthcoming). Migrants form networks with the many different types of people they meet to achieve their goals.

This study has shown that incompleteness is both normal and universal and that it is not an attribute to be viewed in a negative light. In this sense, migrants embrace incompleteness in order to interact and connect across nationality lines in order to act and interact with one another, with the things

people create to extend themselves, and with the natural and supernatural worlds that are relevant to their sense of being and becoming (Nyamnjoh, 2021:263). As migrants navigate and negotiate their way through the city of Cape Town, they turn to mutuality to make ends meet. They reach out to other migrants as well as locals in order to improve the opportunities available to them for making a living. Within this context, movement is an inherent component of their typical day-to-day activities. They move, or in the event that they are not moving, things that improve their means of subsistence or money are in motion. Increasing migrants' mobility can be thought of as building on this foundation of sociality. The ability to be mobile on a daily basis exists, which enhances the opportunities that can be gained through encounters and interaction. According to Nyamnjoh (2021:267), "being incomplete" explains the need for mobility and action to pursue activation for individual and collective self-fulfilment. Being and becoming are only possible if there is limitless and flexible mobility in the pursuit of activation, potency, and efficacy.

8.3 Migrants Embracing *Hushamwari* and Ubuntu in Getting By

Incompleteness animates the mobility and circulation of people, their things, ideas, and goods, resulting in a wide range of encounters and interactions among those involved. Because of the many different interactions people have with one another, their identities, whether personal or collective, are fluid and not fixed (Nyamnjoh, 2020). According to Nyamnjoh's (2021:276) observation, "…through encounters with others, mobile people are constantly required to navigate, negotiate, accommodate, or reject difference" (in things, ideas, practices, and relations). This requires them to do so in an open-ended manner, which makes them a "permanent work in progress". In this respect, the results of my research show that migrants are incomplete beings who have an ongoing need to improve their livelihoods and overall well-being through the cultivation of nimble-footedness, conviviality, ubuntu, and *hushamwari* relationships with other incomplete migrants and locals.

In this investigation, I consider the concept of *hushamwari*, which can be translated as "friendship". However, as I have demonstrated in this dissertation, the term encompasses a more profound connotation than the English translation can permit. I adopt the Shona concept of *hushamwari* to illustrate how conviviality, sociality, mutuality, and social cohesion emerge among individual migrants from African countries who live and work in Cape Town. *Hushamwari* is a

term that originates from the Shona language. The idea comes from my earlier research, which examined the various forms of mutuality and conviviality that exist between Shona-speaking migrants and Tsonga-speaking South Africans living in Giyani, South Africa. In this study, I extend and expand the concept to a wider African social context to gain an understanding of the myriad of ways and spaces in which social relations are forged between migrants themselves and between migrants and South Africans. I do this by extending and expanding the concept to a larger African social context.

The *hushamwari* concept is utilized to demonstrate the various cross-cutting forms of collective personhood that serve as an inspiration to both the ways of being of migrants from other African countries and native locals. These forms of collective personhood make it possible to form social bonds across national lines in a way that enables mutuality to be made between people even when the larger social context continues to be hostile to "foreigners" (Chekero, 2018; Chekero and Morreira, 2020). I use the concept of *hushamwari* because of its adaptability, which allows me to move beyond the dichotomy of kinship and friendship relations and investigate the ways in which people form mutually beneficial friendships that are somewhat "like kin" (Chekero and Morreira, 2020). It contributes novel ideas to the field of anthropological theory and sheds light on the ways in which migrants live by demonstrating concrete approaches to fostering social cohesion and mutuality across borders of nationality.

In light of incompleteness, *hushamwari* is closely connected to the concept of "ubuntu". According to this research, *hushamwari* and ubuntu are both forms of expanded conviviality. The phrase, "I am because we are" is a common way of referring to the ubuntu philosophy. It suggests that it is impossible for a single human being to live independently or sustain themselves in the absence of any other humans. Instead, it is an appeal to collectivism, inclusivity, and togetherness. Nevertheless, as Nyamnjoh (2019:23) pointed out, "It is not enough to recognize and be conscious of togetherness to fulfil Ubuntu." He went on to elaborate that there is a requirement for collective social action that guarantees genuine participation and inclusivity for everyone and anyone. As a result, ubuntu motivates and encourages people to recognize and comprehend who they are in the context of inclusive participation in the achievement of shared objectives in their day-to-day lives. When it comes to African migrants, differences should not be a cause for concern; rather, what should take precedence is the prioritization of shared goals for the sake of improving the welfare

of everyone involved. In connection with this concept, Whitworth and Wilkinson (2013:121) stated that migrants in South Africa and the citizens should generate a common grounding where humanity defines the parameters and direction of life.

Undoubtedly, insights can be drawn here that lead to the conclusion that incompleteness is the bedrock that drives the majority into life and strives within spaces full of possibilities. For this research, I appropriated Nyamnjoh's concept of incompleteness because it drives migrants' search for ways to improve themselves despite the day-to-day challenges they face. For instance, when migrants are unable to support themselves financially, they often cohabit with other people, sharing houses or apartments while also sharing the financial burden of renting those spaces. When migrants are severely impacted by COVID-19 and do not have access to any formal means of sending remittances, they look to connect with independent brokers, such as Edmund (Chapter Six). In this way, incompleteness puts them in the position of having to forge links in a platform that is "open-minded and open-ended" (Nyamnjoh, 2015:8), forcing them to swim against the current of vulnerability. As was mentioned, their perception of their incompleteness motivates them to utilize their full potential without limiting themselves to exclusive identities. However, it is essential to keep in mind that this is not an automatic process. For them to be able to reap the benefits of unionism, they will need to knowingly and willingly cross borders of nationality, race, belonging, and religiosity. In this setting, they need to develop the nimble-footed approach (Nyamnjoh, 2015:8) as the stimulant to enhanced interconnections, interrelationships, interdependence, collaboration, co-production, and compassion (Nyamnjoh, 2015:8).

Such constraints and limitations, which I refer to as "borders and boundaries", have punctuated the mobility encounters and interactions of migrants in this thesis. As a result of mobility, borders and boundaries have been discussed and analysed, and they are presented in terms of access constraints to places or spaces. The importance of my research is not so much in how borders and boundaries are policed as it is in how scholarly emphasis on nationality creates a barrier (borders and boundaries) to a broader understanding of migrant experiences and how life is conceived in diverse urban spaces (Daihinden, 2016). Older policing histories perpetuate the present-day boundaries of belonging. That is, observing boundaries and borders in ethnographic work and my research contributes to illuminating the flaws of previous approaches and developing more inclusive models of thought that recognize constraints without imposing them.

8.4 The Power of Weak Ties

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, our understanding of conviviality, socialities, and migration, as well as mobility and social networks, has been shaped and reconfigured. Although the vast majority of studies have shown that migrants prefer to connect with other migrants of the same nationality because it is the most convenient option, the pandemic has shed new light on transnational networks. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic provided us with a new perspective on life and the flow of events. Some networks were destroyed, while others were built and rebuilt. Some migrants who had never interacted with truck drivers before were forced to do so when remitting money and goods. Any opportunity to connect with relevant people, such as bus drivers, truck drivers, or funeral directors, would be pursued. Networks formed in this manner are associated with what Granovetter (1973) refers to as "weak ties". Weak ties exist between people who are acquainted but not particularly well. In this study, weak ties are people with whom migrants do not necessarily interact regularly. According to Granovetter, weak ties are connections with people with whom one may not have much in common, and the majority of the weak ties will not know each other. Incompleteness in the lives of migrants was activated during the COVID-19 pandemic especially when they needed financial assistance or informal remittance services. Incompleteness in the form of the pandemic brought together people who had never met before. The strength of weak ties is critical, particularly during pandemics. These are more likely to have an impact in difficult situations like the pandemic than those of people one already knows. Weak ties are praised for spreading information. Weak ties enabled the circulation of goods and ideas in this study, allowing for the emergence and achievement of conviviality. Weak ties are an important concept in this study because it allows us to think differently about how people work to make daily life more convivial, focusing on a set of relationships that are formed in times of need (such as the lockdown) to produce mutuality rather than difference. Such frailties extended beyond national boundaries.

According to weak tie logic, acquaintances are more likely to be influential than close friends, particularly in social networks. According to the concept of "strength of weak ties", infrequent, arms-length relationships – the weak ties – are more beneficial for migrants in the exchange of goods and ideas (Granovetter, 1973). The idea behind the strength of weak ties is that weak ties allow distant groups of people to gain access to novel information, which can lead to new opportunities, innovation, and increased productivity. In this study, the most important

connections that migrants rely on, particularly during the pandemic, come from moderately weak ties, which are social connections between the very weakest ties and ties of average relationship strength. According to Granovetter (1973), some ties can act as a bridge that connects otherwise disparate social groups by spanning parts of a social network. Migrants in this study were linked to people such as bus and truck drivers, and independent brokers, among others, by weak ties, particularly during the lockdown period. Weak ties enable the development of social networks and the emergence of conviviality. In terms of ubuntu, conviviality expresses individuals' interconnectedness, common humanity, and responsibility to one another.

To stay with the trend of weak ties, the ubuntu framework is distinguished by the spiritual nature of people; their collective/individual identity; the collective/inclusive nature of family structure; the oneness of mind, body, and spirit; and the importance of having meaningful interpersonal relationships (Zvomuya, 2020). The concept of ubuntu is being celebrated in this context for its role in releasing the potential of migrants, truck drivers, and bus drivers to express mutuality, dignity, humanity, and reciprocity amongst themselves (Poovan, Du Toit and Engelbrecht, 2006:23-25). Human dignity, wholeness, social responsibility, generosity, compassion, stewardship-sustainability, altruism, peace, and social and emotional intelligence are examples of humanistic characteristics, particularly during volatile and unstable periods such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Peterson and Seligman, 2004). Migrants relied on tenuous connections with individuals, such as couriers, truck drivers, and independent brokers, with whom they did not always interact. Thus, ubuntu seeks to convey all people's interconnectedness, as well as their shared humanity and responsibility to one another.

In addition, sharing accommodation brought with it an issue that is frequently overlooked: how connections and conviviality are weakened and severed over time as a result of the everyday conflicts that arise between co-tenants. For instance, in this study, I discuss the taken-for-granted everyday trivial things, such as the smell of fish and the failure to flush the toilet properly, and how these things can spark and fuel conflicts, ultimately resulting in the rupture of social bonds. In addition to this, the presence of religious practices, beliefs, and values that were in direct opposition to one another had a negative impact on the social networks of migrants, particularly among those who shared housing. Although social networks play a significant role in assisting

migrants in adjusting to their new lives and gaining access to opportunities for earning a living, the argument made in this thesis is that just because networks do exist does not mean that everyone has easy access to them. In addition to this, their existence does not last forever. In this context, it is essential to emphasize that social networks, relationships, or connections are not immune to the development of tension or conflict. In addition, during events such as COVID-19, people were knocked out of networks and became disconnected, while others were unable to connect. This was especially the case concerning those that were used to physically connecting and maintaining connections in common places such as salons, taxi ranks, markets, and places of worship, among other common locations. During the pandemic, weak ties appeared to be stronger than strong ties due to the weakening of strong ties, which is defined as the existence of a strong relationship between close members that is maintained through frequent interactions or meetings. A great number of migrants were compelled to initiate or rekindle relationships with people they had known only from a distance.

8.5 How this Research Contributes to Knowledge

This dissertation is an important intellectual effort because it seeks to demonstrate how conviviality, ubuntu, *hushamwari* and various forms of sociality flourish and enable migrants to thrive in a city that, despite its claims of being cosmopolitan and welcoming, is characterized by the vicious demarcation of belonging. This study is significant because it takes place in a city that was so rigidly exclusive during the late colonial and apartheid eras that it becomes an important post-apartheid site to examine the question of its hospitality to those whom the state defines as "other"; migrants defined in racialized terms. Prior to this study, I have insisted on studying migrants from Zimbabwe at every opportunity. My exposure to a wide range of migrant populations from different countries has forced me to re-evaluate my tendency to categorize things in black-and-white, absolute zero-sum terms. Not only has it assisted me in embracing incompleteness in my research endeavours, but it has also assisted me in doing so in my interactions with other migrants from different countries. In this regard, the study has taught me that no one has a monopoly of knowledge and knowing, and that the pursuit of completeness is both elusive and illusory. Instead, the pursuit of completeness is an invitation to investigate, contemplate, and provide for a world of open-mindedness, interconnections, fluidities, and conviviality. Such knowledge is an important epistemological contribution to anthropology and

migration studies. There should be more acceptance of the ambiguities inherent in our research "findings". Such an approach is important as it enlightens both beginners and experienced researchers on their and others' missteps and how to circumnavigate them in the future.

In addition to the above, it is the incompleteness of people's lives that determines where they live, how they access opportunities for a livelihood, and with whom they socialize. Migrants put their physical and social mobility to use in order to navigate to conditions that they believe will be an improvement on their current circumstances. Some of these end up falling short of expectations, while others, like relocating to a new location in the hopes of bettering one's life prospects, live up to those expectations. The progression from "outsider" to "insider" (but also vice versa) and "borders and boundaries" can be seen in these moves. This study has offered important insights into the social engagement and survival strategies of migrants in the everyday contested urban space of Cape Town by drawing on incompleteness as a conceptual framework. The study moves away from the dichotomies that have traditionally been used when investigating movement and migration, such as locals versus foreigners, legal versus illegal, documented versus undocumented. My research, much like that of Chekero and Morreira (2020), has concentrated on the interactions and relationships between people in order to investigate how, despite the fact that the larger social environment is fraught with challenges, individuals are able to cultivate and maintain mutuality among themselves and within communities through the formation of convivial social ties, ubuntu and *hushamwari* that transcend nationality, which, in turn, enables them to move through the urban space.

This study emphasizes that, other than nationality, conviviality based on the commonality and pervasiveness of incompleteness, mobility, encounters, compositeness, debt and indebtedness is more important in migrants' everyday interactions, encounters, and livelihood struggles (Nyamnjoh, 2021). This thesis argues for a lessening in the emphasis placed by the state on national categories. My research has taught me that using nationality will cause me to fall into the "state trap" of categorizing people based on their nationality and administrative units, such as provinces and districts. Indeed, nationality is important, but my research has shown that it is critical not to succumb to the state's imperative to categorize, with the exception of cases where it was necessary to do so to explain the experiences of social actors (see also Neocosmos, 2010). Categorizing

people based on nationality is problematic for migrants, who are a negatively framed group that is rarely considered within South Africa's political agenda (Balbo and Marconi, 2005), and are primarily viewed as intruders rather than opportunities (Crush, 2005). This research does not divide its research populations into specific categories based on the countries from which the migrants originated to gain a better understanding of the density, intensity, and range of networks that migrants draw on. The most important finding from this study is how migrants connect across national lines to overcome the limitations and restrictions they face in their daily lives in Cape Town.

However, with this argument, I am not assuming that locals do not face boundaries and borders, as pointed out by Misago (2015), but as the ongoing debates about who may move to and live in the Western Cape continue to show, this is not true for all. Even among locals, there are still strong continuities with apartheid thinking, which result in minorities facing exclusions that are comparable to those experienced by migrants. In this regard, I am making a claim that life is differently qualified, and one needs to factor that into the picture to avoid a problematic binary of "local"/"non-local", which completely belies the persistence of colonial and apartheid structuring logics in the navigation of the city for many people, not just migrants. In light of this claim, my study places a premium on conviviality. Conviviality encourages migrants as incomplete beings who come from a variety of histories and places of origin, to accommodate, conform, or adjust in order to thrive or survive in their differences. The connections that are forged are extremely useful for gaining access to livelihood opportunities and other types of social services.

To summarize, this study provides evidence of the lived realities of migrants who reside and/or work in Cape Town. The work challenges preconceived notions about migration and the idea that migrants are "people out of place" by analyzing movement from the perspectives of the actors. In my research, I argue that understanding, embracing, and interrogating incompleteness that goes beyond what is initially presented (Kongo, 2022) is necessary to understand and offer insight into the nuanced and complex realities where conviviality is cultivated.

8.6 Thoughts and Reflections

After conducting research on migrants in Cape Town without classifying them according to their nationality, I gained a new perspective on incompleteness, mobility, ubuntu, and conviviality. Indeed, my previous research experience stood out as a torch bearer when I broadened my inquiry

beyond national and linguistic boundaries. Because I was moving into a more dynamic and complicated area of research, the new method instructed me to be adaptable and creative in my approach. It was necessary for me to give careful consideration to the questions to ask as well as the manner in which to ask them, and also as what to see, touch, hear, feel and smell. I also thought about how adjustments to the data collection plan might have an effect not only on the data that was gathered but also on how the results should be interpreted. As a result, I was careful not to draw any hasty conclusions, particularly due to the fact that I was collecting data in contexts, with which I was not intimately familiar, with the myriad of nuances that linguistic variations and lived culture entail. Even though I was a migrant (and therefore assumed to be an insider), the differences in language made me an outsider. In addition, because I am a black male academic who collects data from men and women who find themselves in precarious economic positions, my position as a scholar on their experience of the city may be limited.

I acknowledge that my research output was influenced by a variety of sociopolitical and environmental experiences to which I was exposed. I also do not pretend that I have first-hand knowledge of the circumstances that migrants encounter, particularly women, and I do not attempt to portray their experiences, which are ones that I have never gone through as a man and as an outsider. This "outsiderness" may influence the response of any scholar or author who attempts to frame and present the data, although the extent to which it does so may vary from situation to situation. I was acutely aware of my positionality as an outsider among migrant women in Cape Town, and I constantly engaged in self-reflexive practices. I admit that my interpretation and analysis of the research findings were impacted, at least to some degree, by the presence of these various factors.

I found it fascinating that migrant women, despite or perhaps because of their incompleteness, were able to challenge the conventional structures of globalized capitalism and provoke thought about the gendered aspects of mobility. In the same ways that their male counterparts do, migrant women from African countries negotiate and transform urban space as they move through the city on a day-to-day basis and meet and interact with other people. Migrant women, in an effort to alleviate the feeling that they are incomplete people, embrace social relationships such as hushamwari, which is based on ubuntu and conviviality. This affords them the ability to be mobile,

giving them the choice between challenging the borders and boundaries they face or finding a way to avoid them.

8.7 Future Research

While my study has focused on mobility, space, urbanism, sociality and conviviality among migrants from African countries, I hope it has sparked further debates around similar concepts. I agree that there are various dimensions in which debates could be built and developed. My study focused on how various aspects of the migrant settlement in post-colonial multicultural space and recognized the importance of questions about how newcomers forge a sense of connectedness to the society in which they settle (Wessendorf, 2017:1). It might be prudent for future studies, however, to understand how in pre-colonial eras, newcomers to a chiefdom were perceived and received. Understanding current debates and scholarship about movement and migration in contested terrains may benefit from having such a historical appreciation of movement.

While my study focused on churches and spaces for conviviality, future studies could consider a multireligious context in which migrants share spaces of worship in creating and augmenting conviviality. The story of Isaac and Elias, which can be found in Chapter Seven, demonstrates how challenging it can be to find common ground among adherents of different faiths. In the past, academics have had a propensity to concentrate on a single religion, which has left the interactions between people who practice different religions largely unexamined (Barkey and Goudias, 2018; Hay, 2014). Future research could benefit from such debates.

I hope this thesis will provoke policy research stressing the importance of decentering national categories at the government and regional levels. It must be underscored that migration and ethnicity are not always the most important measures for explaining social processes or people's social practices and affiliations. My research suggests that more attention should be paid to research in networks like *hushamwari*, ubuntu, and conviviality that are built on incompleteness. This should be done without compartmentalizing people according to state categories, such as national identity or administrative categories like provinces and districts. Beginning with nation-based identifications eliminates the need to ask certain kinds of questions about the formation of groups and identities and may lead to shortsighted thinking regarding the density, intensity, and range of networks that migrants may draw on. In future studies, the regionality and breadth of

focus could be considered to be fundamental components in the process of comprehending mobilities and relationships. The emphasis on anthropology will make it possible to gain a thorough understanding of how things and people are mobilized, activated, and vitalized as well as how they circulate.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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