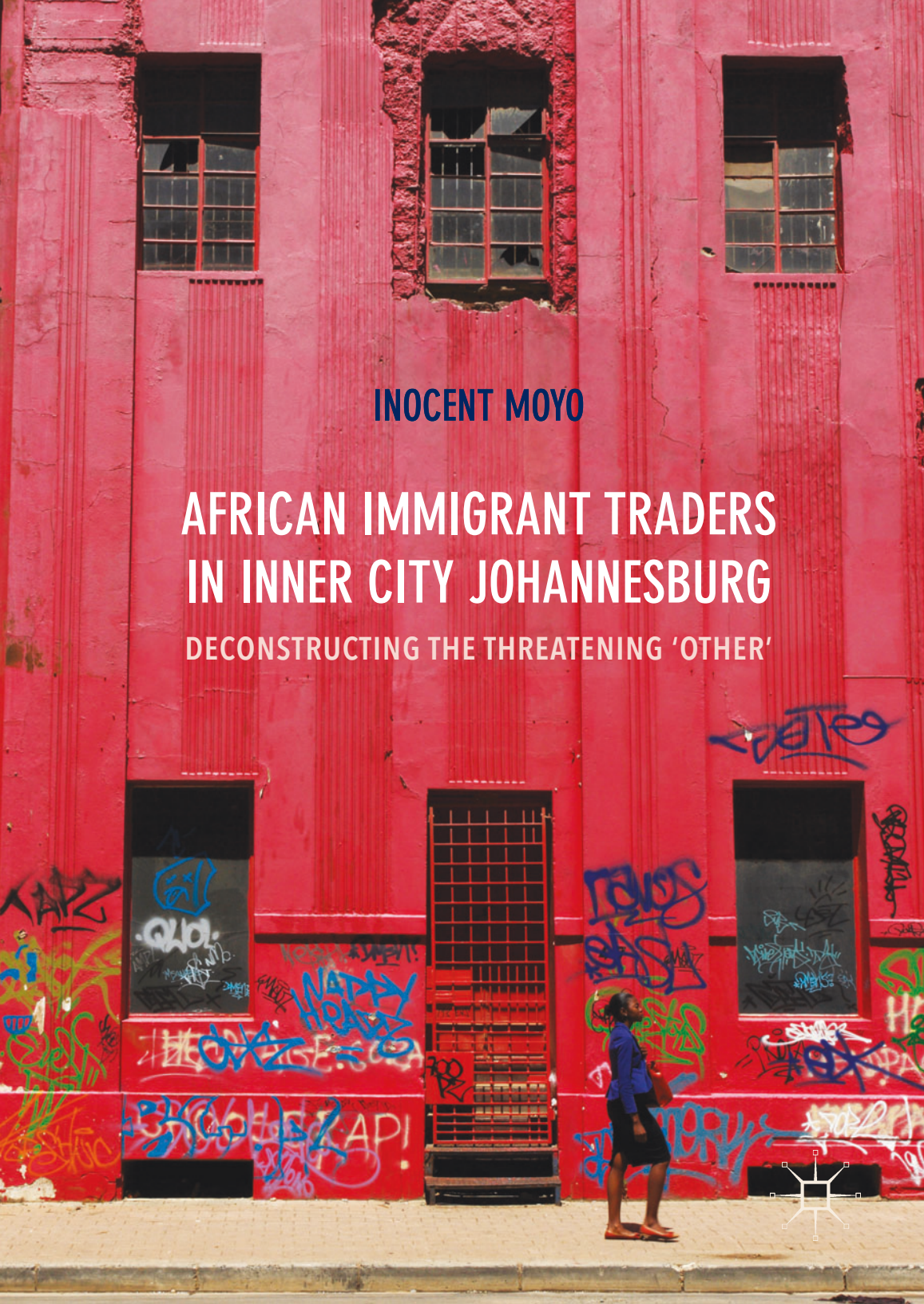

INOCENT MOYO

AFRICAN IMMIGRANT TRADERS IN INNER CITY JOHANNESBURG

DECONSTRUCTING THE THREATENING 'OTHER'

African Immigrant Traders in Inner City Johannesburg

Inocent Moyo

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Deconstructing the Threatening 'Other'

palgrave
macmillan

Dr. Inocent Moyo
Department of Geography
and Environmental Studies
University of Zululand
KwaDlangezwa, South Africa

ISBN 978-3-319-57143-0 ISBN 978-3-319-57144-7 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-57144-7

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017940601

Cover credit: © Zute Lightfoot / Alamy Stock Photo

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

To my wife Precious, daughter Khanyisile Yothando Moyo and son Nelson Methembe Moyo

Foreword

This book is timely as Africa navigates the negotiation of a continental free trade area and hopes to eventually establish an African Economic Community in which capital, goods, services and people move across its 130-year-old artificial borders separating its indigenous people, erected by colonialists. This book also comes at a time when the world is experiencing increasing populism on both extremes of the political spectrum; the consequences of which partly saw a rightist campaign successfully pull the United Kingdom of Great Britain out of the European Union having appealed to supporters who were concerned that the country had lost control of its immigration policy and was threatened with an invasion of its territory by foreigners.

Borders in Africa and the legacy thereof, as constructed by colonialists, run at various levels. Beyond the physical markers of state territory that they are, they also delineate the distinction between people who belong to one socio-economic and cultural group or another. In this sense, borders distinguish between groups, defining who belongs and who does not. Alongside this, those who do not belong are *othered* and considered to be a threat to the *in*-group. This book correctly brings these aspects of borders to the surface and exposes them for the threat

they present to humanity. With a focus on South Africa, it highlights the othering of immigrants from other African countries and the way in which borders are erected around them, to the exclusion of immigrants from other parts of the world, and singles out the African immigrant as problematic. Through its deconstructionist stance, the book contests this negative construction of African immigrants to expose a complex reality around the developmental and in some cases retrogressive impacts that such immigrants have on host communities. Such an exposition undermines and dismisses any efforts which always construct all African immigrants as a threat. This makes this book a balanced treatment of the case of African immigrants in contemporary South Africa and calls for the recognition of the positives that they bring to host communities.

This is important considering that immigrants, incorporating traders, are a silent game changer with regard to the integration of African economies, particularly those whose borders they endlessly transverse as they ply their trade in a quest to make ends meet. However, in addition to citizens, some African governments not only overlook but also demonstrate hostility towards these actors and, somewhat inimical to the African continental integration agenda, have attempted to restrict movement and brand as criminal, the cross-border trading activities of immigrants. The restriction of movement is also a threat to human dignity as it violates the human right to movement of immigrants, as enshrined in international instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and, indeed, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which expressly protects the freedom of movement of people.

This book tackles debates around these challenges, and is an important contribution to the literature on migration, immigration and informal cross border trade.

Pretoria, South Africa
November 2016

Christopher C. Nshimbi

Acknowledgements

This book was conceived when I attended the International Geographical Congress (IGU) meeting in Japan in August 2013, the attendance of which was made possible by a travel grant by the same IGU. The academic atmosphere afforded me quality time for deep reflection. As I attended the many Population, Political and Urban Geography sessions, among others and after I presented my paper, I realised that, after all, it was possible for me to contribute to debates around issues of migration in a book long treatment of the case of African immigrants in South Africa. As I continued with my Ph.D. research and the analysis of the data, that I had gathered, the "voice" within me that I should write a book grew louder and louder until it reached a crescendo.

This coincided with and gained traction as a result of the academic guidance and mentorship that I received from Professor Joan Fairhurst and Professor Melanie Nicolau. So my first thanks go to the IGU and particularly Professor Michael Meadows, (University of Cape Town), the Secretary General of the IGU and Professor Joan Fairhurst and Professor Melanie Nicolau. I can never thank these academics enough. The one man, whose understanding, compassion and willingness to

help me were legendary and continue to be inspirational is Mr James Welsh, the Headmaster of St Martin's High School, Rosettenville, Johannesburg. I am profusely grateful to this great man.

There is a very long list of friends and academics, whose names it's not possible to list here. In this long list, I wish to isolate Dr. Christopher Changwe Nshimbi, a polished political economy scientist and DST-NRF RCA Research Fellow and Deputy Director: Centre for the Study of Governance Innovation (GovInn), Department of Political Sciences University of Pretoria, whom I met in Japan in 2013.Since then, we have worked together on many projects. We have debated and "argued" over a lot of academic issues, which fall within the province of political economy and political geography. Our debates and "arguments" always lead to a project and this is the case up to this day. Christopher has a huge and insatiable appetite for emancipatory research, a commonality that draws us together. Christopher's trademark is his desire to "pick a brain", which is both inspirational and challenging. Thanks a lot, dear friend Christopher.

I would also like to thank my editor Holly Tyler and her team at Palgrave Macmillan for their great assistance and guidance. Finally and most importantly, I remain eternally grateful to my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for the gift of life, family and all the other blessings with which I have been lavished. I do not, even for a second take these for granted and thus glorify and magnify the name of Jesus Christ, now and always.

Richards Bay, South Africa
November 2016

Inocent Moyo

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Abbreviations

AEC	African Economic Community
ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
BBP	Better Buildings Programme
CBD	Central Business District
CD	Compact Disc
CEN-SAD	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
CIPC	Companies and Intellectual Property Commission
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
DHS	Department of Homeland Security (USA)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DVD	Digital Video Disk
EAC	East African Community
ECCSA	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
HPCSA	Health Professionals Council for South Africa
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement (USA)
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
INA	Immigration and National Act (USA)

JDA	Johannesburg Development Agency
JMPD	Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department
JMTC	Johannesburg Metropolitan Trading Company
KFC	Kentucky Fried Chicken
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD	New Partnership for Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
QLTS	Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SANC	South African Nursing Council
SAPS	South African Police Service
SARS	South African Revenue Services
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro-enterprise Economy
STA	Street Traders Association
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UMA	Union du Maghreb Arabe
VAT	Value Added Tax

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The Framing of African Immigrants as the Problematic Aliens

Introduction

In 2008, the Daily Sun ran an article with a screaming headline: 'They wait for darkness before they attack! Aliens use *muthi*[1] to steal our cattle' (*Daily Sun* 9 May 2008: 11). In 2012, I also read another article from *The Sowetan* (2 May 2012), titled 'Foreigners do not benefit South Africa'. From a distance I thought these articles were referring to all foreigners in South Africa. This is because the country received immigrants from all regions of the world (Statistics South Africa 2003, 2012, 2013). But, upon a close reading, I noticed that the reference was directed against immigrants from other African countries. The inference was that African immigrants were a problem in South Africa and did not bring any benefit to the communities where they stayed. This got me thinking about this perception, projection and representation of African immigrants in South Africa as the problematic other or threatening other.

Several questions arose, such as: To what extent was it valid to label African immigrants as the threatening other in contemporary South Africa? Was it possible to investigate and evaluate specific economic

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DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-57144-7_1

and other activities by African immigrants in an effort to analyse their contributions to areas where they operated? Based on these and other questions, I thought more needed to be said about what and how Africa immigrants contributed to communities where they stayed. As a result, the idea occurred to me that a more intensive study of a community and context where African immigrants and South African citizens lived together, closely interacted, operated and in some cases conducted business with each other could be done so as to better grasp, and analyse the extent to which African immigrants were the threatening other.

This is how my countless visits to the streets of Johannesburg inner city began. On these visits, I had observed several shops and trading stalls that were operated by both African immigrant and South African traders. The said is how this book was born and it is about contesting the negative framing and portrayal of African immigrants as people who are not valuable members of the South African society. By probing and investigating the negative perception of African immigrants, this work seeks to highlight and evaluate the contribution and benefits that African immigrants bring to the community where they have elected to live and/or work—the Johannesburg inner city. This negative framing projects African immigrants as a threat to South Africa and its patrimony, in terms of among others; taking ways jobs, committing crime and competing for resources with South African citizens. I assert that, this is a simplistic, if not wrong portrayal of a complex reality.

Interrogating the Targeting of African Immigrants

There are several publications on the issue of African immigrants in contemporary South Africa (see e.g., Crush 2000, 2008; Crush and Ramachandran 2014; Landau 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014a, b; Landau and Freemantle 2010; Landau et al. 2013; Neocosmos 2006, 2008; Nyamnjoh 2006, 2007, 2010; Peberdy 2009) on the subject of how they are portrayed and/or treated. For instance, several publications by Landau have convincingly shown the unjustified

targeting of African immigrants and the role that different sectors of society have played in this. Peberdy`s publications have also demonstrated that at the centre of the immigration anxieties by the South African state are African immigrants. Others (such as Neocosmos 2006; Nyamnjoh 2007, 2007, 2010) have illustrated that the targeting of African immigrants cannot be regarded as a random, but a deliberate, if not calculated way of excluding such immigrants from South Africa. On this basis, Neocosmos (2006) argues that the resultant xenophobia could be seen as a construct of the state. For which cause, there is need for integration on the basis of popular democratic participation and activity (Neocosmos 2006) and the need to declare, without fear, the rights of African immigrants in contemporary South Africa (Neocosmos 2008).

On this subject, Crush and Ramachandran (2014) indicate that the basis for the targeting of African immigrants revolves around, among others, accusations that they bring competition for resources, with South African citizens. Such accusations have been used as an explanation for xenophobia and xenophobic violence. The said is validated by that xenophobic violence such as that of 2008, occurred in 'marginal urban areas' (Crush and Ramachandran 2014: 2). These authors show that this is a simplistic analysis, which reinforces a Marxist and or neo-Marxist perception and explanation of xenophobic violence, in that, there is the implication that African immigrants are at 'fault' by coming to South Africa to cause more problems.

Further, Crush and Ramachandran (2014: 2), argue that, while it is true that there is a strong correlation between xenophobic violence and 'the geography of poverty', a Marxist and neo-Marxist explanation of xenophobia seem to miss the point on several fronts. It fails to explain why specific African immigrants were targeted and why 'not all poor areas', experienced xenophobic violence, or why if poverty and competition for resources is the source of anger, 'poor South Africans were not attacking each other [.....] it does not explain why wealthy and privileged groups, who do not face direct or even indirect competition [.....] also espouse these prejudices'. Notwithstanding the fact that African immigrants constitute a small proportion of the population in

South Africa, a Marxist and/or neo-Marxist interpretation of xenophobia reduces the relationship between the African immigrants and South African citizens to 'economic competition between citizens and "foreigners" [.....] resentment and antipathy towards migrants and other outsiders become inevitable aspects of the social landscape, justifying stringent controls over immigration, and exclusion of migrants. This distinction invigorates the very idea that the presence of migrants and refugees poses a perpetual threat to "legitimate insiders"' (Crush and Ramachandran 2014: 2). However, a Marxist and/or neo-Marxist explanation of xenophobia in South Africa downplays, trivialises and minimalises it to a contest over resources and hides the targeting of African migrants. Such publications provide a sophisticated handling of among others, why African immigrants are negatively portrayed and how this contributes to xenophobia, and why there is the need for a focus on programmes that work towards the integration of South African citizens with the foreign nationals (Landau 2012). These are extremely valid and accurate observations, critiques and suggestions that address the issue of African immigrants in contemporary South Africa.

Although my focus is not xenophobia, this work builds on these studies. While being aware that, the accusation that African immigrants are the threatening other may lead to xenophobia and xenophobic violence, my interest in this book is to interrogate if this accusation is even valid in the first place. I do so by deploying a deconstructionist theoretical and analytical framework. I focus on the practical activities on the ground by African immigrants so as afford a response to the question of what and if African immigrants contribute to communities where they stay and operate. I ask of the African immigrant traders: what is the nature of their businesses in the Johannesburg inner city? Are they registered or unregistered? What contributions do they make? Do they coexist peacefully, with South African street traders? To what extent is the charge that African immigrants are threatening the social and economic fabric of South Africa true and sustainable? On the contrary, do these African immigrants really contribute to the economic and social development of the Johannesburg inner city, and if so, how? These are questions that speak to spatial interactions and relationships, the exploration of which is at the centre of geographical enquiry. Such an approach goes

deeper than polemics and speculation and provides evidence, which lays bare, not only the failings of an exclusivist narrative of belonging, but also a complex social reality around migration and immigration politics, belonging and exclusion in contemporary South Africa.

This deconstruction entails dismantling perceptions and representing the unrepresented by highlighting the tiniest details. For instance, taking an alternative view to the assumed negative perception of African immigrants is a critical deconstructionist stance, based on the fact that the term 'critical' refers to 'the thesis of the fallibility of social knowledge and to social criticism' mainly by engaging in 'explanatory critiques' (Potter and Lopez 2001 cited in Iosifides 2011: 46). The critical stance in this book challenges this essentialist assumption on African immigrants in South Africa. I do so by paying attention to differences in geographic phenomena and how these differences need to be highlighted and not hidden (in terms of highlighting different points of view to the essentialist and/or absolute classification and perception of African immigrants as the threatening other—the problematic others). What makes Geography unique as an academic discipline is its scope and methodology. It highlights, analyses and explains spatial relationships, interactions and variations in phenomena over time and place. By focusing on the case study of the Johannesburg inner city, this work attempts to remain true to this tradition by dismantling and testing the negative perception of African immigrants. The effort is made to find the tiniest detail, which may challenge the almost 'taken for granted' negative view of African immigrants.

By interrogating the notion that African immigrants are the threatening other, I go beyond questions like: 'Why, in the era of globalisation, mass mobility and super diversity, are Africans from the rest of the continent so unfairly singled out as the "other" or "the foreigner" in South Africa? After all, there are thousands of migrants from other continents living and working in South Africa' (Dyers and Wankah 2012: 234), which are relevant geographical questions. I seek to achieve a dispassionate view regarding what African immigrants contribute to communities where they stay. A properly balanced evaluation may contribute to creating a positive perception of these immigrants and by extension

promote tolerance towards African immigrants, because lines of exclusion are not always impermeable (Herbert 2010).

That this should happen is relevant because the forces of globalisation have reduced the world to a global village, of which South Africa is a part. Globalisation and migration have pulverised the fixity of 'ourselves and others' (Gupta and Ferguson 2008: 67), leading to the deterritorialisation of immigrants (Malkki 2008; Castles and Miller 2009) and putting 'greater stress on reimaging possibilities of belonging' (Papastergiadis 2000: 80). This suggests that defining immigrants as 'others', according to nationality, is no longer desirable because globalisation and migration have resulted in the mix of nationalities and continues to do so (Papastergiadis 2000; Castles and Miller 2009; Geschiere 2010). Even though migration and globalisation have not resulted in frictionless movement of people or 'less restrained global fluidity' (Kalir 2013: 313), what is certain is that migration is on the increase as a result of globalisation (Papastergiadis 2000).

This suggests that migration cannot be wished away. With improvements in transport and communication, migration will not only increase, but will also be a permanent feature of all countries and 'an integral part of the transformation of modernity' (Papastergiadis 2000: 2). In this way, the book amplifies and promotes the position that all people and countries must develop a 'more global sense of place, a global sense of local that conforms to the prevailing era of time-space compression' (Massey 2008: 258). Therefore, tolerance, accommodation and inclusivity should be promoted to harvest positives from immigrants—increased and unstoppable migration across national boundaries demands this. For these reasons, the analytical, empirical and theoretical value of the book is that it broadens the study of migration related contexts in a South African setting.

Organisation of the Book

It is organised into chapter. 7. Chapter 1 is the introduction and Chap. 2 theorises African immigrants as the threatening other in South Africa based on secondary sources and other sources from the media. The chapter

demonstrates how and why African immigrants are constructed as the threatening other and on this basis puts a case for the need for a deconstructionist reading and analysis of the projection of African immigrants as the threatening other. Chapter 3 shows that the migration and immigration conundrum is not a South African exceptionalism, but a global phenomenon. The aversion towards immigrants is also evident in regions such as the EU and individual countries such as Britain and France. It is also witnessed in countries like the USA. However, the targeting of African immigrants in South Africa provides a compelling case, especially given that immigrants from other parts of the world do not suffer the same condemnation as those form African countries. Chapter 4 argues that because migration and immigration politics have a long history in South Africa, the highlight of which included the crafting of draconian and exclusive apartheid immigration law, this provided the post-1994 government with a template. Because there was a suspicion of migration during apartheid, that same suspicion has prevailed after 1994, but the 'suspects' are now the African immigrants and this has provided grounds for their exclusion and the xenophobia discourse. Chapter 4 provides a detailed background to this book, and examines the history, trends and trajectories of the migration and immigration debate in South Africa, with the intention to achieve two goals. The first is to further provide a frame for this work and link with the concepts and contexts raised in the previous chapter. The second is to set a foundation on which the case of African immigrants and the deconstruction of the threatening other can be based. In this regard, this chapter discusses the pre- and post-1994 migration and immigration dynamics in order to locate the case of African immigrants.

Given that this book is based on Johannesburg inner city, Chap. 5 provides a profile of African immigrant traders in this area, by showing that the majority came to South Africa for economic reasons. Once in South Africa, they have not been able to utilise their professional skills, due to the lack of recognition of their different forms of capital, leading to the setting up of a variety of street trading enterprises, which include those which repair and sell cell phones, beadwork and embroidery, clothes, blankets, shoes, household and consumable goods. Some of these enterprises are registered as companies with the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC) and others with the

Johannesburg Metropolitan Trading Company (JMTC); the remainder illegally operates on the streets. The chapter highlights, who the African immigrants traders are, what they do and the circumstances surrounding their operations. Since the analysis of the nature and types of African immigrant traders' enterprises in the Johannesburg inner city in Chap. 5, is limited to what these businesses actually did, it argues that, African immigrant traders are positively linked to their South African counterparts, just as there is a link between African immigrant traders with the formal economy at the level of buying and selling of goods. In addition, there are indications that African immigrant traders together with their South African counterparts positively interact with the small-medium- and micro-sized Enterprises (SMME) economy, which may foster growth of this economic sector. This chapter thus argues that, overall, the nature and types of businesses operated by African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city and the ways that they interact and integrate with their South African counterparts and the formal economy seems to suggest that there are not only actual positive impacts, but also possibilities for development.

Chapter 6 delves deeper into a deconstructionist analysis by critically engaging with and interrogating the following themes: employment creation and contribution to the achievement of South Africa's development goals; revenue generation and support for the formal economy; the provision of choices for consumers; revitalising the Johannesburg inner city; and unproductive and destructive traders and the transnational character of African immigrant traders. The chapter highlights that, while there are positive contributions by African immigrants traders, there are also negative impacts to the Johannesburg inner city. Not all African immigrant traders create employment and contribute to the achievement of South Africa's development goals, for example. Some actively contribute towards the deteriorating environmental conditions in the area. This evidence suggests that the issue of African immigrant traders as the threatening other is neither simple nor straightforward because contributions and/or negatives by African immigrant traders are of a variegated and indeed very complex nature.

In keeping with the nature and scope of the deconstruction framework adopted in the project, Chap. 7 is an intensive and integrated appraisal of the evidence discussed in the book. In doing so, the chapter

highlights the complex nature of the issue of the threatening other as it relates to African immigrants. In this way, the chapter brings to the fore, the multiple perceptions regarding African immigrants as the threatening other. Based on a deconstructionist analysis, the chapter reinterprets and resituates the hierarchy that African immigrants are the threatening other. It highlights nuances relating, but not limited to the complex nature of the negatives and positives that African immigrant traders bring to the Johannesburg inner city. These insights dismiss the view that African immigrants in South Africa are only a threat. In this way, the book positions a new perspective.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the framing of African immigrants as the threatening other—the problematic aliens in contemporary South Africa. This framing projects the African immigrants as only capable of importing a litany of problems that range from committing a host of crimes to the use of magical powers to cause other social problems. The chapter therefore problematises this construction of African immigrants and locates the book within these debates by highlighting that the negative tropes and imagery that describe and characterise the African immigrants in contemporary South Africa, may not only be too simplistic and far from the truth, but also deserve careful scrutiny through the lens of Derridean deconstructionism. Such an analytical approach promises to achieve an in-depth analysis of the negative framing of African immigrants and in the end show 'how the apparently straightforward is actually more complicated, of how the "surface appearances" may be quite misleading about "depth realities"' (Wengrat 2001: 6 cited in Iosifides 2011: 179).

Note

1. In African healing traditions, this refers to animal parts, herbs, or barks with medicinal value (Adapted from http://medical-dictionarythefreedictionary.com/Muthi). While muthi can be used to achieve positive goals, like curing diseases, it can also be used negatively, such as bewitching enemies or casting spell over other people.

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2

Migration Context and Contestations

Introduction

Migration to South Africa, especially from the rest of Africa, increased tremendously after 1994 (Adepoju 2003, 2010). Census data (Statistics South Africa 2003, 2012) suggest significant increases in the number of immigrants from African countries, which illustrates that South Africa continues to be a destination of choice on the African continent which is plagued by a litany of economic and political crises (World Migration Report 2000; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Adepoju 2003; Crush et al. 2006; Campell 2010; Kalitanyi and Visser 2010).The increase in the number of immigrants has led to tension (Crush and Frayne 2010; Krieger 2010; McGregor 2010a). As is the case in many parts of the world (Mawadza and Crush 2010), the tension between immigrants and citizens of the host country is topical in South Africa, precisely because of the anti-immigration debate and the contestations that it generates.

A number of researchers (Crush 2000; Neocosmos 2006, 2008; Nyamnjoh 2006, 2007; Laher 2010; Mawadza and Crush 2010) have focused their research on the anti-immigration debate and how it is

I. Moyo, *African Immigrant Traders in Inner City Johannesburg*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-57144-7_2

aimed more at African immigrants, as opposed to other groups of immigrants—it is this debate that is important in this book. This debate shows that there is the perception that African immigrants are not valuable members of South African society (Mawadza and Crush 2010; Laher 2010). Their presence is associated with a number of problems within the host country (Neocosmos 2006, 2008; Nyamnjoh 2006, 2007, 2010; Crush 2008a; Campell 2010). Given the often negative debate around African immigrants within South Africa, the result is that these immigrants battle to find employment within the formal sector. Despite their legal status, some African immigrants are subjected to exclusion and discrimination (Landau 2010) and cannot access social services (*The Star*, 25 October 2012), such as health care (Crush and Tawodzera 2014). These immigrants are often subjected to arrest, detention and deportation, which lowers their ability to successfully enter the formal employment sector (Landau 2010). For this reason, immigrants who are not able to access formal employment tend to rely on self-employment (Landau 2010) in the form of small, sometimes informal businesses in order to generate an income to sustain them within South Africa.

Although the phenomenon of African immigrants within South Africa is well documented in terms of the perception of these immigrants, little research has been done on the types and nature of African immigrant traders, nor has much research been undertaken on the contribution that these traders have made to the social and economic milieu of the Johannesburg inner city. This book is therefore based on a study of the nature and type of trading ventures that have been established by African immigrants in the Johannesburg inner city using a deconstructionist approach. The overarching aim is to evaluate the contribution made to the Johannesburg inner city by these African immigrant traders.

The Contestation

A Southern African Migration Project study undertaken in 2006 found that South Africa is a highly intolerant and hostile country to foreign nationals, more so than any other country in the world (Crush 2008a).

This observation confirms earlier research by several scholars such as: Crush (1996, 1997, 1998; 2001a, b), Crush and McDonald (2001), Crush and Williams (2001), Mattes et al. (2002), Dodson (2002) and Crush and Pendleton (2004). Foreigners, typically African immigrants, are blamed for taking jobs away from South Africans (Laher 2010), engaging in criminal activities and draining the country's resources (Mattes et al. 2002; Landau 2009). Such views are also held by government officials, some South African citizens, the police and private organisations (Mattes et al. 2002; Landau 2005, 2006, 2007, 2010).

This anti-foreigner context, especially against African immigrants, provides the basis for actions which can be interpreted as victimisation and harassment of these immigrants. For example, the 2003 City of Johannesburg and Department of Home Affairs, so-called crime fighting operation, whose real intention was to get rid of African immigrants (Landau 2006). The same can be said about Operation Buyelekhaya (Operation Go Back Home), which was organised in Alexandra Township with the calculated purpose of expelling African immigrants from South Africa, soon after 1994 (Palmary et al. 2002). A study by Peberdy and Majodina (2000) suggests that Somali children faced challenges of access to education in South Africa. Research by Crush and Tawodzera (2011) found that Zimbabwean children faced obstacles in accessing education in public schools. African immigrants were excluded and discriminated against in health facilities (Crush and Tawodzera 2014). In the recent past, Somali shops were specifically targeted and attacked (Brooke 2012, 2013; Ivier 2013b, c; *The Star* 19 May 2011: 6; *The Star* 31 October 2013a: 2, 2013b: 13, 2013c: 13) and some of the Somalis were even killed in May 2013 (*The Star* 29 May 2013b: 4) and in September 2013 (Ivier 2013c). The attacks on African immigrants were on the increase (Ivier 2013b; *The Star* 31 October 2013b: 13) and in April 2015 escalated into a full xenophobic rage, which started in the South African province of KwaZulu-Natal and soon spread to other provinces, such as Gauteng (*Sowetan* 13 April 2015b, 15 April 2015a; *Sunday Times*, 5 April 2015a, 12 April 2015b, 19 April 2015c). These attacks left a 22-year-old Ethiopian shop owner dead on 10 April 2015 from burn wounds suffered after their shop in

Umlazi, Durban, was torched (*Sunday Times* 12 April 2015b). In the Durban Central Business District (CBD), there were violent and bloody confrontations between South Africans and African migrants (*Sowetan* 15 April 2015a; *The Citizen* 15 April 2015). As these attacks spread to Johannesburg in Gauteng Province, there was mayhem and destruction. African migrants were attacked and displaced in areas near Germiston in the East Rand (*Sowetan* 20 April 2015c). Shops owned by African migrants were looted in Jeppestown (De Klerk 2015; Hawker 2015). Similar incidents were reported in Alexandra, Johannesburg (Aboobaker 2015), which led to the brutal murder of a 35-year-old Mozambican vendor on 18 April 2015, by four South African men. Clearly, the issue of African immigrants in contemporary South Africa is of geographical relevance, because it illustrates the contestation between African immigrants and South African citizens, which demonstrates the dynamics between people, space, place and the environment. The desire to expel and/or murder African immigrants is founded on the myth that they are the threatening other—the problem that must be gotten rid of.

Theorising African Immigrants as the Threatening Other

Michlic (2006) explored how Poles, in the different stages of the development of the Polish nation-state, have constructed and perceived Jews, with whom they have lived for many years, as the threatening other. They have done this by projecting the 'Jew as the chief harmful alien' (Michlic 2006: 76). For example, since the 1880s, the myth of the Jew as the threatening other has been sustained and led to the anti-Jewish violence between 1918 and 1939. From 1939 to 1945, there was an increase in Polish exclusivist ethno-nationalism (Michlic 2006). Various political parties promoted different forms of virulent anti-Semitic rhetoric and idioms. The result is that they led to discrimination and violence against Jews and even their death (Michlic 2006). In the name and will of the Polish nation-state, politicians and other writers have used exclusivist ethno-nationalist language, with some political parties even opposed to the 'inclusion of Jews in the definition of the Polish

state' (Michlic 2006: 182). Informed by the work of Michlic (2006), which shows how Jews have always been unfairly blamed for Poland's economic, political and social problems (the threatening other)—leading to their exclusion and murder—I invoke this concept in order to conceptually frame how African immigrants are perceived as the threatening other in contemporary South Africa.

Based on a survey of the popular press from about 2008 up to 2012, it became clear to me that some newspapers attempted to objectively report on African immigrants in South Africa in terms of what these immigrants did and contributed. In the same context, I noted that some newspapers regretted the precarious existence of African immigrants as a result of xenophobic attacks. Examples include an article in *The Citizen*, (20 July 2010a: 6), titled 'Fellow Africans worry over threats', which describes the manner in which African immigrants were being threatened and in some cases attacked. In the same vein, *The Citizen* (15 July 2010b: 13), in an article titled 'Rainbow nation's dark side', castigated xenophobic attacks.

Another report in the *Sunday Times* (2 January 2011a: 21), titled, 'A living to be made from fear and loathing, so they say', states that African immigrants are not liked, even though, through their shops, provided a service to South African consumers. This idea is corroborated by the *Sunday Times* (29 January 2012: 12). *The Sowetan* (14 July 2010: 13) carried an article titled, 'Criminals are behind xenophobia', which argued that xenophobia is caused by criminals. In addition, *The Sowetan* (25 May 2011: 12) reported that 'Talks can stop thugs causing xenophobia', by claiming that, although local businesses complained that African immigrant traders were taking away their livelihood, the accused immigrants argued that they were doing business legally.

Even though there is an attempt at positive reporting on what the African immigrants do and bring to South Africa, the majority of reports, transmit the idea that African immigrants are a problem in South Africa. An article from the *Daily Sun* (17 April 2008: 8) gives the impression that African immigrants are a problem because 'too many South Africans are walking around unemployed while many foreigners, often prepared to work for less money have jobs. Job creation has not kept up with reality in our country'. Another article from the *Daily Sun* (17 April 2008: 1) displayed the headlines: 'Bob's Tsunami', suggesting

that Zimbabwean immigrants in South Africa were a tsunami. Yet another *Daily Sun* article (14 April 2008: 3) asserted that 'many of us live in fear of foreign gangsters and conmen. Much terror has been caused by gangs of armed Zimbabweans, Mozambicans and others', and the *Sunday Times* (18 May 2008: 6) declared in its editorial that 'Poor people feel the competition first-hand. They see the limited benefits of the liberation for which they struggled hard being usurped by newcomers'. In this way, the media 'makes up the numbers' of African migrants in South Africa 'for alarmist effect' (Crush and Tevera 2010: 4). This alarmist effect may be targeted at reaching the general South African populace, and it may not be a flawed argument to suggest that the media frames popular perceptions. That being the case, Mawadza and Crush (2010: 372) have further argued that the role of the media in 'actively shaping South African popular opinion on migration is incontrovertible'. In this way, the media fails, first to be objective and second exonerates the South African population from xenophobia. Regarding the first point, 'the media is distinctly uncomfortable with the reality that xenophobia is pervasive and deep-rooted phenomenon in South Africa' and this is so because 'it is impossible to answer the question "Why are South Africans xenophobic" without addressing the issue of the culpability of the media'. For this reason, 'that the media are not simply responding to events but actively shaping South African popular opinion on migration is incontrovertible' (Mawadza and Crush 2010: 372).

Hence, a comment still relevant today but made over a decade ago by Crush (2000: 12) that 'unfortunately, South Africa's long history of cross-border migrations seems to have faded from public view and myopia is everywhere evident, particularly in the more popular media with historical attention deficit', is telling of how the media has sensationalised and overdramatised the invasion of South Africa by immigrants, especially from African countries. Another article from the *Sunday Times* (2 January 2011b) amplifies this idea in an article titled, 'Our future needs tough calls' by arguing that, 'South Africa, like any other civilised country, must look after its own interests if it wants to guarantee its citizens prosperity and protect its national security'. This is because 'given the poor state of many African economies, it is not surprising that large numbers of Africans have entered South Africa

illegally'. For this cause, 'South Africa—now and in the near future—will have to cope with three internal threats: overextension of its limited human financial and other resources, social, political, economic and ecological instability and a renewed spate of xenophobia'. According to this report, what is disturbing is that 'the presence of many undocumented foreign nationals in the country surely exacerbates the problem of food security. These foreigners can threaten the national security on many fronts. Locally these foreign nationals form stakeholder organisations, which they use to demand their own rights in the country as per the dictates of our constitution'. This situation 'is something that also requires decisive action from the government because South Africa could, in the long run, encounter situations similar to the one that led to civil strife in Ivory Coast' (*Sunday Times* 2 January 2011: 21).

Several *Daily Sun* issues consistently publish dramatic and sensational stories which portray African immigrants in a negative light. Many examples abound, for example: 'They wait for darkness before they attack! Aliens use muthi to steal our cattle' (*Daily Sun* 9 May 2008: 11); 'War against aliens! Thousands forced to flee Alex' (*Daily Sun* 14 May 2008: 2); 'Blood and flames! Aliens killed and injured as new attacks stoke flames of hatred' (*Daily Sun* 19 May 2008: 3) and 'The Alien Terror! Helicopter chases warring crowds! Fleeing the mighty wind! Going home to Moz' (*Daily Sun* 20 May 2008: 3). The idea propagated in these reports is that African immigrants deserve this terror, they deserve to be pushed out of South Africa for causing problems, ranging from the use of magical powers to theft of livestock (*Daily Sun* 9 May 2008: 11) to promiscuity as suggested by this heading: 'Bloody end of alien lover' (*Daily Sun* 9 May 2008: 2).

Furthermore, *The Sowetan* (2 June 2010: 3) urged the government to 'Control the borders', highlighting and justifying the deployment of the army at the Mozambican and Zimbabwean borders with South Africa, and because not only were immigrants entering South Africa illegally but South African citizens and farmers in these areas should be protected from criminal activities. Again, *The Sowetan* (14 November 2011: 9), in an article titled 'Making sense of xenophobia', argued that African immigrants were worsening the South African problems, by stating that 'South Africa has its own serious social and economic problems which

include poverty, a high rate of unemployment, high levels of illiteracy, homelessness and a myriad of socio-economic challenges'. The tone of this article is basically that African immigrants are a problem.

In addition, *The Sowetan* (2 May 2012), in an article titled 'Foreigners do not benefit South Africa', expressed the feeling that those South Africans who 'engaged in civil unrest, service delivery protests or xenophobic attacks saying that foreigners are taking their jobs are not as wrong as many people would like to believe. Just go to any restaurant, supermarket, construction site, petrol station and any other workplace to see this'. The article proceeded to blame unemployment on African immigrants by asserting that 'for every unskilled job that a foreigner holds, the unemployment rate rises and crime by South Africans motivated by hunger increases. How can a Zimbabwean, Nigerian, Ethiopian or Mozambican be a refugee if there is no war in their countries?' (*The Sowetan* 2 May 2012: 12).

Furthermore, Nyamnjoh (2010: 61) has shown that the media in South Africa has succeeded in projecting African immigrants in the country as '*cam-no-gos*– thereby likening them to a stubborn skin rash that itches terribly'. The media in South Africa sustains the image that there is a deluge or tide of immigrants that is flooding into South Africa (McDonald 2000; Fine and Bird 2006; Vigneswaran 2007; Nyamnjoh 2010). This representation or misrepresentation of African immigrants makes them a problem; they are a threat to South Africa. Linked to this media tendency, African immigrants are victimised for having foreign names and even misperceptions are widespread (Nyamnjoh 2006). There is one case where a foreigner 'was arrested for walking like a Mozambican' and accused of being an illegal immigrant (Nyamnjoh 2006: 51).

Firstly, based on the above reporting by the popular press, it appears as if African immigrants are often depicted as the threatening other. Secondly, the idea is widespread that South Africa is separated from the rest of Africa (Mamdani 1996; Dyers and Wankah 2012), which yields dark-skinned (Nyamnjoh 2006) backward and primitive people (Muzondidya 2010) who are making efforts to attain civilisation (Nyamnjoh 2006). Thirdly, this insinuation amounts to the depersonalisation of these immigrants. Indeed, the recent comments by the South African President, Mr Jacob Zuma that the roads in Johannesburg

needed to be paid for because 'We can't think like Africans, in Africa, generally. We are in Johannesburg, this is Johannesburg. It's not some national road in Malawi' (Ivier 2013d) were interpreted by many African immigrants as not only rude, but indeed a confirmation of the idea that South Africa is separated from the rest of backward Africa. A political scientist, Ralph Mathekga, cited by Ndenze and Seale (2013), argued that: You can't clarify that unfortunately. And my view is very simple. It was an expression of Afro-pessimism and he made a clear emphasis. We can't have afro-pessimism coming from the highest office in the land. The comments were 'beyond undiplomatic' and fed into the perception that South Africans thought highly of themselves in relation to their fellow Africans. (Ndenze and Seale 2013)

The popular press in South Africa—from about 2008 to 2012—suggested to me that African immigrants are oftentimes regarded and portrayed as a burden in contemporary South Africa. Even though there is an attempt at positive reporting, two issues emerge. Firstly, I could not find thorough and extensive attempts to clearly highlight the positives which African immigrants actually and potentially bring. Secondly, the same newspapers that attempted to objectively report on African immigrants also print accounts that transmit the views that African immigrants are a problem in South Africa.

Furthermore, articles from some of these newspapers (such as *The Sowetan* 14 July 2010: 13) also deny the existence of xenophobia by apportioning the blame on criminals. Hence, there is no inherent contradiction to the suggestion that while there is some positive reporting, the insinuation that African immigrants are a problem in South Africa still prevails; there being a threatening other is still sustained more than the actual and potential positives. It appears that media tendency towards African immigrants is negative. Consequently, and in the final analysis, African immigrants are seen as people who: take away jobs from South Africans (*Daily Sun* 17 April 2008: 8; *The Sowetan* 14 November 2011: 9). They invade and generally take over from South Africans and do not bring and/or add value to the economy (*The Sowetan* 14 November 2011: 9; *Sunday Times* 2 January 2011: 21; *The Sowetan* 2 May 2012: 12). They are accused of being responsible for criminal and other anti-social activities (*Sunday Times* 18 May 2008: 6; *Daily Sun* 9 May 2008: 11; *The Sowetan* 2 June 2010: 3), exploiting

and destroying the social and physical infrastructure and are a burden on South Africa and its patrimony (*Daily Sun* 17 April 2008: 1). Furthermore, they are seen as swamping the South African health services (Crush and Tawodzera 2014: 656) and also bring competition for resources (Crush 1996, 2001a, 2008; *Sunday Times* 2 January 2011: 21). They do not benefit South Africa (*The Sowetan* 2 May 2012: 12) and deserve to be harassed, arrested and deported (*Daily Sun* 20 May 2008: 3; *The Sowetan* 2 May 2012: 12). This is how the concept of the threatening other is framed, located and will be adopted in this book.

Deconstruction

Deconstruction is 'an analytical strategy which exposes multiple ways through which discourse can be interpreted and it is able to reveal ideological assumptions in a way that is sensitive to the suppressed interests of members of disempowered, marginalised groups' (Martin 1990: 340, cited in Boje 2001: 19), it is 'openness to the other' (Gormley 2012: 375) and this constitutes 'Enlightenment without conditions' (McQuillan 2009: ix). It also involves 'unconditional critical liveliness to the world around us, its histories and its futures' (McQuillan 2009: xi). Royle (2000:11 cited in Royle 2003: 25) defines deconstruction as 'what remains to be thought'. Deconstruction seeks to attain a 'critical perspective above and beyond the consensus beliefs in place' (Lyotard 1984 cited in Norris 2007: 30). It does this by celebrating difference and paying close attention and 'maximum fidelity' to research (Wylie 2006: 301). This is because deconstruction is sensitive to the fact that any discourse excludes and legitimates a central point of view and ideology (Boje 2001). Deconstruction is a strategy and not a method (Boje 2001; Biesta 2010), which makes less visible aspects more clear, because the idea of deconstruction is 'to see both images, to do a double vision' (Boje 2001: 29). Deconstruction challenges those discourses that are taken for granted (Burman and MacLure 2005) and enables the exposure of micro-discourses within the macro-discourses. Wylie (2006: 3003) amplifies the above point by noting that 'deconstruction hauntingly demands questioning of normalised assumptions and procedures,

and perhaps above all entails a rethink of how academics such as geographers write'. Given that this book aims to deconstruct the view that African immigrants in South Africa are threatening other, the Derridean deconstructionist approach comes in, because 'deconstruction does not consist in passing from one conceptual order to another, but in overturning and displacing a conceptual order as well as the non-conceptual order with which the conceptual order is articulated' (Derrida in Margins of Philosophy 1982: 329 cited in Stocker 2006: 189).

I do not delve into the philosophical application of the term deconstruction, but will accept its inherent analytical logic. That is because, this is a geographical analysis, which employs a philosophical tool to enhance an interpretation. On this point, Wylie (2006: 299) observes that deconstruction can be deployed within research on any topic because it conveys a sense of analysis or scrutiny of the topic. This is because deconstruction aims to undermine and oppose any claims to 'truth, certainty, and authority'. Deconstruction dismantles (Cheng 2012) and 'destabilizes notions of truth, clarity and certainty through a spectral logic: it differentiates, disturbs, and unsettles' (Wylie 2006: 299–300), which helps to achieve a deeper understanding of social reality (Sanchez-Prada and Beyebach 2014) by reaching 'other layers of meaning, layers that are different from the supposedly present' (Frers 2013: 433). It is an approach that 'interprets interpretation and shatters the logic of main discourses through their interrogation, shaking up, dislocating and transforming the verbal, conceptual and other landscapes' (Royle 2003: 25). By deploying the Derridean deconstructionist approach, I should be able to show that 'knowledge is always insufficient or incomplete without the alternative representations' (Burman and MacLure 2005: 287) and this suggests that the widespread view of African immigrants as the threatening other, may be incomplete knowledge and this work should be able to add the other part.

I am intimately aware that the concept of deconstruction is hotly contested in philosophical circles, with some authors such as Wolfreys (1998) denying its existence as an analytical framework. However, surveyed literature (Derrida 1981; Boje 2001; Royle 2003; Burman and MacLure 2005; Wylie 2006; Stocker 2006; Norris 2007; Biesta 2009, 2010; Cheng 2012; Gormley 2012; Frers 2013; Sanchez-Prada

and Beyebach 2014) suggests that deconstruction is an accepted analytical strategy or approach to the extent that it stimulates new lines of thought about given discourses, an assumption that would apply to the issue of African immigrants in South Africa. Although I am also aware of the debates around and the variants of deconstruction, it is not the focus of this work to interrogate the merits of these contestations. The deconstruction guidelines developed by Boje and Dennehy (1993 cited in Boje 2001: 21) and applied in this book are: reinterpreting the hierarchy, recognising rebel voices, looking at the other side of the story, denying the plot, tracing what is not said and resituating the hierarchy (Fig. 2.1). By reinterpreting the hierarchy, the book posits that the dominant discourse that African immigrants are the threatening other is not correct. There is the assumption that this discourse is 'the Real and the Good, while the oppressed or excluded becomes the Unreal and

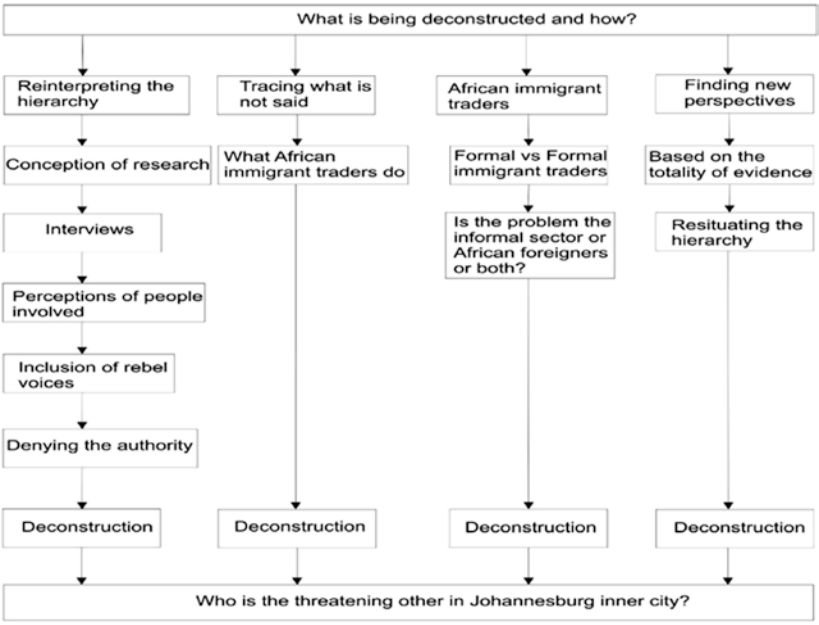

Fig. 2.1 The nature and scope of deconstruction. *Source* Drawn by author, July 2014

the Bad, something to be burned at the stake' (Boje 2001: 24). In fact, questioning the hierarchy began when this work was conceived based on the portrayal of African immigrants as the doppelgänger anti-citizens in South Africa. Writing this book is still a process of reinterpreting the hierarchy. This is the first point of deconstruction.

It is mostly the media, politicians and some South African citizens who negatively label the African immigrants. I probe this particular notion by advancing the argument that the media, politicians and indeed certain sections of the South African citizenry do not know much or are not in regular contact with these immigrants. These negative labels are contested by interviewing African immigrant traders themselves and their South African counterparts, with whom they are in daily or otherwise regular contact. Statements from the newspapers and politicians may not be trusted absolutely, but the information from the people who participate actively in the scene can be considered more valuable in understanding whether indeed they are the threatening other. A study of African immigrant traders, together with their South African counterparts, represents examining social reality in its natural setting; this is regarded as more trustworthy than, for example, the print media. This is because the media does not portray the views of African immigrants themselves together with those of South Africans who interact with these immigrants.

This is the second act of the actual deconstruction, being the nucleus of this book. By asking those involved what they think and do, amounts to, 'denying the authority' (Boje 2001: 21) of one dominant discourse and in the process producing a counter-discourse that includes a 'rebel voice' that would expose marginal perspectives (Boje and Dennehy 1993 cited in Boje 2001: 27)—what and if African immigrant traders contribute to the Johannesburg's inner city. Based on the findings of interviews, this work can 'trace what is not said' and 'fill in the blanks' (Boje 2001: 21), which will provide the grounds on which to 'deny the plot' (Boje 2001: 21) (Fig. 2.1). The plot at the moment is that South Africa is infested with an invading flood of needy and criminal African immigrants (Laher 2010). The plot spells disaster for South Africa on account of the deluge of the African immigrants. This is what is said in the media and public and political discourses (Nyamnjoh 2006, 2007; Neocosmos 2006, 2008; Crush 2008a).

The positives that the African immigrants bring to South Africa are not adequately described; in this regard I trace what is not said and fill in the gaps. Based on employment creation, revenue generation and other social and economic facets, I challenge the discourse of African immigrants being the threatening other, people who are needy (Landau 2008; *The Sowetan* 14 November 2011: 9), criminal (*Sunday Times* 18 May 2008: 6; *Daily Sun* 9 May 2008b: 11; *The Sowetan* 2 June 2010: 3; Muzondidya 2010) and prey on the South African economy (Nyamnjoh 2006, 2007; Neocosmos 2006, 2008; *Sunday Times* 2 January 2011: 21). In this way, the third point of deconstruction is based on what the African immigrants actually do that makes them be or not be the threatening other.

The fourth and final item for deconstruction is finding new perspectives, what Boje (2001: 21) calls 'resituating'. The objective is to re-author the discourse so that 'the hierarchy is resituated and a new balance of views is attained' (Boje 2001: 21).According to the Derridean deconstructionist approach, the questions raised in this book seek to establish whether there are opposing views to one of the African immigrants being the threatening other. This is important because, as Royle (2003), Stocker (2006), Norris (2007) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009) contend, deconstruction necessarily involves reconstruction, which suggests that, from the investigation of the threatening other, the research should achieve a new and objective view (Fig. 2.1).

African Immigrant Traders and Humanistic Geography

The term 'African immigrant traders' is used in this book, to refer to Africans who are not South African citizens, regardless of their immigration status; for example, asylum seekers, refugees, temporary or permanent residents. This clarification is relevant because South Africans are Africans too. Humanistic geography is a critical geographic approach which explores human actions (Nayak and Jeffery 2011) based on their experiences and meanings which they attach to social reality (Entrekin

and Tepple 2006; Nayak and Jeffery 2011). 'Humanism can be seen as a practice, an interrogative orientation which is integral to modes of both co-existence and critical intellectual engagement' (Simonsen 2012: 24); it involves understanding and expressing human agency in social reality (Christensen 2014).

A humanist approach in Geography emphasises the human subject (Entrekin and Tepple 2006; Simonsen 2012). This suggests that meaning is not found in objects, but from human subjects as 'places are not spatial categories but proceed from the on-going dynamic' of human beings attempting to make Earth their home and create their world (Tuan 1991 cited in Entrekin and Tepple 2006: 32). In this regard, the geographical study of migration is more than a simplistic origin and destination exploration of push-pull factors, but includes an understanding of 'human experiences of attachment, dislocation, alienation and exile as they are constitutive of the experiential reality and integral parts of migration' (Entrekin and Tepple 2006: 32).

Accordingly, probing the portrayal of African immigrants as the threatening other is a humanistic geographical and deconstructionist approach because of its 'challenging, interrupting and interrogating aspects of reality that are so central or entrenched in our understanding of what is normal, that we can come to take them for granted' (Cheek, 2000 cited in Cheek and Gough 2005: 305). It also involves remaining open to other perspectives, not 'airbrushing the unrepresentable out of the picture' and remaining open 'is inherently geographical by being more sensitive to difference and differentiation to (s)pacing than geography ever was' (Doel 1999; Soja and Hooper 1993 cited in Clarke 2006: 114). Consequently, a humanistic geography 'deconstructs the orderly lineaments of Euclidean, non-Euclidean and n-dimensional spaces and totalisation and becomes dissimulatory—a conduit for difference, otherness, heterogeneity' (Doel 1999: 70–71 cited in Clarke 2006: 114); 'it effects a possible place of difference and alterity' (Easthope 2002: 4 cited in Clarke 2006: 114). This 'gives new eyes to see spaces and places in other ways' (Clarke 2006: 114). Thus, deconstruction is situated at the centre of the humanistic perspective, which drives this work. In an attempt to deconstruct the view that African immigrants are

the threatening other, the people involved in the scene are considered in order to understand the deeper meanings of their lived worlds, 'in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin and Lincoln 2000: 3). Based on the scope of humanistic geography, this is how and why deconstruction is deployed in this book as an analytical strategy.

For this cause, in-depth interviews were administered in three rounds or phases between 2012 and 2013. In the first round of interviews, from June to September 2012, 40 African immigrant and 40 South African traders were interviewed. African immigrant and South African traders chosen were those who were operating from stalls and shops and were chosen by their willingness to do the interviews. In the second round of interviews from October to December 2012, ten African immigrant and ten South African traders were targeted. Finally, a third round of in-depth interviews, which assumed the status of 'conversations' more than interviews, was undertaken from January to February 2013 and focused on both African immigrant and South African traders. In the third phase, a total of six interviewees were selected: three African immigrant traders and the same number of South African traders.

Regarding the size of the sample, what becomes important is that the chosen respondents provided cases that were carefully examined to illuminate the argument in this book. The issue becomes the extent to which the chosen respondents represented cases, which, through an 'orientation towards the in-depth multi-aspect and holistic investigation of one or a small number of instances' (Iosifides 2011: 202) and 'a holistic description through an iterative process' (Easton 2010: 119), shed light on the issue of the threatening other. In all the phases, South African traders were purposefully sampled for in-depth interviews based on the need to gather their views on and the meanings of African immigrant traders in Johannesburg rather than interviewing ordinary South African citizens who may not know any better than popular opinion. As people who actively interacted with African immigrants, their views and experiences, were considered vital in a book, which attempts to access alternative views on the basis of which deconstruction could be achieved.

Repeated interviews were deployed because they can be regarded as a 'quasi-experimental design' (Kazi 2003: 59), which could serve the

purpose of generating new and deeper insights, on the basis of which theoretical abstractions can be made (Iosifides 2011). Interviews were deployed because they are 'a means of gathering critical information about the social world' as they facilitate accessing 'possible underlying, causal mechanisms' (Iosifides 2011: 179). In addition, through interviews, 'the interaction among structural, cultural and agential emergent powers can be grasped' (Iosifides 2011: 179). They 'can be powerful means for interpretative understanding of participants' points of view, lived experiences, preferences and perceptions' (Iosifides 2011: 178). This is because 'interview data may be appropriate not only for understanding agential perspectives but also for explaining them'. Interview data can also be related to the 'wider social contexts [and] to identify causal mechanisms operating at different levels of social reality'. Such data 'always tell us something about social reality and its real casual powers' (Iosifides 2011: 179).

Interviews can easily capture the more subjective and value-laden aspects of this work. The subjective and value-laden aspects relate to how African immigrant traders locate themselves in South Africa and the actual and potential contribution that they make to Johannesburg's inner city, and also how their South African counterparts regard them. The way that both African immigrant and South African traders understand and interpret the perception of the threatening other, should yield useful information. The fact that knowledge or evidence is subjective does not make it insignificant or untrue, because it can be used to shed light on the world of the people being interviewed. That the views of the people are subjective does not make such information less valuable, because 'when we try to elicit someone's subjective beliefs, we could say that we are trying to objectively represent their subjectivity'. The fact 'that something is my subjective belief does not entail that it cannot be true. Subjectivity also refers to the subjective quality of all knowledge—that it can be of and for subjects, and is situated and embodied, even though it is mostly about objects' (Sayer 2000: 60).

It follows that the value of interviews is that they can assist this analysis to 'access intense and intimate emotions and experiences that go far beyond words' (DeLyser and Sui 2014: 295). In addition, Iosifides (2011: 79) states that interviews are also 'capable of producing data

about agential interpretations, meanings, perspectives, social situations, relations, practices and actions that can be adequately understood and explained'. The data gathered from these interviews were manually analysed by reading through all the data, identifying and establishing themes and descriptions, interrelating themes and descriptions and interpreting the meaning of themes and descriptions, a method recommended by Creswell (2009).

Johannesburg Inner City

Since this book is based on Johannesburg inner city, a quick comment is necessary. The area is spatially broad. It includes, Newtown, Braamfontein, Hillbrow and Joubert Park, Bertrams, Fairview, Jeppestown, Jeppestown Berea, Yeoville, Pageview, Vrededorp, Bellevue, Bellevue East, Observatory; Troyeville, Highlands, Lorentzville, Judith's Paarl, Bezuidenhout Valley; Doornfontein and New Doornfontein, Fairview; Betrams, Kensington; Marshalltown, City and Suburban, Ferreirasdorp and Droste Park, Fordsburg, Burgersdorp, City West, Westgate, Selby Extension and Crown North Extension, Village Main and Wemmer (City of Joburg Guide to Inner City Urban Development Zone 2006: 2). Johannesburg inner city is located in the City of Johannesburg, the largest city in South Africa and has a population of about 4,434,827 (City of Johannesburg-Statistics South Africa 2013). It is the capital city of Gauteng which, according to Wray (2014), is the richest province in South Africa. In addition, 7.1% of the population in the province is made up of immigrants (Statistic South Africa 2012), of whom 82% are from the SADC (Transport trends in the GCR—GCRO Gauteng City-Region 2013).

As Johannesburg is the biggest city in South Africa, this could explain why it is a major attraction for immigrants, and hence described as a city of in-migration (OECD 2011) or 'a quintessentially migrant city', but also 'one of the least-immigrant-friendly cities in the world' (Crush 2008b: 280). Murray (2010: 145) estimates that a quarter of the population of Johannesburg inner city is made up of immigrants 'from virtually everywhere in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly

Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Congo, Ethiopia and Somalia'. It is estimated that there are about '7000 to 10,000 traders' in the Johannesburg inner city (Regional Spatial Development Framework for Region F., 2010–2011: 17). Within the Johannesburg inner city, the concentration of African immigrant traders is not uniform; the highest concentration of African immigrant traders were identified in City and Suburban, Kensington, Jeppestown, Fairview, Troyeville, Highlands, Lorentzville, Judith's Paarl, Bezuidenhout Valley, Yeoville, Bellevue/Observatory, Berea, Hillbrow, Doornfontein, Betrams and Newtown.

Conclusion

This chapter has defined and outlined the nature and dynamic of the contestation between African immigrants and the various sections of the South African society. In particular, the discussion on how and why the targeting of African immigrants is deliberate, if nothing else calculated, is intended to show why this book has elected to focus on these immigrants. The chapter also discussed concepts on which this book is anchored. These include deconstruction, humanistic geographic approach, and the threatening other.

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3

Global Contexts, African Immigrants, Traders and the Johannesburg Inner City Milieu

Introduction

Migration is not a phenomenon that is peculiar to Africa, the Southern Africa region or South Africa. For instance, between January and November 2015, it is estimated that about 1, 5 million migrants illegally crossed the EU's external borders into the EU (European Commission 2015) and the current migration conundrum on the shores of the Mediterranean provides evidence that there is an increasing number of migrants from Africa who migrate (legally or otherwise into Europe) (Nshimbi and Moyo 2016). It is also estimated that about '191 million people worldwide'—nearly '3% of the world's population'—were not living in the country in which they were born (Solimano 2010: 4). All this suggests increased levels of international migration.

It has been argued that globalisation has played a role in the increased levels of international migration (Heisler 2008). Yet, in spite of this reality, immigrants are generally treated with hostility (Alarcchi 2002; Solimano 2010) and 'individual rights are fundamentally tied to citizenship and nationality' (Solimano 2010: 47), suggesting that immigrants are

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DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-57144-7_3

discriminated against. In fact, 'globally, there is a surprising consistency in the dominant negative metaphors used by the media to describe those deemed to have "violated" national territory and sovereignty or are poised to do so' (Mawadza and Crush 2010: 364). For this cause, it is relevant to provide a brief comparative overview of international migration scenarios and debates in other parts of the world in order to contextualise the South African immigration scenario and the case of African immigrants.

Global Contexts

Within the European Union (EU), migration is high and frictionless (Ryan and Mulholland 2014). It has been likened to a 'form of internal migration' (Santacreu et al. 2009: 71). But immigrants from outside the EU face stricter immigration regimes, because 'European countries display negative attitudes towards immigrants in general and immigration in particular' (Davidov and Meuleman 2012: 770). This is demonstrated, for instance, by a call for EU countries to set up a European Border and Coast Guard Agency that will secure and protect the EU border against the flood of refugees and migrants (European Commission 2015). Pursuant to this, the European Commission President, Mr. Jean-Claude Juncker, declared in the State of the Union Address on 9 September 2015 need for 'a united refugee and asylum policy [….] to secure our external borders […..] this is what our citizens expect. We need to strengthen Frontex significantly and develop it into a fully operational European border and coast guard system'.[1]

This could explain the tightening of immigration policies against immigrants from outside the EU. A case in point is the tightening of immigration policies against immigrants from African countries in Britain (Barou et al. 2012). For example, Zimbabwean 'teachers, engineers, scientists, traders, health professionals, financiers and those with IT and technical skills' were not recognised for their skills in Britain due to structural barriers (Block 2010: 165), and 'accountants, mechanics, development professionals and bankers' (McGregor 2010b: 181) and some of the Zimbabweans who have not been able to practice their

skills have joined the care industry 'as a result of restrictive migration policies, constraints on entering other parts of the British job market' (McGregor 2010b: 201). A UK study of asylum and refugee regimes by Stewart and Mulvey (2014) suggests that as a result of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act of 2006, there was 'the move from permanent refugee status to a temporary one, the so-called "cessation clause". The implication of this is that it 'effectively removes the provision of permanent protection of refugees and replaces it with temporary status, at least in the first instance' (Stewart and Mulvey 2014: 1025).

This UK example is similar to the Swedish stance on offering Somali asylum seekers subsidiary protection instead of full refugee status. In France, immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa 'cannot enjoy the benefits of the French welfare system and instead depend on the solidarity of their countrymen' (Barou 2012: 89), and in Britain other African immigrants 'had experienced discrimination and prejudice in employment, education and everyday neighbourhood spaces' (Waite and Aigner 2012: 121).

In the Southern African region, Namibians (Namibia) and Batswanas (Botswana) are 'less tolerant to immigrants' (Campell 2010: 183). Other research (de Vletter 2000; Frayne and Pendleton 2000; Gay 2000; Zinyama 2000) also suggests that migration in the Southern African region—to South Africa in particular—is met with hostility and xenophobia. Entry into South Africa is made more difficult and those who make it into the country often experience various forms of hostility, discrimination and xenophobia (Laher 2010; Rugunanan and Smit 2011).

Based on the examples of France and Britain where African immigrants in the EU experience discriminative immigration regimes, it can be argued that it is not on the same scale as it is in South Africa, where African immigrants 'experience a much harder discrimination than in France or Britain' (Attias-Donfut et al. 2012: 186). This is because 'the South African immigration regime is distinctive from the French and British in that it takes a more ambivalent approach'. This is evidenced by that 'larger numbers of African immigrants live there with little or no access to formal citizenship'. Such 'exclusionary tensions are further enhanced by the resentment experienced by immigrants from some

groups within the local population and the oppressive machinery of the state, which emphasises their non-belonging to South Africa' (Attias-Donfut et al. 2012: 179).

The situation in the EU, when compared to the Southern African region generally and South Africa specifically, is relatively different; particularly the latter where there seems to be a deliberate effort to keep African immigrants out. Perhaps it is unfair to compare the EU and the Southern African region, because the former is more economically integrated than the latter. Nevertheless, this comparison is important to raise because South Africa is part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) project, which seek to integrate the region on the basis of which the African Union (AU) can establish an African Economic Community (AEC), as espoused in the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (1991). The African Union (AU) through the 1991 Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) (also called the Abuja Treaty, which was enforced in 1994) targets increasing economic, social and cultural development and the integration of African economies (African Union 1991, Paragraph 1(a) Article 4). The strategy for attaining an economic community is through regional economic communities, which will provide building blocks for the continental economic community. Such regional economic communities include: The East African Community (EAC), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), The Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Southern African Development Community (SADC), The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA) (The Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community 1991). These regional economic communities should promote a holistic integration for the African continent.

As an integral part of the AU and AEC, the SADC aims to, for example, 'strengthen and consolidate the long-standing historical, social and cultural affinities and links among the people of the region' (*Declaration and Treaty of SADC* 1992: 3). Currently made up of 15 countries (Angola, Botswana, Congo [DR], Lesotho, Malawi,

Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe), SADC started on 1 April 1980 with nine countries (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe) as the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC). The Front Line States (FLS) movement established SADCC to be self-reliant and reduce Members' dependence on South Africa's apartheid regime. The SADC Declaration and Treaty, which was signed in August 1992, transformed SADCC into SADC. The SADC Treaty seeks regional development through formal regional institutions and to establish an economic community through the successive stages of regional integration. The thinking is that a harmonised regional migration governance system can enhance cooperation, foster integration and contribute to regional development. As unfair as the comparison of EU and South Africa can be, the latter sits in a region with which it seeks to integrate, and so, the manner in which it perceives and treats African immigrants, inclusive of those from the SADC and other African countries, arises, because an integrated SADC is an important pillar of an AEC under the auspices of the AU.

Beyond the EU, the case of the United States of America (USA), also throws some important insights, in that, although immigrants are generally welcomed, in the recent past, immigration laws have been tightened (Golash-Boza 2012; Wong 2012). This is evidenced by immigration raids, vigorous interior enforcement of immigration laws, militarisation of the border, and home and work raids (Golash-Boza 2012). In 2010, the state of Arizona institutionalised the 'criminalisation of undocumented migrants' as evidenced by the Arizona Senate Bill SB 1070 'that made undocumented migration a crime of trespassing and carried a punishment that involved a fine and jail time' (Golash-Boza 2012:15–16). In addition, the 27 (g) programme also mandates the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), which is 'a federal agency under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to train local enforcement officers to enforce federal immigration laws as authorised through section 287 (g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA)' (Wong 2012: 739).

This implies that there is a general anti-immigration debate in the US, with suggestions that immigration is not good for the country because 'the concern for securing the border and protecting the US citizenry from predatory migrants has also become a more prominent feature of the public discourse on immigration' (Kretsedemas 2012: 5). This US immigration debate manifests in the public and political discourse and space. A clear evidence of this is what can be considered prejudicial statements by the US Republican presidential nominee, Mr Donald Trump, something that has aroused fear in the immigrant populations in the USA. In August 2015, Mr Trump asserted that 'when Mexico sends its people, they are not sending their best, they are sending people that have lots of problems, they are bringing drugs, they're bringing crime, they are rapists' (Sanneh 2015). He further declared in 2016, that illegal immigrants especially those from Mexico were a security and safety threat for US citizens, for which cause, he would build a wall between the US and Mexico and latter would pay for it (Reinhard 2016). These reports seem to imply that some US citizens actually support Mr Trump in his proposed draconian, exclusivist, if nothing else, racist immigration reforms.

The US immigration debate depicts striking parallels with that of South Africa. As in the USA, immigrants in South Africa, especially Africans, 'were the targets of severe assaults, burning, looting of shops and being displaced from their homes. These attacks were perpetrated by South Africans who believed that African immigrants have no place in South Africa and should be sent back to their home countries' (Laher 2010: 11). This is similar to the interior immigration enforcements, home and work site-based raids and the sending of people to deportation centres in the US described by Golash-Boza (2012). The example of Mr Trump, shows that, while immigration is negatively regarded in the US, the focus is on and the intended targets are illegal immigrants. While in the USA there is a general anti-immigration debate, it is arguable that the difference with South Africa is that African immigrants are specifically targeted, whether legal or not. Possession of valid and legal documentation does not always guarantee better treatment. The reason is that they are viewed as not deserving to be in South Africa (Laher

2010). Clearly, therefore, the issue of African immigrants in South Africa appears to be compelling in terms of their being targeted and blamed for problems afflicting South Africa. It is thus relevant to comment further on the issue of African immigrants in contemporary South Africa.

South African Immigrations and the Case of African Immigrants

Census results for 2001 (*Statistics South Africa* 2003) show that South Africa receives immigrants from all parts of the world, including Africa, Asia, Australia and New Zealand, Central and South America, and Europe and North America. There is also an indication that the numbers of immigrants in South Africa from different parts of the world is increasing significantly (*Statistics South Africa* 2012) and the international migration projections for South Africa for 2011–2015 (*Statistics South Africa* 2013) generally suggest the same geographical spatiality and temporality. On the basis of this, it is relevant to emphasise that it is not only immigrants from African countries who enter South Africa, but also those from other regions of the world.

If this is the case, it is significant to comment on whether all immigrants in South Africa suffer the same hostility and discrimination. This is deemed important so as justify fixing the focus on African immigrants. Several scholars (Crush and Williams 2001; Crush 2000; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Landau 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012; Neocosmos 2006, 2008; Nyamnjoh 2006, 2010; Laher 2010; Mawadza and Crush 2010; Abdi 2011; Dyers and Wankah 2012; Crush and Tawodzera 2014) suggest that other immigrants in South Africa do not suffer the same discrimination and hostility directed against African immigrants.

Nyamnjoh (2006) demonstrates that in South Africa, there is almost no reference to West Europeans and North Americans, despite the possibility that some of these immigrants may be in the country illegally and may also commit crimes. In the same vein, there is no widespread publicity of 'Thai, Romanian and Bulgarian women involved in prostitution

or about Taiwanese and Chinese illegals responsible for smuggling contraband' (Nyamanjoh 2006: 67). Laher (2010) also argues that it is the African immigrants more than those from regions such as Western Europe who are targets of discrimination and bad publicity.

As African immigrants are the archetypical illegal aliens, this has led to them being referred to as *makwerekwere*, a term which 'depicts the phonetic sound of foreign African languages and is used in an attempt to ridicule' (Laher 2010: 15). It also implies primitive people who are 'attempting to graduate from naked savagery, are usually believed to be the darkest of the dark skinned and to be less enlightened… they are also thought to come from distant locations in the remotest corners… north of Limpopo' (Nyamnjoh 2006: 39). Thus, *makwerekwere* is also 'a derogatory term African foreigners are referred by' Neocosmos (2006: 113) or is used to refer to African immigrants 'who do not speak the language of the people' (Mawadza and Crush 2010: 366).

Many South Africans believe that African immigrants 'take away jobs from South Africans' (Laher 2010: 7). African immigrants are 'uneducated and desperate people who are fleeing poverty and chaos in their home country to find work, peace and shelter in the "land of milk and honey" by crawling under the fences or paying off corrupt border officials and are entering by the millions' (McDonald 2000: 2). They are 'hostile, unwelcome, a threat to the culture, way of life and economic life of the citizen' (Mawadza and Crush 2010: 366).

It appears that African immigrants are the ones who are perceived to be a problem. Even though there could be immigrants from other parts of the world whose languages have some phonetic sounds which are difficult to understand, such immigrants are not called *makwerekwere* or an equivalent. This perception of African immigrants results in them being called the black tide from the north (McDonald et al. 1999), 'barbarians at the gate' (McDonald 2000: 2) or 'parasites … stealing jobs of South Africans' (Maharaj 2010: 367). This perception of African immigrants in contemporary South Africa is where I situate this work. The detail that I have provided, thus sketches and problematises African immigrants in contemporary South Africa to further highlight, justify and contextualise the focus on these immigrants in this book. It is pertinent to define these African immigrant traders and describe the

environment in which they occur in relationship to South African traders and both the formal and the informal economy.

African Immigrant Traders

African immigrant traders refer to people from African countries who—regardless of immigration status in South Africa—produce or buy and sell different types of goods and services, ranging from small-scale activities, such as vending, to relatively big retailing shops. Studies suggest that there has been an increase in the number of African immigrant traders in South Africa (Skinner 2008; Dyers and Wankah 2012; Venter 2012). Although my focus is on the Johannesburg inner city, I consider it relevant to this discussion, to mention that, the activities of African immigrant traders have been identified in other parts of South Africa; for example those in Cape Town as described by Dyers and Wankah (2012).

In addition, African immigrant traders are not only limited to South Africa or the African continent. For example, they have taken root in and established 'trading posts' in Guangzhou, China and Hong Kong (Bertncello and Bredeloup 2007: 94). Research by Lyons et al. (2012) confirms this development. Furthermore, the activities of African immigrant traders have been recorded in Dubai, Bangkok and Jakarta (Bertncello and Bredeloup 2007). In these regions, African immigrant traders are playing a positive economic role because they provide a channel of distribution for goods produced by both Africa and China (Bertncello and Bredeloup 2007). This confirms that, 'similar to the consortia involved globally in the retailing industry, the African traders who have set up shop in Asia have the ability to link the centres of production to the markets'. Further, 'not only are they redrawing the trading routes, but, they are contributing to the creation of new products for an African clientele, while negotiating directly with the Chinese factories' (Bertncello and Bredeloup 2007: 97).

That being so, the insights gained from the experiences of African immigrant traders in Asia and South East Asia fall directly into my analytical framework, which explores the nature and economic activities

of African immigrant traders and how these could contribute to the Johannesburg inner city and how this measures up against the accusation and/or perception that they are always the problematic people from North of the Limpopo.

Urban Informality and African Immigrant Traders

As an introduction to a discussion of the phenomenon of African immigrant traders, it is important to provide a brief background to the issue of urban informality and how it is perceived in African cities in general; the South African ones specifically. This is considered vital because African immigrant traders may be informal. In this way, a brief overview of urban informality is intended to highlight the view that the occurrence of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city is part of urban informality. In addition, the way that urban informality is perceived and the role it plays in social and economic development should assist the analysis of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city. Questions of whether the informal sector in South Africa is negatively regarded in general, or whether it is the informal economic activities by foreigners, or indeed those of African immigrants is noteworthy, as this will provide insights into the deconstruction of African immigrants as the threatening other.

There are a number of perspectives that have been advanced to explain urban informality and these include the dualistic, structuralist and legalistic perspectives. The dualistic perspective views informality as backward and separate from the formal economy and because it is separate from the formal economy, this informality would soon be phased out (Geertz 1963). This perspective acknowledges the importance of the economic and developmental role played by the urban informality (Williams 2010). The structuralist perspective regards urban informality as a product of economic crisis or the informalisation of the formal economy (Portes et al. 1989). The legalistic perspective regards urban informality as a product of the activities of people who choose to escape the stringent formal

regulation of the formal economy (Gumbo and Gyser 2011). These perspectives are relevant because they help this book to briefly debate how urban informality is regarded in African and South African cities. This is important in order to locate the South African case of African immigrant traders, since they are an integral part of urban informality.

Kamete (2013: 17) argues that many regulatory regimes in African cities regard urban informality as a problem, a 'spatial disorder' or 'spatialised deviance', which explains the obsession by governments to annihilate urban informality in order to preserve urban modernity. In Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, urban informality is not regarded as an integral part of the urbanisation process, but rather something ugly that must be destroyed or at least made to conform to the modern Western type of city (Kamete 2013), an approach and assumption which makes formality superior than informality. This forces urban informality to operate outside the law (Lindell 2010). It appears that regulatory regimes in African cities are guided and influenced by the dualist framework of looking at urban informality as a phenomenon that must be eliminated, rather than an integral part of urban economic systems. In fact, in South Africa, urban informality is regarded as the second economy (Aliber et al. 2006). Since this is the case, the question of whether African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city, are the only ones who are harassed arises. In this vein, it is worth mentioning at this stage that following the trends of violence against immigrants, especially traders as reported in the electronic and print media from about 2011 to 2013 (as discussed in Chap. 4), that other immigrants like Pakistanis were also attacked (Ivier 2013; *The Star* 19 May 2011: 16). However, the same discussion firmly suggests that it is predominantly African immigrant traders who were harassed and suffered the most in the xenophobic violence. This means that within the context of the negative perception of and responses to urban informality in South Africa, African immigrant traders suffer the most.

Beyond the question of the perception and treatment of urban informality in general, and that of African immigrant traders specifically, the interface between urban formality and formality and its development

role deserves consideration. Research has shown that urban informality is inextricably linked to formality (Cohen 2010) and should not be regarded as a second economy. Studies of street traders in Durban (Mapadimeng 2011) and in Johannesburg inner city (Cohen 2010) suggest that there is an active interface with wholesalers from whom the street traders order their goods for resale to the general public and that this has a development impact. I further explore this aspect in the in this book.

The brief discussion on urban informality was intended to frame African immigrant traders in general—and those in Johannesburg inner city specifically—by highlighting the fact that they are part of urban informality and showing how this links with the small-, medium- and micro-enterprise economy (SMMEs). Having introduced SMMEs, it is relevant to establish the connection and/or relationship between urban informality and the SSME sector. The SMME encompasses economic activities 'from the completely non-regulated to the entirely regulated. It involves many subsets or branches of the economy; from street traders to small capital intensive manufacturing firms' (Bischoff and Wood 2013: 566). From this definition, it appears as though the African immigrant traders can be regarded as part of the economy of the SMMEs; if this is the case, I am concerned with the developmental role of the African immigrant traders within the framework of the SMME economy. Being infinitely aware that urban informality is an integral part of the SMME economy, as suggested by the analysis of Potts (2008), Kamete (2013) and Le Roux and Bengesi (2014), this work explores the activities of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city with a view to showing their interface with their South African counterparts and how this affects the formal economy and possibilities for development in the Johannesburg inner city. Even though African immigrant traders may be operating outside the radar of the Johannesburg City Council regulations—or what Landau and Monson (2010) call subterranean existence—their developmental effects should be able to be highlighted by the in-depth interviews. To continue the discussion on the development impact of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city, it is necessary to explore the following themes: employment creation, revenue generation and support for the

formal economy, the transnational character of African immigrant traders, the provision of choice for consumers, revitalising the decaying city economy, contribution to the achievement of South Africa's development goals and unproductive and destructive traders.

Employment Creation, Revenue Generation and Support for the Formal Economy

A study by Rogerson (1997) shows that foreign immigrant traders created employment for South Africans. In his study of 70 immigrant traders in the Johannesburg Central Business District (CBD), Rogerson (1997) discovered that immigrant traders had created 227 jobs. Another study by Kalitanyi and Visser (2010) in Cape Town also reveals that immigrant traders created employment for South Africans. In addition, research on street traders in Durban established that they created sustainable livelihoods (Mapadimeng 2011). Hence, there is evidence that immigrant traders contribute to the creation of employment. Even though the salaries may be low and the working conditions and benefits below standard when compared to the big companies, this criticism must not be overdone (Parker 2009), because these jobs support families and can improve household incomes and the quality of life (Spring and MacDade 1998). However, there are other aspects of development that have not been adequately explored to date. For example, the extent to which the African immigrant traders support and sustain the formal economy is lacking in the literature reviewed. Peberdy and Rogerson (2000) have highlighted this but have not adequately and extensively examined it. In a study of street traders in Durban, Mapadimeng (2011) has shown that there is an interface between the formal and informal economy. In this work, I explore the nature of this interface.

In investigating the contribution of African immigrant traders to the Johannesburg inner city, it is imperative to examine the interface between, firstly, the formal and informal economy, and secondly, South African and African immigrant traders, as African immigrant traders do not operate in a vacuum. How their operations straddle the formal and

informal economies, and also the nature, dynamic and extent of their interaction with South African traders needs to be exposed to fully grasp whether they make any contribution to the Johannesburg inner city and what that may be. A study by Potts (2008) shows that sub-Saharan countries have vacillated between separating the formal and informal economies, where the latter has been regarded as being subordinated to the former. However, 'general observation and many case studies indicate that most workers in African towns today are informal; that is the dominant form of employment and that the trend is increasing,' Therefore, 'fairly obviously, any conceptualisation of the informal and formal sectors in terms of duality and some notion of gradual absorption of the former by the latter, with no dynamic interaction between the two, have to be discarded' (Potts 2008: 157).

The introduction of the terms 'formal economy' and 'informal economy' aims to clarify the activities and operations of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city in terms of whether they are formal or informal or a combination of both and how and if they contribute to the Johannesburg inner city. Considering the fact that 'the small-, medium- and micro-enterprise policies' had their origins in the capacitation of the informal economy (Potts 2008: 158), what are the possibilities in the Johannesburg inner city? What does the case of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg demonstrate?

African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city operate in areas where there are also South African traders. In an attempt to achieve a balanced understanding of African immigrant traders and to bring to the fore the nature and depth of the interactions in the Johannesburg inner city, it is also paramount to consider what the South African traders do. What do they say about African immigrant traders? Questions relating to whether South African traders are formal or informal and how and if the activities of African immigrant traders play out in such an environment will help highlight the contribution, if any, which they make to the Johannesburg inner city. Thus, this will assist in deconstructing the threatening other. Considering African immigrant traders together with South African traders shows the geographical interplay of people-place/space-environmental interaction and

the effects of this interaction. How this interaction has materialised over time illustrates the geographic temporality of this work.

Transnational Character of African Immigrant Traders and the Provision of Choice for Consumers

Regarding the transnational African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city, I examine the nature and extent of transnational flows between South Africa, other African countries and the countries of origin. For example, are the activities a form of 'circulatory transnationalism represented by activities which physically connect two sides' or 'connective transnationalism represented by activities that link the places of origin and destination through the sending of money or communicative flow' or 'commercial transnationalism', which 'includes businesses that offer various ethnic products, furniture, clothing?' (Ambrosin 2014: 622).

Whatever the nature of the transnational characteristics of African immigrant traders, it is relevant to this work to the extent of illuminating their impact on the Johannesburg inner city. For example, how are the activities of the African immigrant traders integrated into the local economy of the Johannesburg inner city and with what actual or potential benefits? Research (Rogerson 1997; Peberdy and Rogerson 2000; and Peberdy 2000) shows that African immigrant traders bring goods to sell into South Africa from their home countries, and they can also take South African goods into their own countries. Furthermore, as Peberdy and Rogerson (2000) have argued, the transnational character of some immigrant traders means that South African goods are exported to other countries; hence, 'these networks not only provide capital, but also involve the import and export of wholesale goods and inputs for business in South Africa and elsewhere. For non-SADC entrepreneurs, these networks extend beyond continental boundaries to Europe, North America and the Far East' (Peberdy and Rogerson 2000: 36). On the basis of this, there is an indication that the activities of the

African immigrant traders could integrate the local economy of the Johannesburg inner city with the regional and international markets. This suggests the case of African immigrant traders as significant actors in regional or even continental integration of the SADC and AU and AEC, respectively.

Revitalising the Decaying Johannesburg Inner City Economy

In order to provide a background to how African immigrant traders could contribute or have contributed to the gentrification and revitalisation—or indeed have added to the dilapidation of the Johannesburg inner city—it is necessary to discuss the environmental and spatial dimensions of the area under study. Johannesburg inner city had been a prominent commercial centre (Mapetla 2006) since the establishment of the city as a mining town in the 1880s, but by the late 1990s, the area began to decline (Olitzki and Luiz 2013). As a result of 'capital and white flight', the Johannesburg inner city experienced a growth in informal economic activities which were accompanied by the unemployed. Hence, the 'majority of existing inner city residents are poor; many rely on the informal sector to survive and many reside in physically dilapidated apartment blocks or bad buildings, as classified by the city council, while being exploited by slumlords' (Winkler 2009: 26). The sad picture described by Winkler (2009) seems to be incomplete as Olitzki and Luiz (2013) show that there is a significant proportion of formal businesses in the Johannesburg inner city, especially established retail shops.

Because the Johannesburg inner city has declined since the 1990s (Mapetla 2006; Winkler 2009; Olitzki and Luiz 2013), this has necessitated the need for gentrification and revitalisation since the year 2000 (Winkler 2009; Olitzki and Luiz 2013). Winkler (2009) further argues that the composition of the Johannesburg inner city dwellers has prompted the City of Johannesburg to clean up the city of undesirable elements in line with imagined city standards of the North. To this end, the Johannesburg inner city was declared 'an Urban Development Zone

through public and private sector collaboration', which has involved, among other strategies, the identification of 'bad buildings' and incentivising the private sector to revamp these, a move called the Better Buildings Programme (BBP) (Winkler 2009: 26). Furthermore, City Improvement Districts were established so as to achieve the regeneration of the inner city (Winkler 2009; Olitzki and Luiz 2013).

In addition, the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) was formed in 2001 'to stimulate and support area-based economic development initiatives throughout the Johannesburg metropolitan area in support of Joburg 2030' (Luiz 2003: 4). The Joburg 2030 Vision is a plan which integrates all activities which will cumulatively make Johannesburg become a world class city by 2030 by attracting private sector investment and increasing the price of properties. Thus, the Johannesburg inner city gentrification and rehabilitation strategies are part of Joburg 2030 Vision and its successor, the refined Joburg 2040 GDS, 'that sets its sights on a desired Johannesburg of the future—a Johannesburg in which all will aspire to live and work' (Joburg 2040: Growth and Development Strategy 2011). Notwithstanding the fact the City of Johannesburg is certain that the Joburg Vision 2030 project will yield positive results in line with transforming the city into a world class African city, some scholars believe that 'the 2030 Vision and the subsequent 2003 Inner City Regeneration Strategy undoubtedly demonstrate a preference for capital accumulation with negligible attention paid to the formulation of social policies' (Winkler 2009: 28). Granted that in 2007 the City of Johannesburg came up with the Inner City Regeneration Charter to include the needs of poor people, Winkler (2009) argues that this has not been achieved, as the ideas of creating a world class African city seem to take precedence over the needs of the urban poor.

The discussion in this section suggests that the issue of regenerating the Johannesburg inner city is on the agenda of the City of Johannesburg. This is where the contribution of this work to the debate of revitalising the Johannesburg inner city comes in. In line with the observation by Bates (2006) that immigrant traders can promote economic development in poor neighbourhoods, this book investigates

the efforts by African immigrant traders that constitute gentrification. Do their efforts constitute bottom-up strategies of gentrification which benefit the poor? Is it possible for the City of Johannesburg to incorporate the effort of the African immigrant traders so that its gentrification activities are broad-based and do not favour rich investors at the expense of the poor urban residents? I do not entirely agree with Bates (2006) that immigrant traders only develop poor neighbourhoods, by advancing the view that these traders may also contribute towards the dilapidation or ghettoisation of poor neighbourhoods. Therefore, over and above focusing on what positives African immigrants could have brought, a deconstructionist approach requires that the possibility of negative impacts is also examined.

Winkler (2009: 28) has argued that the top-down approaches adopted by the City of Johannesburg fail to consider the poor people on the ground because 'Johannesburg's policy makers and politicians continue to be inspired by international renaissance precedents where market led redevelopments, tax incentives…flagship projects', do not consider the urban poor. To comment on this, it is pertinent to state that I am aware that the process of gentrification and its controversial impacts; for instance, the issue of 'whether it is necessary to destroy a community in order to save it' (Dennis 2008: 496) always arises. In addition, gentrification also assumes a class conflict between the rich and the poor where the former are regarded as taking over the space for the latter on the basis of financial strength (Dennis 2008). It is not my intention to engage this discussion but to locate the role of African immigrant traders in the regeneration or dilapidation of the Johannesburg inner city, by analysing the spatial and environmental manifestations of gentrification and regeneration or dilapidation.

Contribution to the Achievement of South African Development Goals

In an attempt to contextualise the contribution of African immigrant traders to the Johannesburg inner city to South Africa's development goals, it is worthwhile to briefly discuss the Millennium Development

Goals (MDGs) together with the National Development Plan: Vision 2030. The Millennium Development Goals 'form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and the entire world's leading development institutions' (United Nations Millennium Development Goals). The achievement of these goals is based on 'international and national target setting and monitoring' (Unterhalter 2012: 253). Hence, the comment on the Millennium Development Goals in this section attempts to position the contribution of African immigrant traders to South Africa`s promise made in 2000, together with other nations of the world, to achieve the MDGs. That being so, this should not be regarded as a critique of South Africa's progress towards the MDGs, but an analysis of how African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city can contribute, or have contributed, towards the attainment of the MDGs.

There are eight MDGs expressed in the Republic of South Africa Millennium Development Goals Country Report (2013). These are: eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, achievement of universal primary education, promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, reduction of child mortality, improvement in maternal health, combat of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, environmental sustainability and development of a global partnership for development. These MDGs also tie in with the objectives of the National Development Plan: Vision for 2030. This is because this plan aims to achieve the same aspects as the MDGs.

For the present purpose, a brief discussion informed by the results of the in-depth interviews will be based on MDGs 1 and 8. MDG No. 1 aims to eradicate extreme poverty and No. 8 aims to develop a global partnership for development, all of which blend with the National Development Plan: Vision 2030's aim to create jobs and livelihoods (National Development Plan: Vision 2030 (2011). This work asks of the African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city: What have they done or what are they doing which can be considered relevant to the achievement of the MGDs 1 and 8? Are the activities of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city congruent with or discrepant to the Strategy for the Development and Promotion of Small Businesses in South Africa, published in 1995, which commits the South African government to uplifting small-, medium- and

micro-enterprises? Answers to these questions should illuminate the developmental or retrogressive impact of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city and assist this book in its aim to deconstruct African immigrants as the threatening other in South Africa.

Destructive and Productive Immigrant Traders

Today it is accepted that 'any business venture is part of the general community and that it is jointly responsible for solving the social problems of that community. This is because land, labour, consumers and some of the input for the business comes from the community it operates in' (Van Aardt et al. 2008: 267). Having posited the positives that African immigrant traders can actually or potentially contribute to the Johannesburg inner city, I am also sensitive to the fact that some immigrant traders can be destructive. Baumol (1990, 1993) has shown that some businesses can be unproductive and destructive through the manipulation of the economic system. Some may generate tension (Min 1984; Yoon 1991).

This tension, if it exits in the Johannesburg inner city African immigrant traders' operations, will assist my attempt to deconstruct the threatening other. The concept of deconstruction employed in this book is based on the Derridean analysis which posits that deconstruction is largely based on identifying difference in discourse (Derrida 1981). Thus, in the deconstruction of African immigrants as the threatening other, it may help this book to further engage with both the positives and negatives which these actors bring to the communities where they operate; this is why perspectives on destructive and productive businesses are considered here. Proceeding from these premises, it will then be possible to achieve a balanced deconstruction of African immigrants being the threatening other in South Africa.

In the context of African immigrant traders, it is important to note that there may be serious questions about how they operate and achieve their goals, even if these are generally considered positive. Hence, 'morals for us are the personal values and behaviours of individuals … the values and behaviours associated with being enterprising. Ethics are the

more systematic categorisation of morals, the socialised moral norms that reflect the social systems in which morals are embedded' (Anderson and Smith 2007: 480). What Anderson and Smith (2007) suggest is that businesses, and this may include African immigrant traders, must not be unscrupulous in pursuit of their goals.

Similar arguments and counter-arguments have been made in similar contexts. For example, Manchan (2002: 1), when commenting on entrepreneurship, contends that 'in business and the culture hospitable to it, not much is more important than the moral state of entrepreneurship'. For Anderson and Smith (2007: 486), 'individualism, overcoming obstacles and endeavour might characterise entrepreneurship, but the manner of doing, the means and ends do not fit with an ideology of value creation. Criminality, perhaps entrepreneurial in scope is not entrepreneurial in spirit, it lacks social legitimacy'. Hence, there are destructive as opposed to productive entrepreneurships, because the 'moral space for entrepreneurship lies between the entrepreneur and the public' (Anderson and Smith 2007). Some authors have differing views, such as Brenkert (1999), cited in Anderson and Smith (2007), who argues that an entrepreneurial society and a good society are not necessarily the same. A counter-argument to this is that 'entrepreneurs may act in good and bad, moral and immoral ways and if an entrepreneurial society refers to a society in which entrepreneurship is promoted, we need to know the relationship between this and promoting a good society' (Anderson and Smith 2007: 480); even though entrepreneurships are not symbols of virtue (Baumol 1993) and the private virtues of entrepreneurships are not always public virtues (Zafirovski 1999). Therefore, I am cognisant of the controversies surrounding the judgements that may be passed on businesses in terms of whether they are destructive or productive; resolving these controversies is not the focus of the present work. That being so, this study places the issue of whether African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city are productive or not within these debates so as to unpack their operations in communities and their impact on the same. Consequently, the in-depth interviews of both African immigrants and South African traders will dwell on issues that are considered destructive or productive.

From a geographical spatial perspective in the Johannesburg inner city, the in-depth interviews will attempt to identify: Which African immigrant businesses are considered productive or destructive. Who considers them as being good or bad? Do African immigrant traders consider their businesses good or there are some who consider businesses by fellow African immigrant traders as bad? Do South African traders believe that all or some of the African immigrant traders are good or bad and which ones and in which area? Even though different societies have different views about what and how businesses should operate, there is a general agreement that these should operate within socially accepted limits (Dreyfus et al. 1997 cited in Anderson and Smith 2007). In the Johannesburg inner city, are the socially accepted limits the same? In the case of the African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city, is it possible to say there are entirely and absolutely productive and destructive African immigrant traders? Does the situation dismantle the dualism, such that we have middle of the range African immigrant businesses that mix both positive and negative practices? If this is this case, how does it reflect on the object of this book? It appears as though the stance adopted in this book points to a lot of unanswered questions within the framework of this study.

Conclusion

This chapter has positioned South African immigration—especially that of African immigrants—within a global context. This contextualisation suggests that discrimination against immigrants is an international problem, but the South African case is significant in its negative targeting of African immigrants. This becomes the basis of focusing this book on these immigrants in South Africa generally and African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city specifically regarding their operations, which include but not limited to employment creation, revenue generation and support for the formal economy, transnational character of African immigrant traders and the provision of choice for consumers and revitalising the decaying Johannesburg inner city economy.

Note

1. FRONTEX, or the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union, was established by the European Council Regulation (EC) 2007/2004 to improve procedures and working methods of the EU's External Border Practitioners Common Unit comprising members of the Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum (SCIFA) and heads of national border control services. FRONTEX promotes, coordinates and develops European border management in line with the EU fundamental rights charter applying the concept of Integrated Border Management. See, http://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/mission-and-tasks/ (Accessed March 21, 2016, cited in Nshimbi and Moyo 2016).

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4

Historical Perspectives on Migration and the Xenophobia Discourse

Introduction

A detailed background examining the history, trends and trajectories of the migration and immigration debate in South Africa is important for two reasons. The first is to further provide a frame for this book and link with the concepts and contexts raised in the previous chapter. The second is to set a foundation on which the case of African immigrants and the deconstruction of the threatening other can be based. For this cause, this chapter discusses the pre- and post-1994 migration and immigration dynamics in order to locate the case of African immigrants generally and that of traders in the Johannesburg inner city specifically.

Immigration Trends: 1910–1948

Foreign migration into South Africa has a long history, especially that of labour migration. The South African migrant labour system started at the turn of the nineteenth century (Richmond 1994). By 1910, 24 years after the discovery of gold in the Witwatersrand and diamonds

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DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-57144-7_4

in Kimberley, there was a huge need for labour (Jevees 1985; Parnwell 1993; Manghezi 1998). This created the demand for migrant labour whose source was within South Africa, beyond its borders, more specifically southern Africa and even China between 1904 and 1906 (Jeeves 1985). Peberdy (1998) observes that at the beginning of the last century, there were various Immigration Acts or regulatory instruments which were designed to manage and control immigration into South Africa. This move was based on increasing numbers of people who desired to immigrate into South Africa. These Acts included the 1913 Immigrants Regulation Act, the 1930 Immigration Quota Act and the 1937 Aliens Control Act, which provided a base to subsequent immigration laws (Peberdy 1998). Despite the fact that during the apartheid years there were changes to these laws, the legislation 'reflected the centralisation of state power, eroded further the already minimum rights of immigrants; continued to entrench the contract labour system and was increasingly directed at the control of non-white regional immigrants' (Peberdy 1998: 192).

The first national immigration law was the Immigration Regulation Act of 1913, because each province had its own laws before the Union of South Africa in 1910 (Peberdy and Crush 1998). The Act of 1913 gave the Immigration Board and Immigration Officers substantial power on immigration matters (Peberdy and Crush 1998). On the strength of the Act of 1913, European immigrants were welcome but the number of Indians was controlled, because, after the indentured labourers from India came to South Africa from about 1850, there was the feeling that more Indians were not good for South Africa (Peberdy and Crush 1998). The Act of 1913 also limited the internal migration of black people, as they were not viewed as South African citizens, a situation, which, from the point of view of the state, necessitated monitoring and regulation (Peberdy and Crush 1998). Although there were amendments to the Act of 1913, these did not detract from the primary purpose; if anything, the subsequent amendments strengthened the Act of 1913 (Peberdy and Crush 1998).

As the numbers of Eastern European immigrants to South Africa after World War One increased and because more Indians and poor whites managed to enter South Africa in spite of the 1913 Immigrants

Regulation Act, provided the foundation for the 1930 Immigration Quota Act (Peberdy 1998; Peberdy and Crush 1998). This Act was intended to exclude the immigration of some whites who were not regarded as the appropriate white immigrants (Peberdy 1998; Peberdy and Crush 1998). This Act also prescribed the number of immigrants who were eligible to enter South Africa from certain countries (Peberdy and Crush 1998). Subsequently, there was the Immigration Amendment Act of 1937 which amended the 1913 Immigrations Regulation Act by strengthening the powers of immigration officers regarding who could and could not be admitted into South Africa (Peberdy and Crush 1998). This Immigration Act also allowed for the recruitment of migrant workers from outside South Africa (Peberdy and Crush 1998; Peberdy 1998).

The Aliens Act of 1937 followed the Immigration Amendment Act of 1937 to promote the exclusion of Jewish immigrants into South Africa. This was 'the first time the word alien was entrenched in legislation and public discourse to describe unwanted immigrants. The act defined an alien as a person who was not a 'natural born British or not a Union subject' (Peberdy and Crush 1998: 26). This Act allowed for the establishment of an Immigration Selection Board that had authority to offer or deny permanent residence (Peberdy and Crush 1998). The 1937 Aliens Act was followed by the Aliens Registration Act of 1939, which was designed to select immigrants (Peberdy 1998). The Aliens Registration Amendment Act of 1949 emphasised the 1939 Act by strengthening the monitoring of immigrants (Peberdy and Crush 1998).

Immigration Trends: 1948–1994

When the National Party came into power in 1948, immigration policies were amended to conform to the new dispensation. Brownell (1985) argues that after 1948, immigration policy in South Africa reflected the conflict between Afrikaans and English speaking whites. This was evidenced by the National Party government of the day making every effort to reverse the previous immigration policy that had actively encouraged the British to immigrate to South Africa and

focused instead on encouraging more German and Dutch immigrants. The previous immigration Acts of 1913, 1930 and 1937 were amended to be in line with this political reality (Peberdy and Crush 1998; Wa Kabwe-Segatti 2006).

It must be noted that during the apartheid years, the Immigration Board and officials had complete power over immigration issues, including monitoring immigrants and determining permanent residences for them (Peberdy and Crush 1998). Those who were admitted into South Africa were strictly followed (Peberdy and Crush 1998), which resulted in the requirement for people to carry identity documents wherever they went, and for black South Africans passbooks laws were enforced (Peberdy and Crush 1998). Over the years, many amendments were made to the 1913, 1930 and 1937 Acts to consolidate government control of immigration. These included the 1972 Admission of Persons to the Republic Regulations Act, the Aliens Amendment Act of 1978 and the Aliens and Immigration Laws Amendment Act of 1984, which, like other amendments, enabled the state to carefully follow who entered South Africa and the nature of their employment (Peberdy and Crush 1998; Wa Kabwe-Segatti 2006).

Another important amendment was the Temporary Removal of Restrictions on Economic Activity (Act 87 of 1986). On the strength of this Act, non-whites were now eligible for temporary and permanent residence permits. The 1986 Act was followed in 1991 by the Aliens Control Act 96 (Act 96 of 1991). The Aliens Control Act provided further relaxation of the control of migrant labour into South Africa, but racist provisions were still in force (Peberdy 1998), such that the rights of immigrants, especially the black foreign nationals, were not protected (Peberdy 1998; Peberdy and Crush 1998; Crush and McDonald 2001).

What is clear is that the rights of immigrants, especially those considered undesirable by the current political regime were not respected. 'Immigration was a "white issue"… immigrants were by definition white… the government distinguished between desirable and undesirable whites in formulating its policies' (Peberdy and Crush 1998: 29). Those who were admitted into South Africa were strictly followed and monitored (Peberdy and Crush 1998), which resulted in the requirement for people to carry identity documents wherever they went, and for black

South Africans, passbooks were a must (Peberdy and Crush 1998). For this reason, during the Union of South Africa and apartheid years, people from other countries were carefully selected so that the appropriate immigration population was attained (Peberdy 1998). Within South Africa, the migration of black people was also monitored so that they could not be a threat, to 'white' South Africa.

The requirement for black South African people to carry passbooks enforced the apartheid government's policy of separate development. This was captured in among others, the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959 (Act 46 of 1959); Third Bantu Laws Amendment Act of 1970 (Act 49 of 1970); Bantu Homelands Constitution of 1971 (Act 21 of 1971), which clearly outlined the creation of 'white' and 'black' South Africa. In particular, the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959 and the successive legislations were a systematic and calculated way of stripping black people of their South African citizenship (O'Malley 2007). As outlined in the Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act of 1970 (Act 49 of 1970), this relegated black people to the impoverished homelands, in which they were accorded 'citizenship'.

Black people could only enter 'white' South Africa as migrant labourers. This meant that they were regarded as temporary sojourners who would finally go back to the homelands (Landau 2014). To control and regulate their movement to and within 'white' South Africa, the pass system was vigorously enforced. In essence, the strict monitoring and regulation of the movement of black people to and within 'white' South Africa 'converted' them to native foreigners and the white people became foreign natives (Neocosmos 2006) or outsiders and insiders respectively (Nyamnjoh 2006). As native foreigners, black people were the suspicious outsiders, whenever they migrated to and within 'white' South Africa, and its privileged insiders (Neocosmos 2006). The effect of the construction of suspicious native foreigners and outsiders and privileged 'white insiders' and foreign natives increased the concern by the apartheid state to protect the latter against the former, by monitoring and regulating migration.

In this way, migration in general and that of blacks was perceived as a threat to the apartheid regime (Landau 2014: 297). It is for this

reason that in post-apartheid South Africa a 'deep suspicion of those who move—particularly to urban areas—continues to infuse official and popular discourses' (Landau 2014: 297). However, it must be emphasised that all black immigrants were treated in the same way before 1994. Black South Africans were treated as migrants and expected to go back to their homes in the then 'black' homelands once they had outlived the labour service needs in 'white' South Africa. Black workers from the rest of Africa were not treated any differently (Peberdy and Crush 1998). If immigrants from the rest of Africa were treated the same as those from South Africa during apartheid, that after democracy in 1994, the latter must turn against the former, with suggestions that they are the problematic others, is not only curious, but also a label that must be dismantled, with a view to expose micro-discourses and thus achieve a better understanding of the issue of African immigrants in post-apartheid South Africa. This is important if it is viewed against the fact that there is a long history of xenophobia in South Africa, which can be traced to the 1800s, after the arrival of Indian indentured labourers and 'white settlers institutionalised fear of Asians' (Klotz 2013: 10). With this long history of xenophobia, 'overturning a century of racism reinforced xenophobia' against and redirected it towards the African migrant (Klotz 2013: 6), who became the problematic migrant after 1994.

Immigration Trajectories After 1994

Post-apartheid South Africa's immigration regime reflected apartheid immigration controls until the Immigration Act of 2002 (Act 13 of 2002) (Crush et al. 2006) was passed. There was a belief that a deliberate policy to encourage immigration and the import of labour would threaten the interests of the new dispensation (Crush and McDonald 2001; Crush et al. 2006). Immigration policy changes appear to suggest this thinking (Peberdy and Crush 1998). A clear example is the Aliens Control Amendment Act of 1995 (Act 76 of 1995), which generally retained restrictionist apartheid policies—for example substitution of section 44 of Act 96 of 1991, as amended by Section 9 of Act 3 of 1993 (Act 76 of 1995). The same argument

can be made about the amendment of Section 10 of Act 96 of 1991, as amended by Section 9 of Act 3 of 1993 (Act 76 of 1995), which seem to have been stringent. This is not very different to the apartheid years when, as noted by Peberdy (1998), the Immigration Boards and officials had power to allow or deny potential immigrants entry into South Africa. Consequently, this generally implies that in the 1990s, the Aliens Control Act of 1991 (Act 96 of 1991) guided immigration policy (Peberdy and Crush 1998), suggesting that the fundamental problems of discrimination against foreign nationals remained (Schulze 2002) as a result of various impediments to the legal recognition and encouragement for the presence of immigrants in South Africa.

The major Immigration Act which replaced the Aliens Control Act of 1991 (Act 96 of 1991) was the Immigration Act of 2002 (Act 13 of 2002). This Immigration Act reads differently from Act 96 of 1991 and its amendment (Act 76 of 1995) by its use of the word 'foreigner' in place of 'alien', as categorically stated in its preamble; 'In providing for the regulation of admission of foreigners to, their residence in, and their departure from the Republic and for matters connected therewith, the Immigration Act aims at setting in place a new system of immigration control which ensures that…' (Act 13 of 2002: 3). The Immigration Act of 2002 (Act 13 of 2002, Sections 26 and 27) also claims to facilitate and simplify the granting of permits, as well as encouraging skilled foreign people to immigrate to South Africa. In addition, the Immigration Act of 2002—as amended by Immigration Act of 2004 (Act 19 of 2004), which came into operation in July 2005—states that 'xenophobia is prevented and countered both within Government and civil society, a human rights-based culture of enforcement is promoted, civil society is educated on the rights of foreigners and refugees' (Act 19 of 2004: 4). On this basis, it is necessary to comment on the Immigration policy directions after 2005.

A review of Immigration Acts and Amendment Bills between 2007 and 2014 generally suggest that the South African state, while making the commitment to the efficient processing of permits to foreigners, seems at the same time to be tightening conditions on the same. This is illustrated by for example, the Immigration Amendment Act of 2007

(Act 3 of 2007), which was enacted to amend the Immigration Act of 2002 (Act 13 of 2002) (as amended by Immigration Amendment Act, 2004 Act 19 of 2004) 'so as to define certain words and to substitute a definition, to provide for the clarification and revision of procedures and permits with regard to admission to, residence in and departure from the Republic, to effect certain technical correctness' (Act 3 of 2007: 2). Generally, this Immigration Act (Act 3, of 2007) outlines several amendments, but what seems to emerge is the desire to tighten the admission of foreigners into South Africa. For example, amendment of Section 27 of Act 13 of 2002, as substituted by Section 28 of Act 19 of 2004, states that the application for permits must fall 'within yearly limits of available permits prescribed for each sector of industry' (Act 3 of 2007: 6). What is implied here is the desire of the South African government through the immigration procedure to limit the entry of foreigners into South Africa.

There have been several Immigration Amendment Bills, but I will comment on the Immigration Amendment Bill of 2010 (Immigration Amendment Bill of 2010), which was approved in March 2011, as it contains several amendments raised in the Immigration Act of 2007 (Act 3 of 2007). The Immigration Amendment Bill of 2010 (Amendment Bill of 2010) clearly states the introduction of and differences between different types of temporary visas and permanent residence permits. The preamble of the Amendment Bill of 2010 states the commitment to expeditiously process permits. It should be mentioned that the provisions of the Amendment Bill of 2010 generally encourage legal immigration to South Africa. However, it also tends to make the standards for qualification for foreigners' entry into South Africa more stringent and there also seems to be an attempt to clamp down on illegal immigrants and to protect South Africa from immigration influxes (*The Star* 3 May 2011a: 10). Thus, one can detect a desire from the Immigration Act of 2007 (Act 3 of 2007) and in the Immigration Amendment Bill of 2010 to tighten control of entry into South Africa.

In fact, the Immigration Amendment Act of 2011 (Act 13 of 2011), like its 2007 predecessor, actually contains the provisions of the Immigration Amendment Bill of 2010. The Immigration Amendment Act of 2011 (Act 13 of 2011) describes in detail the requirements and

provisions under which different types of temporary residence visas may be issued. For example, amendments of Section 19 of Act 13 of 2002 as amended by Section 21 of Act 19 of 2004 and Section 6 of Act 3 of 2007 (Act 3 of 2011: 16) details the conditions of a general work visa and that of a critical skills work visa. It appears as though the conditions for these visas are stringent; for example, the prescribed requirement for a critical skills visa may be 'determined to be critical for the Republic from time to time by the Minister by notice in the Gazette' (Act 3 of 2011: 16). This implies that it is not a given that foreigners will be granted this visa, because the ultimate arbiter is the Minister. It is arguable that this gives room to actually 'deny' a foreigner's entry into South Africa. The same argument can be made about the conditions for a corporate visa, as detailed in Act 3 of 2011: 16–17. It is tempting to make a comparison of this discussion with the apartheid immigration regime, which as Peberdy (1998, 2009), Peberdy and Crush (1998) note, gave so much power to the Ministers of Home Affairs, the Immigration Board and Immigration officials to grant or deny potential immigrants entry into South Africa.

Furthermore, Immigration Regulations (2014) came into effect on the 26 of May 2014. These were built on the foundations of the Immigration Act of 2007 (Act 3 of 2007), the Immigration Amendment Bill of 2010 (Amendment Bill of 2010), which was a precursor to the Immigration Amendment Act of 2011 (Act 13 of 2011). The argument was made in this section that these have generally promoted high standards for the admission of foreigners to South Africa. Thus, it is possible to further argue that the Immigration Regulations 2014 could not be any better than the foundations on which they rest. In fact, the proclamations on pages three and five of the Immigration Regulations 2014 declare that the commencement of Act 3 of 2007 and Act 13 of 2011 respectively, are in effect those regulations.

For example, the requirements for a work visa include 'a written undertaking by the employer, accepting responsibility for the costs related to the deportation of the applicant and his or her dependent family members, should it become necessary'. In addition and among other things, 'a certificate from the Department of Labour' is required confirming the relevance of the skills and that there is no South African

citizen or permanent resident to fill the job (Immigration Regulations 2014: 26). Such a requirement may be onerous on the part of the employer and some employers may be unwilling to enter into such an undertaking. The result is that the foreigner will find it difficult to apply for such a visa. It appears as though, far from making immigration easy, it may be difficult. On this basis, it is possible to argue that the South African state is making admission of foreigners into the country difficult and for some, relatively impossible.

In addition, the requirements for a business visa are equally stringent, and documents such as 'a certificate issued by a chartered accountant registered with the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants or a professional accountant registered with the South African Institute of Professional Accountants' (Immigration Regulations 2014: 23) are needed. Such a certificate should state the certain 'amount of money in cash to be invested in the Republic' and 'at least an amount in cash and a capital contribution as determined from time to time by the Minister, after consultation with the Minister of Trade and Industry by notice in the Gazette'.

It appears as though the Immigration Regulations (2014) have set the standards of visas too high. For instance, small businesses could be excluded by the requirements of certain amounts of money in cash—amounts of which are not specified, leaving room for manipulation; an instrument of inclusion or exclusion—as well as a certificate from a registered accountant. For those who are in the country already and also those intending to immigrate, how easily would they access the services of South African registered accountants? Although on paper it appears well organised to process a business visa, in practice many foreign small business owners and potential ones may face hurdles relating to cash requirements and certification from South African registered accountants.

Post-1994 Immigrant Influx and the Xenophobia Discourse

Despite the relatively stringent immigration laws, as discussed in this chapter, people have continued to migrate to and immigrate into South Africa. For instance, the number of immigrants in South Africa had

significantly increased, based on the 2011 census; for example, 3.2% of the of the population (5,650,462) of the Western Cape, 0.9% of the population (6,437,587) of the Eastern Cape, 0.9% of the population (1,125,306) of the Northern Cape, 1.9% of the population (2,663,080) of the Free State, 1.1% of the population (10,113,978) of KwaZulu Natal, 3.5% of the population (3,439,700) of the North West, 7.1% of the population (11,952,392) of Gauteng, 2.6% of the population (3,983,570) of Mpumalanga and 2.6% of the population (5,322,134) of Limpopo were not South African citizens (Statistics South Africa 2012). Given that there are many foreigners including those from outside Africa, how is discrimination and xenophobia against African immigrants a construct of the state? Answering this question links with and takes up the discussion on the targeting of African immigrants in anti-immigrant rhetoric.

Neocosmos (2006: 83) expresses the view that in post-apartheid South Africa, the state has explained 'citizenship and belonging in terms of indigeneity, whereas the history of immigration and migrant labour has not been acknowledged and, most importantly, it is the state institutions and personnel that fuel xenophobic tendencies.' Mamdani (1996) posits that the state has catalysed a discourse of exceptionalism based on the reasoning that South Africa is an exception on the African continent due to its industrial development, which makes the rest of the continent appear backward, rural and economically unstable, among other negatives applicable to some other African countries. There is the perception that 'Africa is in chaos and South Africa represents a haven of freedom, peace and prosperity for the continent's destitute masses' (Crush and Wiilliams 2001: 1). In this context, Peberdy (2009) argues that, 'new official discourse around immigration has developed and been translated into active attempts to control and discourage documented and undocumented migration'. This shows that the South African state 'has taken a draconian approach to border and heartland policing that has involved abuse of the rights of migrants and immigrants. Africans appear to have borne the brunt of restrictive measures' Peberdy (2009: 139).

Based on arguments by Mamdani (1996), Crush and Williams (2001), Neocosmos (2006) and Peberdy (2009), a contention can be made that it appears as though the immigration problem in

contemporary South Africa is the African immigrants. The portrayal and positioning of first the African countries, as argued by Mamdani (1998), makes these countries look negative. Secondly, and arising from the first point, African immigrants who are produced by these poor countries already carry a negative label; this could explain attempts to restrict their immigration to South Africa as posited by Peberdy (2009). Furthermore, the denial of the history of migration and immigration (Neocosmos 2006) by the South African state could have led to, firstly, 'the creation of an imagined community of all South Africans based on memory and citizenship… the state indicate a belief in bounded identity: one where South Africans, however diverse, are identified by their citizenship, history, relationship to the state and entitlements' (Peberdy 2009: 167).

Secondly, the imagined community suggests that African immigrants are not only undesirables, but that the South African state should disassociate itself from them as much as possible, perhaps due to the fact that, 'black Africans from outside South African borders have become threatening because also for the first time, they can become part of the nation (legally or otherwise)' (Peberdy 2009: 168). This is the basis on which such African immigrants 'can be seen to have the potential to deprive entitled citizens of their hard won rights and access to state resources that they are entitled to as members of the nation' (Peberdy 2009: 168). Peberdy further argues that 'now that South Africa's national vision encompasses all South Africans, it seems that Africans from the rest of the continent can threaten the nation and its resources'. This is because 'as the South African state has moved to construct a diverse, but inclusive nation, its immigration anxieties have become similarly inclusive. South Africa's new national identity as constructed by the state while supposedly African, is actually firmly South African' (Peberdy 2009: 168).

Similarly, Gordon (2011: 51) argues that 'immigration legislation effectively portrays immigrants, especially immigrants from African countries, as a threat to the economic and social goals of the post-apartheid state'. It is arguable that this has provided grounds for xenophobia, based on the view that the state sees African immigrants as 'contaminators of the nation' (Peberdy 2009: 158) and 'both competitors and

consumers for scarce resources and opportunities' (Gordon 2011: 47). Hence, black foreign nationals from Africa are not subject to the normal protections of constitutional democracy and human rights obligations. Instead, migrants are treated as an exception and as such relegated to a space outside the workings of the law' (Gordon 2011: 45).

The result of this is that 'by envisioning South Africa as being threatened by parasitical foreigners, the authorities are able to invoke notions of a state of siege' (Gordon 2011: 55) which necessitates a state of exception (Agamben 1998). I argue that this could be the reason why African immigrants must not be part of the imagined community. This has resulted in what Appadurai (1996) refers to as the construction of second classiness and third classiness and the need to murder or expel those who do not belong. Consequently, 'immigration, the foreign migrant labour system and support for it have been viewed by the state as being undemocratic due to the discourse which elevated true democracy to the exclusion of foreigners from belonging to South Africa and reducing citizenship rights to their indigenous status' (Neocosmos 2006: 83). It could be argued that xenophobia can become a construct of the state when the state defines 'South Africans as who they are, the state has clearly defined who South Africans are not and so who does not belong to the nation' (Peberdy 2009: 181). In fact, 'seemingly contradictory, the state's commitment to building its relationship with the rest of Africa, African migrants and immigrants, both documented and undocumented, seems to be the target of those new immigration anxieties' (Peberdy 2009: 178).

In addition, Neocosmos (2006) has shown that debates around issues of immigration have taken place within state institutions and among politicians blaming immigrants for social problems afflicting South Africa. An example in support of this statement is provided by researchers Landau (2005, 2007) and Landau and Freemantle (2010): who implied that the former Minister of Home Affairs, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, spread xenophobic discourse to the Department of Home Affairs during his term of office. Landau and Freemantle (2010) continue this line of argument by suggesting that politicians in the African National Congress (ANC) and opposition political parties alike also spread a xenophobic discourse.

In this regard, Neocosmos (2006) argues that state institutions have provided conditions for a hegemonic discourse on xenophobia because the state conceived the idea of Fortress South Africa—that South Africa was to be defended against a flood of immigrants and barbarians entering the country. Fortress South Africa is the symbolic tightening of all ports of entry into the country and at the same time protecting the South African population from the invading army of immigrants. Indeed Pain (2009 cited in Staeheli 2010: 394) notes that the intensification of borders and boundaries is a larger dynamic of exclusion and othering, which is reinforced through the discourses of fear.

Thus, the South African state could have directly or indirectly assisted in encouraging xenophobia by promoting an exclusively South African identity. This has materialised in many ways; for example, the explanation by Landau (2005: 338) that statements made by civil servants and politicians, such as the former Minister of Home Affairs, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, 'represent official endorsement or tacit acceptance' of any means including 'parallel-extra-legal systems for policing foreigners' and efforts that can be taken to rid South Africa of immigrants. This may even include hostility and xenophobic attacks.

In addition, Comaroff and Comaroff (2001: 645) contend that the state has 'intentionally and/or unintentionally contributed to the mood of xenophobia' by allowing security agents to attack foreign nationals, normally in the form of police raids on areas where immigrants stay or on their businesses, even though the 'state's tacit approval and support of xenophobia coexists with its support for the principles of democracy, human rights, African humanity' and the credo of neo-liberalism. Therefore, by the state's acceptance and support of the estrangement of foreign nationals through state agencies, the state has contributed to and nurtured xenophobia and is guilty of the same *ipso facto*.

It is for this reason that I could argue that perhaps South Africans who beat up and sometimes kill immigrants may be doing so under the assumption that they are protecting South Africa from foreign invaders. Indeed the argument that the South African state has constructed a discourse of xenophobia is adamantly advanced by Neocosmos (2006), who notes that during liberation there was a discourse of inclusivity; citizenship was not based on indigeneity, but on popular democratic

activity. This is why there was no hostility and xenophobia against black African foreign nationals. After 1994 the state conceived citizenship and rights in terms of descent and indigeneity, the result of which is that black African foreign nationals have become non-indigenous. The effect of this is that the state has 'denied the history of immigration and migrant labour and where it is evident it has been seen as a feature of apartheid which deserves interpellation' (Neocosmos 2006: 83).

In this vein, the South African government is directing its immigration policy towards thwarting 'threats to national security and stability' (Landau 2012: 14) as evidenced by the ANC's Peace and Stability policy discussion document. In fact, 'nowhere does the Peace and Stability document make mention of xenophobia or the need to address the deep-seated hostility that festers in the body politic and within many politicians. Instead, the ANC is proposing provisions that will limit foreign ownership of spaza shops and effectively detain immigrants in purpose-built camps near the border' (Landau 2012: 14).

Thus, even though Neocosmos (2006) argues that the South African state has constructed xenophobia by reducing citizenship rights to indigeneity, Peberdy (2009) has taken the debate up and suggested that the South African state has engendered xenophobia by promoting an exclusively South African identity through immigration rhetoric and policy. For Comaroff and Comaroff (2001), Landau (2005, 2006, 2007) and Gordon (2011), the anxieties expressed through immigration policing within South Africa have portrayed a state under attack. It appears that there has been a promotion of indigeneity or the reconfiguration of the South African identity and the intensification of immigration policing, the state has promoted xenophobia by defining those who are not South African—especially African immigrants—and classifying them as a threat.

Based on this discussion, it may be logical to link the attacks on African immigrants to the xenophobia discourse. For example, as recently as May/June 2011 through to September 2013, South Africans attacked foreigners. Foreign business owners in Reiger Park (Ekurhuleni) and other townships around Johannesburg were attacked by South Africans telling them that they must go back to their own countries (Ivier 2013a, b, c; *The Star* 19 May 2011b: 16). In some cases,

Somali business owners were attacked by South Africans in a xenophobic rage in the Ramaphosa informal settlement in Gauteng province (*The Star* 2 June 2011c: 6). Another example is that of a Congolese man who 'was attacked by a black South African thief' while other South Africans looked on and did not rescue the man. After the attack, the South Africans told him that they did not help because he was 'crying in English. If you were crying in Zulu, we would have helped you'. The police told the man that 'you are not our brother, we can't help you' (Harris 2002 cited in Kalule-Sabiti et al. 2012: 145).

In another event, four Somali shops were burnt down. The South Africans told them to go back to Somalia, and the victims said they could not go back to their war-torn country, at least not for now (Pillai 2011). Also, in Johannesburg, Somalis suffer daily harassment, especially from the police (*The Star* 27 March 2012). Immigrant shop owners continue to be harassed (*The Star* 24 May 2012: 14) and in March 2013, shops owned by Somalis and others were looted in Delmas, Mpumalanga (Brook 2013) and in other parts of the country during September 2013 (Ivier 2013c).

A Rwandan refugee had to pay a 'protection fee' for three years to South Africans. This began when four South African men first robbed him of his three hundred rands, because they accused him of having too much money because he was a *kwerekwere*. When he reported this attack to the police, 'they didn't ask me questions. They just took my refugee papers and tore them up. They arrested me saying that I'm illegal in the country, that I don't have a paper. They put me in jail for the weekend. They told my friends to bring money so that I can be freed'. Every month for up to 3 years, the four men who had robbed him demanded money from this Rwandan refugee (Harris 2002 cited in Kalule-Sabiti et al. 2012: 146).

There are also reports that a 'cauldron of xenophobia is again boiling', although it is not in the same proportions as the May 2008 attacks (*The Star* 22 May 2013: 4), manifesting in xenophobic attacks against immigrants, especially those who own businesses, and also against other African immigrants (Ivier 2013b, c). From a geographer's point of view, this discussion suggests that the targeting of African immigrants is spatial, economic and Africanised. It is spatial because the areas targeted

are those where there are of African immigrants; it is economic because the people who are suspected of making more money ahead of South African nationals are attacked, as evidenced by the attacks on African-owned trading shops as well as the most recent and frequent attacks on Somali-owned shops.

These attacks are Africanised because it is predominantly immigrants from African countries who are victims and who suffer the accusation that they are a problem in South Africa. This is illustrated by the latest example in which, in 2012 and 2013, the Limpopo government together with the provincial Department of Home Affairs only closed down informal businesses belonging to Ethiopian and Somali asylum seekers in a crackdown called Operation Hardstick (*The New Age* 30 September 2014a: 10). However, the lawyers for Human Rights challenged the unlawful closure of these African immigrant traders' businesses in Limpopo. The Supreme Court of Appeal ruled in favour of the Lawyers for Human Rights and 'made it clear that the attitude of the police and provincial Department of Home Affairs was unacceptable and contrary to the constitutional values' (*The New Age* 30 September 2014a: 10). This example shows the targeting of African immigrants by government departments and it may not be a flawed argument to suggest that this is an example of how the state has constructed and implemented the discourse of xenophobia against African immigrants.

African immigrants are actually or symbolically coded as the unwanted immigrants. As shown in this example, if the Supreme Court of Appeal had not intervened, the Ethiopian and Somali traders were actually going to become destitute due to the actions of government departments. This coding and assignation (Staeheli 2010) of African immigrants as the unwanted people provides a site for discrimination. Therefore, when South Africans attack foreigners, it can be argued that they think they are doing so in the active service of their country which tacitly supports their actions. Supposing that the Supreme Court of Appeal had not intervened in favour of the Ethiopian and Somali traders in Limpopo, they would have been vulnerable and open to attack by ordinary people. This is because the government departments had given a hint by closing down their businesses, suggesting they were not wanted in South Africa. The general population could not have been

wrong in attacking them, as they would be complementing the provincial government of Limpopo and Department of Home Affairs (DHA).

A related and recent example is that of the arrest and ill-treatment of African immigrants by the DHA and the South African Police Service (SAPS). African immigrants suspected of being illegal were arrested and detained for months at the Benoni police station. This was against the law, which states that immigrants cannot be detained for more than 48 h without being charged or deported (Ivier 2014). An HIV-positive Zimbabwean immigrant was among those African immigrants who have been detained at the Benoni police station for months, and whose relatives have been turned away each time they brought his medication (*The New Age* 16 October 2014b: 2). In this incident, the SAPS stated that they had been given the green light by the DHA to arrest and detain the suspected illegal immigrants because the Lindela deportation centre was full to capacity, but the DHA denied such an allegation (Ivier 2014). In this case, what is clear is that African immigrants were the target of harassment, as the law was suspended just to deal with their alleged illegality in the country. This can be interpreted as xenophobic, especially if it is carried out by government departments. In this way, the construction of xenophobia by the state is out of touch with reality in terms of failing to consider, or indeed neglecting the contributions that African immigrants make. A reconfigured claim to citizenship and rights is the *sine quo non* for full membership in the South African state, which has tacitly or otherwise supported this position.

Conclusion

The immigration trend in South Africa up to the 1940s suggests that it was racist and selective and informed immigration policy up to 1994. The immigration trajectory after 1994 shows that soon after 1994, there was reluctance to accept immigrants into South Africa, based on the provisions of the Aliens Control Amendment Act, 1995 (Act 76 of 1995). However, the government soon realised the actual and potential roles that immigrants could play in South Africa. To this end, the government then generally encouraged the immigration

of foreign nationals into South Africa through successive Immigration Acts and Amendments, Bills and Regulations, such as the Immigration Act 13 of 2002, (Act 13 of 2002) as amended by Immigration Act of 2004, (Act 19 of 2004), Immigration Act of 2007 (Act 3 of 2007), the Immigration Amendment Bill of 2010 (Amendment Bill of 2010), Immigration Amendment Act of 2011 (Act 13 of 2011) and Immigration Regulations (2014).

As Peberdy (2009) observes and argues, the immigration policy changes benefitted the highly skilled at the expense of those without the skills. From 2007, as evidenced by the successive Immigration Acts, the Amendment Bill of 2010 and culminating in the Immigration Regulations of 2014, the South African government has gone back to tightening the requirements for entry into the country and this makes the immigration regime selective; only those deemed beneficial to the country may be admitted. One is reminded of the forceful arguments by Peberdy (1998, 2009), Peberdy and Crush (1998) that during the apartheid years, immigrants were selected on the basis of racism, but the argument made in this section seems to suggest that from about 2007, the new 'racism' is how useful immigrants are to the South African state. If they are not, they will find the visa requirements nearly impossible to meet, which will make them become officially undocumented, illegal and undesirable because South Africa continues to be an attractive destination of choice—there seems to be no better alternative on the African continent. Since African immigrants are the undesirables, the dynamics of this and how it materialises, deserve a brief consideration. Finally, although the focus in this book is not xenophobia, its discussion as a construct of the South African state, was intended firstly to sustain the discussion on the case of African immigrants and secondly, to illustrate the conceptualisation of African immigrants as the threatening other. As shown in this discussion, when people from African countries migrate or immigrate to South Africa, whether they are legal or not, are not conceived and portrayed as part of the South African state. In this way, the framing of African immigrants as the threatening other revolves around what Mbembe (2015) terms an organised 'ideology' that targets and negatively constructs African migrants. Viewed thus, the targeting of African immigrants is deliberate and their construction

as the threatening other is organised because it has shifted from the Indians and directed against immigrants from African countries (Klotz 2013). It is this ideology about, around and against African immigrants as the threatening other, that I contest.

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5

African Immigrant Traders in Johannesburg Inner City

Introduction

The question regarding the reasons African immigrant traders moved to South Africa is important. How and if they have encountered discrimination, hostility and xenophobia are also relevant. Investigating such questions will provide an insight into why African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city have chosen to trade and what exactly they do in their trading enterprises. Along these lines, this chapter begins by providing a background to why African immigrant traders migrated to South Africa, and whether they have encountered discrimination, hostility and xenophobia. This background is intended to introduce the reasons why they chose to engage in the businesses that they do, followed by an exploration of the nature and types of African immigrant businesses.

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DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-57144-7_5

Reasons for Migration to South Africa

An analysis of the setting of increased migration into South Africa by African immigrant traders in this work suggests that economic reasons played the most important role in the migration decision-making. Immigrants based in urban areas in their countries of origin stated that they were supplementing the incomes of their immediate and extended families, whereas those based in rural areas asserted that they were assisting in increasing agricultural production by buying inputs, as well as supplementing their livelihood bases by sending money and 'urban commodities'. This migration context of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city invokes the sustainable livelihood and transnational approaches to migration. A sustainable livelihood strategy is defined by De Haas (2008: 35) as 'a strategic or deliberate choice of a combination of activities by households and their individual members to maintain, secure and improve livelihoods'. In this approach, migration is seen as a possible option of having a sustainable livelihood through 'improving or avoiding deterioration of household poverty, wellbeing, capabilities and a natural resource base' (De Haas et al. 2002 cited in Hagen-Zanker 2008: 15). Migration is therefore a means to have many assets, which can act as 'an insurance against future shocks and stresses', and to maintain contact with and even develop their areas of origin (De Haas et al. 2002 cited in De Haas 2008: 37). Sander and Maimbo (2005: 60) observe that in this regard, remittances contribute to 'a family welfare system'. This is a form of 'co-insurance and diversification of income' (Hagen-Zanker 2008: 15).

The transnational approach to migration posits international migration which is based on the recognition that immigrants can and do maintain ties with their families in their countries of origin as well as with their host countries (Guarnizo et al. 2003 cited in De Haas 2008). This has been made possible by developments in transport, communication and technology and immigrants find it easy to foster double loyalties (Guarnizo et al. 2003 cited in De Haas 2008) and also have a 'penchant for keeping a foot' in both their areas of origin and destination (Crush 2002: 149). The study in the Johannesburg inner city

suggests that—for as long as the problems persist in countries where the immigrants originate—South Africa will continue to be a destination of choice because it is regarded as economically developed and presents many opportunities. This confirms other studies on why South Africa is an attractive destination for many African immigrants (World Migration Report 2000; Adepoju 2003; Crush et al. 2006; Campell 2010).

Experiences of Discrimination, Hostility and Xenophobia

After arriving in South Africa, the African immigrant traders chose the Johannesburg inner city because they believed that it would expedite their settling and at the same time they would quickly grow and improve economically. Again, this demonstrates space and place interaction; issues of geographical relevance.

Xenophobia

In the first round of interviews with the African immigrant traders, 32 out of 40 interviewees (80%), in the second round, 7 out of 10 (70%) and in the third round, 2 out of 3 interviewees (66.7%) claimed that they had encountered what they believed were less violent xenophobic tendencies. Examples of these included the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police Department (JMPD) impounding of goods belonging to the traders—even when they had trading licences and operated from stalls—and arresting those who allegedly operated from licensed trading zones, accusing them of crowding and making the inner city dirty. It is relevant to comment on the fact that the alleged acts of xenophobia could be valid, especially if goods were impounded from designated trading zones. What is also valid is that there were African immigrant traders who operated in undesignated trading zones, such as areas along Simmonds Street and thus deserved to be arrested and have their goods

impounded. In this case, it seems as though the alleged acts of xenophobia by the JMPD are not completely accurate, as some of the African immigrant traders were simply operating illegally; when the JMPD impound their goods, they were only enforcing the law. In this regard, there is nothing xenophobic. Another example of xenophobia was the harassment of African immigrant traders by ordinary South African citizens. African immigrant traders stated that some ordinary citizens and customers took away goods without paying for them and hurled insults at them telling them to go back to their countries. Although not all African immigrant traders had experienced xenophobia, this finding links with the discussion in Chaps. 2 and 3, which is that a xenophobic discourse exists in South Africa based on the perception that African immigrants are the threatening other and must go back to their own countries rather than flooding South Africa.

It is arguable that when some ordinary citizens take goods from African immigrant traders without paying for them, they are sending a message—these traders should not be in South Africa in the first place. This is significant, given that, as reported by African immigrant traders during the interviews, such South African citizens do not do the same to shops operated by their compatriots. This dynamic removes a criminal intent and emphasises a xenophobic objective. From a geographical, temporal perspective, a xenophobic discourse seems to prevail and African immigrant traders continue to be perceived as undesirable economic competition. Similarly, when the JMPD, who are charged with maintaining law and order, actually impound goods from people who are lawfully registered and operate from stalls, can be interpreted as xenophobic. One is reminded of the experience of a Rwandan refugee who went to the police to report a criminal attack, but was instead detained because he was not South African and therefore not a brother. It is possible to make the connection that when the JMPD impound goods belonging to African immigrant traders and not those from South African traders, they are saying the former are not brothers like the latter. This looks similar to the xenophobic attacks of businesses owned by African immigrants, especially the Somalis discussed in Chap. 3.

Discrimination in the Job Market and the Decision to Trade

Sixty percent of the respondents (24 out of 40) asserted that their qualifications were not recognised and as a result they had to do what they called low-class jobs. For example, a nurse from the DRC claimed that she found it difficult to be registered with the South African Nursing Council (SANC). A quick check on requirements for registration of nurses from foreign countries and South African nurses, who trained in foreign countries, shows that they were onerous for the former than the latter. For example Section 4, Sub-section 4.1.1 (c) and (d) of the requirements of the registration of nurses (South African Nursing Council 2012), requires foreign nurses to obtain an endorsement from the National Department of Health. South African nationals who trained as nurses in foreign countries were exempt from this requirement. It is noted that this may be done in an effort to prioritise citizens ahead of foreigners. But, at the same time, it is subject to many interpretations; for example, when two people—one a South African and the other a foreign national who undertook the same training in a similar institution in a foreign country—are not treated equally when they possess the same skills. This was the argument of the DRC nurse and, from her point of view, was discrimination.

The Health Professionals Council for South Africa (HPCSA) also appears to be guided by the same principles as SANC. Its website declares that 'applicants who are non-South Africans are required to first obtain a letter of endorsement issued by the National Department of Health in Pretoria prior to applying to the HPCSA for registration'. The statement goes on to add that 'the National Department of Health does not encourage the recruitment of individual foreign health professionals who are citizens of developing countries' (HPSCA). It appears as if African immigrants who were health practitioners could have faced hurdles practising their profession because of strict requirements, which according to them, was tantamount to the lack of recognition of their qualifications because they were from African

countries. Nevertheless, it seems as though the issue of strict monitoring and registration of foreign professionals is not something unique to South Africa. For example, lawyers who qualified in countries other than England and Wales are required to sit for examinations before they can be admitted as law practitioners in these countries (QLTS Assessments). Could this requirement in South Africa relating to health professionals be regarded as hostile and xenophobic? This may not be the case; it may be about standards.

Nonetheless, since South Africa is a developing or middle-income country and does not encourage health professionals from developing countries, the message is open to the interpretation that it either despises African immigrants, or that educational standards in other African countries are poor. One is reminded of the Afro-pessimistic comments by the President of the Republic of South Africa about how Johannesburg roads were different from and needed to be paid for unlike some national roads in Malawi. This seems to tie in with the debate raised in Chaps. 2 and 3 on the matter of the negative perception of African immigrants and what they bring or do not bring to South Africa. In this case, their medical degrees/qualifications are not desirable and thus they should not be encouraged to register for medical practice.

In the absence of an explanation of what it means not to encourage qualifications from developing countries, this is open to interpretation by African immigrants that their qualifications were not always recognised in South Africa; this demonstrates that what was important and recognised in their country of origin was not accorded the same respect in the host country. In order to earn a living in the Johannesburg inner city, these African immigrants had to resort to trading. What is particularly important in the case of the HPCSA is that immigrants from other parts of the world are encouraged. Therefore, it seems to be the perception by the African immigrant traders that they were discriminated against. This scenario in this work seems to fit in well with Bourdieu's theory of social practice (Bourdieu 1977, 1990 cited in Thieme 2011). This theory posits that social practices by groups of people or individuals are predicated on habitus, capital and social fields. Bourdieu (1986 cited in Thieme 2011: 333) defines capital as 'accumulated labour and includes all material and symbolic goods that present themselves as rare and worthy of being sought after in a particular

social formation'. Different kinds of capital can be identified based on Bourdieu's theory, and examples of these are: economic capital which refers to commodities of monetary value; cultural capital which refers to educational qualifications; and social capital which is a network of durable social relations (Thieme 2011). Hence, 'the form capital takes only receives a value if one enters a social field where it is valued' (Thieme 2011: 334).

In the Johannesburg inner city, the African immigrant traders, whose educational qualifications (cultural capital) were not recognised initially, accepted low-class jobs, from which they raised capital to start businesses. For example, trained primary school teachers from Zimbabwe stated that they first worked as maids and waitresses and that some of their male counterparts worked as 'garden boys' and some as bar tenders or waiters. In addition, the information from this case study revealed that some worked as construction workers. They considered these jobs as either menial or manual because in their countries of origin they had what they considered 'respectable' jobs, such as school teachers, insurance sales representatives and accounts clerks. The argument can be made that these immigrants could have been overambitious. If they were migrating to a foreign country, they could not expect to find jobs waiting for them just because they left respectable jobs in their countries of origin, but needed to adapt to the new environment—a classic example of the human-space environment interface, an issue of geographic relevance. In this regard, Thieme (2011: 334) argues that 'the position of an actor in a society and in a social field is never absolute, but always relative. Inequality of and access to resources are the basis upon which each field operates. Power relations are contested and conflicts and compromises are negotiated'. This is the reason why 'in a receiving country, migrants have to act in different social fields to gain access to employment, shelter … Their different forms of capital are valued differently when they enter into a new social field and power relations change' (Thieme 2011: 334).

Beyond this argument, and from the point of view of African immigrant traders, migrating to South Africa reduced them to serving food and beer in restaurants as waiters, or watering flowers and tending to grass as gardeners and cleaning houses as maids. Thus, 29 out of 40 respondents (72.5%) found themselves in this or similar situations.

They stated that they had decided that the only way to economically uplift themselves was to form businesses, where at least they could earn according to their efforts rather than be undervalued, discriminated against and reduced to low-class jobs, and therefore become underclass human beings. This choice can be regarded as a strategy to earn a living in Johannesburg's inner city; a foreign place for the immigrants.

It is relevant to comment further on financial challenges of the group of African immigrant traders who decided to form trading businesses after arriving in the Johannesburg inner city. The African immigrant traders claimed that they had financial challenges, as they did not receive any form of funding and, coupled with the need to pay rent and rates and provide for their families, it was a challenge starting the trading businesses. This could explain why some of the trading businesses were simply survivalist vending operations, whereas some were established trading businesses.

It is important to highlight the fact that 11 out of 40 interviewees (27.5%), came to South Africa and the Johannesburg inner city specifically to set up businesses and not to look for employment. The basis of this migration decision was that a business was a quicker way of making money in South Africa than looking for a job commensurate with qualifications and experience. Nigeria topped the list with three African immigrants who highlighted that they came to South Africa to set up businesses, followed by Somalia with two. Of the respondents, DRC, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Tanzania and Zimbabwe each had one immigrant trader who came to South Africa to set up a business. Although it was not possible to verify the start-up capital injections for these African immigrant traders who came to the Johannesburg inner city to specifically set up businesses, the lowest was a Zimbabwean woman who claimed that she had R4000, and the highest was a Somali who asserted that she had a start-up capital of R20,000. The latter operates a relatively large shop along Eloff Street, just before the intersection with Plein Street, where she sells blankets, curtains and clothes.

It appears as though those African immigrant traders who came into start businesses had more capital injection that those who were forced into businesses by circumstances discussed in this section. In addition, it appears that both categories of African immigrant traders

have injected relatively large amounts of capital, some of which the immigrant traders earned and saved in South Africa before starting the businesses and some of which they brought into South Africa. For example, a Congolese shop owner asserted that she brought about R10,000 with her to South Africa in 1999, and a Somali shop owner asserted that he brought R20,000 to South Africa. The migration journey of the African immigrant traders from the point they decided to settle in the Johannesburg inner city—either to set up businesses or look for jobs, failing which they settled for low-class jobs and ended up deciding to set up businesses as well—shows how they have become part of the Johannesburg inner city milieu. Thus, the next step is to explore in greater detail the nature and types of these businesses, on the basis of which I will be able to deconstruct the threatening other.

African Immigrant Traders in the Johannesburg Inner City

In order to grasp exactly what African immigrant traders undertake in their businesses, it is necessary to examine their registration statuses, their spatial distribution and the issues of formality, informality and illegality. In addition, a comparative analysis of enterprises operated by both African immigrants and South African traders is intended to bring to the fore the activities which were uncovered in this work.

Registration Status

From the 40 African immigrant traders who were interviewed in the first phase, the following pattern in relation to the registration of these businesses emerged. The businesses which were registered as companies with the Companies and Intellectual Property Commission (CIPC)[1] would be the formal traders, of which there were 14 out of 40 (35%). Those registered with the Johannesburg Metropolitan Trading Company (JMTC) through the Street Traders Association (STA) would be the informal traders, and amounted to 18 out of 40 (45%).

Finally, those that were not registered with at least the STA or not operating in designated trading zones totalled 8 out of 40 (20%). This last group of African immigrant traders were operating illegally in the Johannesburg inner city. An interview with officials at JMTC and the JMPD represented by an Inspector on 12 October 2012 revealed that according to the regulations guiding the street traders, small businesses, however entrepreneurial needed to be recognised by the municipality and allocated at least a stall within designated trading zones.

Based on the interview with the officials at the JMTC, it became clear that even the informal street traders, although not registered with CIPC, needed to observe designated trading zones and not randomly start trading. Considering the interview with the JMPD and the JMTC, it became clear that some streets, such as Simmonds were not designated as trading zones (Fig. 5.1), due to many factors which include, among others, the presence of other structures and the requirement not to sell within five metres of a traffic intersection. From a sample of 40 African immigrant and 40 South African traders, there were 32 recognised businesses belonging to African immigrants, of which 14 were registered as companies and 18 were informal businesses registered with the JMTC through the STA. Eight fell in neither of the categories and from the interviews with the JMTC and JMPD, these were operating illegally. Figure 5.1 also shows the distribution of South African traders, of which 38 were registered and two unregistered. Thus, only two South African traders operate outside of the municipal laws, as opposed to eight African immigrants.

In Chap. 3, the issue of urban informality was raised and the many dimensions in which it applies to this work. At this point, I will comment on whether informality by South African traders in the Johannesburg inner city is tolerated more than that of the African immigrant traders. Those African immigrant and South African traders who were registered as companies were generally not harassed by the JMPD. All four South African traders who were registered as companies stated that they did not have any problems of harassment by the JMPD whenever they did checks on the registration status on the businesses and the legitimacy of the brands of goods which they sold.

Of the 14 African immigrant traders registered as companies, 8 (57.1%) claimed that the JMPD always harassed them; as opposed

Fig. 5.1 Representation of the detailed spatial distribution of respondents in the Johannesburg inner city. *Source* GIS location of interviewees by author in July 2014

6 (42.9%) who claimed that they did not have problems with the checks by the JMPD. In addition, of the 18 African immigrant traders who were registered with the JMTC, 13 (72.2%) stated that the JMPD always harassed them and in some cases impounded their goods, but all South African traders who were registered in a similar capacity did not complain of any harassment by the JMPD.

Another point to note is that both the African immigrant and the South African traders who were not registered stated that they were always harassed. Overall, in the regulation of street traders, it seems as though South African traders were tolerated more than African immigrant traders, based on the statements that registered businesses operated by African immigrant traders were harassed by the JMPD, whereas the South African ones were not. Therefore, even though the point was made in Chap. 3 that urban informality was regarded negatively, in the City of Johannesburg this case study suggests that informality by African immigrant traders is regarded more negatively than that of South Africans. This seems to reinforce the negative perception, targeting and treatment of African immigrants.

Spatial Spread and Organisation

Furthermore, what is suggested in Fig. 5.1 is that even though both African immigrant and South African traders operate in the same space and in close proximity to each other, there appears to be a tendency for the clustering of businesses. This is most apparent at Linear Market in Wanderers Street, as well as along Plein, Bree, Eloff and Joubert Streets (Fig. 5.1). The traders suggested that this was a question of preference. This does not seem to be the case, because the allocation of trading stalls by the Johannesburg Metropolitan Company does not operate on the basis of preference. Perhaps this could apply in the case of rented shops like those along Plein, Bree and Jourbet Streets. In the case of trading stalls, it could be posited that African immigrants wanted to operate closer to their counterparts as was the case with the South African traders.

Nature and Types of African Immigrant and South African Traders' Businesses

The question of what African immigrant and South African traders do, whether they are formal or informal, is important. For this reason, a discussion of which types of African immigrant and South African traders' businesses were formal and informal—and what exactly their lines of business were—helps to further examine African immigrants as the threatening other. In this regard, it is necessary to take up the discussion of the formal, informal and unregistered African immigrant and South African traders, by analysing exactly what the business did (Tables 5.1 and 5.2). These tables suggest that there were more formal businesses owned by African immigrant traders, that is, 14 out of 40 (35%), as opposed to 4 out of 40 (10%) in the case of South African traders. This seems to counter the claim that African immigrant traders

Table 5.1 Types of African immigrant traders' enterprises in the Johannesburg inner city, July 2012

Nature of business	Number of formal businesses	Number of informal businesses	Unregistered businesses
Beadwork and embroidery	2	0	0
Bedding	0	2	0
Cell phones and cell phone accessories	0	1	2
Clothes, blankets, shoes and household goods	5	4	2
Consumable goods	3	4	0
Cosmetics	1	2	1
Courier company	1	0	0
Handmade sandals	2	0	0
Ladies shoes	0	2	0
Traditional clothes		2	1
Fruits and vegetables		1	2
Total	14	18	8

Source Drawn by author July 2014

Table 5.2 Types of South African traders' enterprises in the Johannesburg inner city, July 2012

Nature of business	Number of formal businesses	Number of informal businesses	Unregistered businesses
Belts and stockings	0	2	0
Clothes, blankets, shoes, household goods		5	0
CDs DVDs	0	5	
Consumable goods	2	9	0
Cosmetics	0	4	0
Electrical appliances	1	0	0
Fruits and vegetables		5	1
Hair braiding products		2	1
Spices	1	0	0
Sunglasses	0	2	0
Total	4	34	2

Source Drawn by author July 2014

always had problems in registering their businesses. Apparently, it is not always correct to suggest that all African immigrants face discrimination and xenophobia in formally registering their businesses.

The interview results show that more African immigrants actually own formal businesses than South African citizens. Another aspect reflected in these tables is that 34 out of 40 South African traders (85%) seem to dominate in the category of registered street traders by the JMTC, as opposed to 18 out of 40 African immigrant traders (45%). However, there were relatively more unregistered African immigrant traders, who amounted to 8 out of 40 respondents (20%) as opposed to 2 out of 40 (5%) South African traders. Their operating in this status could be a reflection of difficulties in being granted trading permits or indeed a case of lawlessness. The latter is most likely, if the evidence from the JMTC that anyone could be registered as long as they had the required documentation, like a valid passport in the case of immigrants is accepted.

In addition, I observed that those African immigrant and South African traders who operated randomly on the streets would quickly gather their wares and flee when the JMPD appeared and/or passed by—a suggestion that they were not registered with the JMTC and

therefore traded illegally. These observations converged with the results of the interview with the JMTC officials on the issue of some immigrants who randomly put out their goods for sale anywhere along the streets, constituting illegal activity. Thus, the accusation that such African immigrants in the Johannesburg inner city were making these areas dirty could be justified. It is also clear that it is not all African immigrant traders who deserved this condemnation. Some were registered and at least operated in designated trading areas.

The following nationalities were involved in the unregistered trading: a Nigerian trader (cell phones and cell phone accessories), three Zimbabwean and one Mozambican traders (clothes), Malawian and Tanzanian traders (consumable goods) and a trader from the DRC (vegetables). The interview with the Inspector from the JMPD revealed that there were some African immigrant traders who used their businesses as fronts for illegal activities. While I did not observe or get the information about the illegal activities, the JMPD asserted that some Nigerians used their shops as bases for selling drugs. This came to light as a result of JMPD operations, which resulted in the arrest of Nigerian immigrant traders who sold drugs in the Johannesburg inner city.

In addition, during all the phases of the interviews with the African immigrant traders, I observed that there were shops, especially those operated by Somalis and even some South Africans, who would swiftly close their shops when the JMPD appeared or passed by. This observation was further corroborated by the Inspector from the JMPD, who claimed that those traders, whether African immigrant or owned by South Africans, closed their shops when the JMPD were doing counterfeit inspections with brand holders. This suggests that some of the African immigrant traders and South African nationals also sold counterfeit goods.

Differences and Similarities Between African Immigrant and South African Traders

In an attempt to shed more light on the nature and type of African immigrant businesses, a comparative analysis of both African immigrant and South African traders' businesses is provided. What is suggested in

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 is that there are differences and similarities in the nature and types of trading businesses operated by African immigrant and South African traders. For example, beadwork and embroidery, handmade sandals and traditional clothes, cell phones and cell phone accessories were specific to African immigrant traders. Other enterprises which were specific to African immigrant traders were sales of ladies shoes and different types of bedding.

A courier company was operated by a Nigerian immigrant trader, who shared that after realising that there were many foreigners, especially Africans, in the Johannesburg inner city, he reasoned that they would need to remit money and goods to their home countries. He therefore formed a courier company which sent money and in some cases material goods to some African countries. Some of the African immigrant traders explained that the chosen lines of businesses were based on expertise gained from their countries of origin, such as beadwork and embroidery as well as repairing cell phones and selling cell phone accessories. The other reason was based on the need to reduce competition by engaging in businesses different to those operated by South African and other African immigrant traders. Trading businesses which were specific to South African traders included those which sold belts and stockings, spices, CDs and DVDs, earrings, electrical appliances, sunglasses and hair braiding products. The South African operating a shop selling and repairing electrical appliances explained that he had skills and expertise in this line of business. Regarding the other South African traders, they suggested that they engaged in types of business which were relatively easy to start.

Similarities can be identified in the shops selling clothes; for example, 11 out of 40 (27.5%) of the African immigrant traders were involved, compared to 5 out of 40 (12.5%) of the South African traders. Interview results suggest that this could be explained by the fact that some African immigrant traders imported cheap goods; they also knew of wholesalers in Johannesburg from whom they bought the clothes at lower prices, the latter claim being made by South African traders. In the shops that sold consumable goods, 7 out of 40 (17.5%) African immigrant traders were involved in this line of business, compared to 11 out of 40 (27.5%) of the South African traders.

This difference could be accounted for by the fact that African immigrant traders mostly served dishes that catered for their fellow countrymen, whereas South African traders catered for a large customer base, including hundreds of taxi drivers and other street traders and indeed African immigrant traders as well. Shops trading in cosmetics were evenly balanced at 4 out of 40 (10%) for each group of traders; whereas 6 out of 40 (15%) of the South African traders sold fruits and vegetables, against 3 out of 40 (7.5%) of the African immigrant traders. Both groups of traders explained that it was relatively easy to engage in this line of business.

Differences Within African Immigrant Traders

In an attempt to clarify the nature and types of African immigrant traders' businesses, it is relevant to further show that generally, certain types of businesses were specific to certain nationalities. For example, the cell phone and cell phone accessories shops were operated by Nigerians, beadwork and embroidery by Ghanaians and Tanzanians. Somalis mostly specialised in selling clothes, blankets and a variety of household goods. It would seem as though these had had previous experience in their countries of origin. Somalis claimed that they imported their goods (clothes, blankets, shoes and different types of household goods) from China in larger quantities, which explains why they sold them at very low prices.

The interview with the Inspector from the JMPD also highlights the fact that the majority of the immigrant traders, especially those who operated clothing shops, were selling legal goods. He asserted that most of the goods, especially from the African immigrant shops, were legitimate goods, properly imported and even though in some cases they were not branded, this did not make them counterfeit. Congolese, Mozambicans, some Malawians, Tanzanians and Zimbabweans were involved in a bit of everything; that, in their view, sold faster. Although there were some Zimbabwean women who had worked on farms in Zimbabwe and this previous experience predisposed them towards selling farm produce such as fruit and vegetables, it would appear as though others were opportunistic street traders driven by the need to make quick profits and just survive.

Differences Within South African Traders

Although this case study shows that South African traders from all provinces were involved in most of the types of businesses described in the preceding sections, specific patterns were identified. Women from Kwa Zulu Natal mostly sold consumable goods, especially meat and *pap*[2]; one lady from this province sold spices. One man from Limpopo operated an electrical appliance shop, and another from the same province sold sunglasses. Other types of business were undertaken by South Africans from all provinces, but no interviewees were selected from Cape Town in the Western Province.

Link Between African Immigrant and South African Traders and SMME Economy

There appears to be a link between the African immigrant and South African traders. Firstly, those who sold fruit and vegetables bought their produce from the same market, suggesting growth of business of their suppliers. Secondly, African immigrant traders also bought goods—such as consumables—from South African traders. Thirdly, South African traders claimed that they relied on African immigrant traders to repair their cell phones and supply them with cell phone-related appliances. Fourthly, some South African traders stated that they bought most of their blankets and household goods from the shops owned by African immigrant traders, such as the Somalis. Bearing in mind the definition of the SMME economy offered in Chap. 3, it is relevant to comment that the interface described in this section between African immigrant and South African traders suggests a mutual interaction which is conducive for the growth of the SMME economy, especially the businesses of both South African nationals and African immigrant traders.

Considering the buying and selling interaction which exists between African immigrant and South African traders, there is a possibility of growth of businesses within the framework of the SMME and urban informality. For example, many African immigrant traders who buy consumable goods from South African traders may result in the growth

of enterprises in this line of business. In this case, African immigrant traders provided a ready market for the consumable goods, and this can foster growth of the enterprises which sell such goods. The same argument can be made about a South African trader from Kwa Zulu Natal who sold spices. Considering the fact that some of the enterprises which sold consumable goods such as meat and *pap* needed spices, these were always readily and quickly supplied by the South African trader selling these spices. This example demonstrates the possibility of growth of businesses in the Johannesburg inner city. It is possible to posit that in the process of time such a business can graduate into a formally registered business with CIPC.

Link Between African Immigrant Traders and the Formal Economy

Furthermore, African immigrant traders such as those selling cosmetics and some of those which sold shoes and household goods stated that they bought these from wholesalers around the Johannesburg inner city. A similar claim was made by South African traders. This shows that there is a close relationship between African immigrant traders and the formal economy. In addition, some of the African immigrant traders were fully registered businesses, suggesting that there was an expansion or a possibility of expansion of the formal economy in the study area.

Possibilities for Development

The differences and similarities in the types of businesses operated by African immigrant and South African traders suggest a possibility for development. For example, African immigrant traders involved in beadwork and embroidery suggest an expansion of enterprises in this line of business by the introduction of East and West African styles of beadwork and embroidery. Such businesses could achieve two aspects; firstly the broadening of skills and talent in beadwork and embroidery and

secondly, an increase in the sheer numbers of small businesses involved in these lines of business.

In addition, Ghanaians also made sandals, and Malawians and Tanzanians mostly operated shops selling traditional African clothes. Furthermore, African immigrant traders who sold African and/or traditional attire stated that they noticed that in the Johannesburg inner city there were many immigrants from African countries. As a result, they reasoned that these foreigners needed a taste of traditional clothes in general and in line with their national or ethnic tastes. Therefore, they opened shops specialising in traditional and other African attire and the response was overwhelmingly positive, especially from fellow immigrants. What was noteworthy from the interviews was that some South African citizens also bought these clothes. Malawians and Tanzanians led in the immigrant businesses which sold African and/or traditional attire. Some of these traditional clothes were imported, but some were handmade in their shops in the Johannesburg inner city. It can be argued that the importing and hand-making of uniquely African traditional attire is a contribution to the fashion industry. It is an addition of a dimension to fashion; an African fashion in the Johannesburg inner city.

A report on the state of entrepreneurship in South Africa (Davis 2010) records that the fashion and the textile industries needed to widen and identify opportunities, including the design and production of these commodities. In this regard, it can be advanced that what the African immigrant traders brought in the form of traditional clothes and beadwork can broaden the fashion industry in South Africa. What the African immigrant traders brought in this regard can and needs to be harnessed and developed. This suggests that the actual and potential contribution by African immigrant traders is relatively significant.

Therefore, the presence of African immigrant traders involved in the fashion and textile line of business is an opportunity for the South African fashion and textile industry in the Johannesburg inner city to exploit and develop. It is important to add that, the fact of the addition of a new aspect to the textile and fashion industry in the Johannesburg inner city as a result of African immigrant traders, demonstrates geographical significance, not by fact of the spatial movement of the people, but the addition of new styles. This

illustrates that immigrants can change many facets of the host environment—in this case positively, through fashion—by the introduction of new African attire. This is a possibility for development of the Johannesburg inner city. Interview results also suggest that some of the African immigrant traders have previous experience of either running businesses or working in an environment similar to the line of business in which they are now involved. Such experience can be channelled towards the development of businesses in the study area.

A discussion of the role of African immigrant traders in other parts of the world in Chap. 3 suggested that they were playing an important role in the Middle East and South East Asia by setting up 'trading posts' (Bertoncello and Bredeloup 2007: 97). This discussion on the possibility for development seems to suggest that African immigrant traders, for example the Somalis, who sell large quantities of textiles, clothes and household goods, could potentially set up trading posts in the Johannesburg inner city.

Conclusion

Overall, the nature and types of businesses operated by African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city and the ways that they interact and integrate with their South African counterparts and the formal economy seems to suggest that there are not only actual positive impacts, but also possibilities for development. For example, beyond the growth in economic activity as a result of buying of goods for resale from wholesalers in and around the study area, the skills in beading and embroidery and the introduction of African attire, which may broaden the textile and fashion sector in the inner city, are actual and potential sites for development. In addition, the expensive clothing and textile shops operated by Somalis seem to point towards a possibility of the development of a large trading sector in the study area. Although there are African immigrant traders who operate outside of the law by engaging in survivalist vending operations, which, because of their operating status may be considered negative, it is difficult to ignore the fact that some African immigrant traders' businesses play a positive role.

Beyond the question of what African immigrant traders' businesses engage in, there is a need for a detailed understanding of their actual contribution to the Johannesburg inner city. I consider this in Chap. 6.

Notes

1. CIPC came into operation on 8 February 2011 as a result of the merging of the Office of Companies and Intellectual Property Enforcement (OCIPE) and Companies and Intellectual Property Registration Office (CIPRO) (https://www.cipc.co.za/Publications_files/MediaReleasesCommission.pdf. Accessed on August 12, 2014).
2. Pap is a traditional dish that is made mostly from softly grounded maize, which is cooked to form a soft porridge. However grounded maize may be found in other parts of the world as well, and just differs in name. In the West, pap is better known as polenta or grits, and in East Africa it is known as ugali. See http://ificould.co.za/how-to-make-traditional-south-african-pap/#popup1. (Accessed October 10, 2016).

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6

African Immigrant Traders' Contribution to Johannesburg Inner City

Introduction

Because 'we come to know what has happened partly in terms of what others reveal in their experience' (2000: 442), the results of the in-depth interviews highlight, among others, the following themes along which the discussion will proceed: employment creation and contribution to the achievement of South Africa`s development goals; revenue generation and support for the formal economy; the provision of choices for consumers; revitalising the Johannesburg inner city; and unproductive and destructive traders and the transnational character of African immigrant traders.

This targets a deeper analysis of the issues raised in the in-depth interviews and in the process unravel the threatening other in relation to African immigrant traders. Along these lines, the status of what the threatening other is must emerge by piecing together the 'contested versions of reality' (Tierney 2000: 642) because social reality 'is like a sack which won't stand up when it is empty; in order that it may stand up, one has to put into it the reason and sentiment which has caused it to exist' (Pirandello 1921/1962 cited in Tierney 2000: 643). On these

I. Moyo, *African Immigrant Traders in Inner City Johannesburg*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-57144-7_6

grounds, I aim at a balanced assessment of what African immigrant traders contribute to the Johannesburg inner milieu.

Employment Creation and Taking Away Jobs

The results in this work suggest that African immigrant traders created employment for South Africans as well as for foreign nationals, especially fellow countrymen and other African nationalities. Table 6.1 summarises the employment creation by African immigrant traders. This could be regarded as a positive contribution to the Johannesburg inner city to the extent that South African nationals who were employed were salaried, which could improve the standard of living of their family members. In addition, more employment opportunities could result in more income and tax revenue, as some of the employees received taxable earnings. The evidence in Table 6.1 seems to be generally validated by the fact that, in the first phase of the in-depth interviews, 13 out of 40 (32.5%) South African traders stated that African immigrant traders created employment, but 11 out of 40 (27.5%) South African traders were of the view that African immigrants in the Johannesburg inner

Table 6.1 Employment creation by African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city, July 2012

Nationality of employer	Number of South African citizens employed	Number of employees from other African countries
DRC	0	0
Ghana	9	6 Zimbabweans
Malawi	3	1 Ghanaian
Mali	0	0
Mozambique	0	0
Nigeria	2	1 Nigerian, 1 Malawian, 1 Zimbabwean
Somalia	6	2 Zimbabweans
Tanzania	3	1 Tanzanian, 1 Malawian
Zimbabwe	0	0
Total	23	14

Source Drawn by author, July 2014

city took away jobs from South African citizens. In addition, 16 out of 40 (40%) South African traders were of the view that African immigrant traders neither created nor took away jobs. In the second phase of the in-depth interviews, 6 out of 10 (60%) South African traders, as opposed to 4 out of 10 (40%), stated that African immigrant traders actually created employment and in the third phase of the in-depth interviews, 2 out of 3 (66.7%), as opposed to 1 out of 3 (33.3%), of the interviewees, were of the view that African immigrant traders created employment for South African citizens.

This means that most South African traders suggested that African immigrant traders played a positive role in the creation of employment. This is instructive as it comes from South African nationals in the study and agrees with the evidence from the African immigrant traders as captured in Table 6.1. That being so, an African immigrant interviewed during the interviews stated that;

> I personally create employment for both immigrants and South Africans. My shop is so big that I cannot operate alone and for this reason I have employed people to help. I constantly hear this story that African immigrants take away jobs. Can I ask you, which jobs do we take? I came to South Africa and set up a business using my own money, I was not hunting for a job, not all foreigners are job hunters. I had a business in Nigeria and have a wealth of experience in running a business and also had the capital. I brought something—capital and a business—to South Africa. So, you see, this idea that we take away jobs is false. (Interview with Oluche a Nigerian immigrant trader, Metro Mall, 18 February 2013)

However, in the absence of evidence of the amount of salaries that they paid their workers; it can be speculation that these salaries actually improved the standards of living of such South African employees. They could be exploiting the South African employees just like other vulnerable African immigrants are exploited as discussed in this section, but this cannot diminish the mere fact of employment creation by African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city. Nevertheless, regarding employment creation, the accusation that African immigrants do not create employment (The Sowetan, 2 May 2012: 12) is only part of the

assessment; the other part seems to be that some African immigrants do create employment. Hence, a South African trader stated that 'African immigrants create employment through their businesses. They employ both their fellow immigrants and South Africans. Even though the salaries may not be great, the fact that they do create employment for South African citizens is a good thing' (Interview with Tshepo, a South African trader, Linear Market, Wanderers Street, 6 February 2013).

For those who just form businesses, sell goods, realise profits which they send back to their countries of origin, accusations that they are the threatening other may not be so wrong. What may be wrong with regard to employment creation is to say that all African immigrants are a threat. Some are a threat and others are not. In this study, the latter may apply to those African immigrant traders like the DRC nationals, Malawians, Mozambicans and Zimbabweans who although they did not take away any jobs, their setting up of businesses whose profits were sent back to their countries origin can be regarded as a threat, as there is 'no benefit' to the Johannesburg inner city.

This seems to link with the observation that 'African immigrant traders have taken over the whole of the Johannesburg inner city with the result that they are everywhere and are running the entire Johannesburg inner city' (Interview with Pumla, a South African trader, Metro Mall, 25 February 2013). For this South African trader, such African immigrant traders had taken over the Johannesburg inner city for their own benefit and from the point of view that that South Africans did not benefit, it may be correct to regard African immigrant traders as a threat. The fact that they did not take away jobs does not necessarily equal to a benefit to the Johannesburg inner city. They may be selfishly exploiting the market in the Johannesburg inner city to sell their goods, make more money and go back to where they came from; that may be considered a threat.

What is also suggested by Table 6.1 is that African immigrant traders also created employment for fellow immigrants. This, together with the evidence that African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city created employment for South African citizens, illustrates that the popular view that African immigrants take away jobs is an incomplete appraisal. Within the macro-discourse that African immigrants

take away jobs, there is another that they do create jobs. The latter discourse does not seem to be publicised like the former. Closely linked to the perception that African immigrants took away jobs is that they accepted low salaries and because of that eroded the bargaining power of South Africans in the job market place. This view was echoed by South African traders who asserted that African immigrant traders did not create employment. In the in-depth interviews with South African traders, in the first phase 11 out of 40 interviewees (27.5%), in the second phase, 4 out of 10 interviewees (40%) and in the third phase, 1 out of 3 interviewees (33.3%) supported the view that African immigrant traders took away jobs from South Africa citizens. However, a follow-up on this issue in the third phase of interviews with South African traders revealed a complex picture.

It emerged from the interviews that the view that African immigrants accepted low salaries was too simplistic. One South African trader charged that the issue of exploitation by South African employers could not and must not be reduced to a simplistic accusation of African immigrants accepting low salaries. They said that it could be true that African immigrants accepted low salaries but that did not make them the threatening other, because the low salaries were offered by South African employers who were expected to know better about the minimum wages. If South African employers ignored this and preyed on the vulnerable immigrants means that these employers were equally a threat. This is because they were breaking the law and exploiting immigrants—a threat to people, whether they are South Africans or immigrants. Even worse, other African immigrant traders who owned companies actually or potentially exploited their fellow African immigrants. It was shown that some African immigrant traders actually owned formally registered companies and also employed fellow African immigrants, so that this is not an unreasonable suggestion and connection. Thus, the threat could not be about South African employers but all employers regardless of national origin, who wanted to make profit out of desperate African immigrants. In addition, all African immigrant traders in all phases of the interviewing process pointed out that the accusations about them taking away jobs were baseless; they could not fairly compete with the South African nationals because they did not have the bar-coded green

identity document and this made it difficult to take away jobs. It was for this reason that those African immigrants who were employed were offered low salaries by unscrupulous employers. Overall, this work seems to highlight the fact that African immigrant traders do create employment. This confirms earlier comparable researches (such as Rogerson 1997; Kalitanyi and Visser 2010). Beyond just confirming findings from these studies, this work also suggests that the perception that African immigrants take away jobs and accept low salaries is a complex issue, which does not seem to allow one dominant perception to prevail. For this cause and with regard to employment creation, a complex picture seems to emerge.

Contribution to the Achievement of South Africa's Development Goals

In addition to the aspect of employment, creation is the one that African immigrant traders helped in the achievement of South Africa's development goals. These goals are outlined in the Republic of South Africa Millennium Development Goals: Country Report (2013). The relevant development goals are Nos. 1 and 8. Millennium Development Goal (MDG); No. 1 aims to eradicate extreme poverty and No. 8 aims to develop a global partnership for development. These MDGs are integrated with the National Development Plan: Vision for 2030 (National Development Plan: vision for 2030 2011). African immigrant traders stated that they had assisted 74 South African nationals to start their own small businesses, as shown in Table 6.2.

It is important to clarify that the number of South Africans whom the African immigrant traders claimed to have assisted were not under the employ of African immigrant traders at the time of the in-depth interviews. Thus, the information in Table 6.2 should not be confused with the information in Table 6.1, because they show different aspects; for example, the two South African nationals who were assisted by the Ghanaians were not the same people who were under the employ of the same. Also, in Table 6.1, the DRC traders had not employed any

Table 6.2 South African traders assisted by African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city between 2000 and 2012

Nationality of the immigrant traders	Number of South Africans assisted	Nature of business
DRC	10	Cosmetics retailing and selling vegetables
Ghana	2	Making sandals
Mozambique	2	Buying different assortment of goods from wholesalers and reselling
Nigeria	2	Selling clothes
Somalia	50	Selling clothes
Tanzania	1	Beadwork
Zimbabwe	7	Consumable goods and vegetables

Source Drawn by author, July 2014

South African nationals, but as shown in Table 6.2, they had assisted them to start their own businesses. Employment creation for and assisting South African nationals to start their own small businesses should not be regarded as the same thing.

The African immigrant traders from the DRC said that they had assisted South African nationals by giving information about the source of goods. Ghanaian traders stated that they taught two South Africans how to make sandals and these South Africans had then opened their own shops. A Mozambican immigrant trader stated that he assisted South Africans by putting them into contact with wholesalers from whom they could buy goods cheaply and sell at low prices with handsome profits. Nigerian immigrant traders said that the South Africans were initially employees, who must have learnt how to operate a business and then gone on to start their own businesses. Furthermore, the Somali traders stated that they assisted South Africans to set up their own shops to sell clothes. They also claimed that they assisted the South Africans by giving them information on where to buy goods from wholesalers in and around the Johannesburg inner city.

I was not able to get proof of all these claims, but during the second phase of the in-depth interviews managed to speak to a South African

trader who sold vegetables from a stall. She stated that she was assisted by her Zimbabwean counterpart, and another who sold cosmetics credited that to the assistance she received from a Congolese woman. In the second phase of the interviews, the researcher also managed to interview a South African man who sold clothes, blankets and household goods and stated that the Somalis had helped him with information regarding where to buy cheap goods in larger quantities.

Due to the fact that I was not able to interview all South African nationals who allegedly benefitted from the assistance of African immigrant traders to start their own businesses, it may be the case that the rest of the information may be inaccurate, but for those I interviewed, there is evidence that this assistance did occur. Since this is a case study, it means that the information from those who were interviewed was verified. Thus, the question of whether it is true that African immigrant traders assisted South African traders to start their own businesses seems to be settled, but what remains unclear is the extent and scale of the assistance. Accepting the evidence, however limited, that African immigrant traders assisted their South African counterparts to start small businesses shows a developmental role of African immigrant traders.

The question of the two groups of traders assisting each other implies working together and illustrates a partnership for development at grassroots level; this fits in well with MDG No. 8 which targets a global partnership for development. I argue that when African immigrant traders from different countries work together with the South African traders in the Johannesburg inner city illustrates a mutually beneficial partnership. A partnership should not be defined by standards of agreements between big companies and indeed between countries. Grassroots level partnerships also count and they can be more meaningful because the impacts are direct and rules of engagement are determined by the people involved; in this case African immigrant and South African traders.

Additionally, such businesses have the potential to reduce poverty because families have a source of income, as suggested by the example of a South African lady who had opened a vegetable shop, another a cosmetics shop and a man who sells clothes, blankets and household goods. In these cases, contributions to the achievement of MDG No. 1 are clearly demonstrated. The formation of trading businesses by South

African nationals in the Johannesburg inner city as a result of assistance from the African immigrant traders means that more employment opportunities and productive work is opened up. This ties in well with the objective of 'involving communities in their own development, all leading to rising living standards' National Development Plan: Vision for 2030 (2011: 2).

This detail helps to highlight the fact that the African immigrant traders do bring a developmental role to the Johannesburg inner city, which seems to link with the South African government's commitment to building the capabilities of people and communities to reduce poverty, unemployment and inequality (The National Development Plan: Vision for 2030 2011; *The Star* 16 May 2012: 6). While it is accepted that not all African immigrant traders have contributed positively as discussed in this section, what needs to be highlighted is that it may not be correct to assume that all African immigrants cannot and do not bring positives to the area under study.

Revenue Generation and Support for the Formal Economy

Of the 40 African immigrant traders who were interviewed in the first phase of the interviewing process, 14 (35%) had registered companies and were therefore supposed to pay tax, but it must be noted that the South African government implements a graduated structure of taxing small businesses (Black et al. 2003: 176), which suggests that some African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city may not pay tax at all. Although it was not possible to establish the exact amounts that these immigrants paid, the fact that they were compelled by law to pay tax could be taken to mean that they contributed to revenue generation in the Johannesburg inner city. Another aspect of revenue generation is that 18 African immigrant traders were registered with the JMTC through the STA. They paid monthly rentals which ranged between R100 and R300 and on average this means that the African immigrant traders who were interviewed paid R2 400 a month or R43 200 annually, and, since the majority of the immigrants had been in

the country for over 5 years, this means that they had contributed R216 000 to the Johannesburg municipality.

This is an average estimate based on a small percentage of the immigrant traders studied. The actual figures could be more, but this reflects the contribution that African immigrant traders make to the Johannesburg inner city. Such income could be used by the Johannesburg municipality to provide public goods, and the contribution of this revenue by African immigrant traders can never be small. Surely this detail about the role which African immigrants play in the Johannesburg inner city needs highlighting. One can argue that if all the African immigrant traders were investigated in the Johannesburg inner city—and there were thousands—the results would show that in a month they contributed millions of South African Rands to revenue generation in Johannesburg municipality. This is a possible area for further research.

Since 8 out of 40 (20%) African immigrant traders were not registered either as companies with the CIPC or the JMTC, this means they did not contribute to revenue generation. In addition, and because it was not possible to obtain the amount of tax payments for 14 out of 40 (35%) of the registered companies, what is established is that 18 out of 40 (45%) companies paid rentals to the JMTC, as discussed in this section, made a definite contribution. In the absence of actual evidence, what is certain is that 45% (18 out of 40) of the African immigrant traders actually contributed towards revenue generation. For the registered companies, it is only probable that they paid tax based on the requirements of the law, which they may or may not respect. However, the chances are that they did pay tax, because penalties for not paying are harsh. This suggests that in respect of revenue generation, it may be incorrect to say that all African immigrants do not contribute, some do.

All immigrants interviewed stated that they paid Value Added Tax (VAT) on all goods that they bought. VAT is a type of indirect tax levied on goods and services by the national government (Black et al. 1999, 2003). An indirect tax is a way of collecting revenue from people with small incomes and those who are not captured by the tax bracket with the aim of making all the people in a country contribute to 'the upkeep of the government' (Black et al. 1999: 196, 2003: 198). Studies

show that VAT has the capacity to generate more revenue compared to the old sales tax; hence, Black et al. (1999: 199, 2003: 201) argue that VAT has attained the reputation of being a 'money machine'. Raising revenue is very important to finance government expenditure and to correct what is commonly called market failure problems. Governments need to provide public goods like roads, street lighting, law and order and defence. These are services which cannot be provided by the private sector because there is no incentive to do so. Such services are needed for an economy to function properly and for that to happen revenue is needed to finance government intervention.

On this basis, I argue that if African immigrants are accused of flooding South Africa, the flood in VAT payments must be equally highlighted because if there are many African immigrants in the Johannesburg inner city, it means that VAT also increases and helps in revenue generation. It is important to clarify that the 35% of African immigrant traders who owned registered companies stated that they paid VAT and the remainder argued that, in their individual capacities, they were charged VAT whenever they bought goods from shops in and around the Johannesburg inner city. They stated that they did not have to register in order to pay VAT as any shops from which they bought goods—shops which were registered for VAT—charged VAT on the goods sold. Thus directly or indirectly, the view from all African immigrants that they paid VAT seems to be correct. The point is that VAT is not only paid by African immigrants, but with their increased numbers they do contribute to revenue generation, which is ultimately collected by the South African Revenue Services (SARS) .This highlights the contributions that the African immigrants make in this regard in the Johannesburg inner city.

In the first phase of the in-depth interviews, 31 out of 40 (77.5%) African immigrant traders also raised a related point: they claimed that they had bank accounts and had held these accounts for as long as they had been in South Africa. They asserted that the bank charges levied on them, just like any other customer, constituted an economic contribution, as the charges on bank accounts help to raise the banks' capital. Another aspect which emerged from the in-depth interviews with the African immigrant traders in all phases of the interviewing

process—and corroborated by their fellow South Africans—was that the African immigrant traders bought their goods (for domestic use and resale both in South Africa and in their countries of origin) for cash. Over 80% (34 out of 40) of the African immigrant traders argued that in their home countries the banking sector had collapsed to such an extent that credit facilities were not available and/or were limited. Consequently, they had grown up in the culture of buying goods for cash, including cars and houses and did not find buying goods on credit attractive or clever.

As a result, the African immigrant traders argued that this contributed to money circulation, as cash is the most liquid of all assets and enables people to use it immediately, unlike credit. This also reduces the risk of default and improves business cash flows. If more people are buying for cash, shops are able to restock goods, business grows and more profits are made; thus, more revenue is generated in the form of company tax and VAT. This suggests a contribution by African immigrant traders to business turnover. Furthermore, buying for cash is a good thing when inflation is high, so that waiting to receive cash in 6 months or 12 months' time can negatively affect the real purchasing power of money.

Based on the fact that 35 out of 40 (87.5%) in the first phase, 7 out of 10 (70%) in the second and 3 out of 3 (100%) African immigrant traders in the third phase of the in-depth interviews bought their goods for cash from wholesalers around the Johannesburg inner city; this highlights a link between the formal and the informal economy where the latter arguably play an important role in keeping the former in sound business. This is because the African immigrant traders who bought goods from wholesalers and resold them to the consumers injected money into the wholesalers' businesses. It can be stated that this kept these wholesalers in business, which potentially created jobs. This is confirmed by comparable studies such as Cohen (2010), Dwyer (2010), Mapadimeng (2011).

Despite the fact that this appears to be limited evidence, it helps to show that African immigrant traders played a positive role. Finally, relative to revenue generation and support for the formal economy, studies have shown that increased immigration generally increases economic productivity (Productivity Commission 2006). Therefore, the influx of African

immigrants, especially those who formed businesses and also bought (mostly using cash) different types of goods from many wholesalers in the Johannesburg inner city generally increased the purchasing power of the economy and thus boosted demand for goods and economic growth.

Provision of Choice for Consumers

During the first phase of the in-depth interviews, 15 out of 40 (37.5%) African immigrant traders stated that they imported goods to the Johannesburg inner city, and in the second phase, 2 out of 10 (20%) provided a similar answer. In the final phase, this answer did not feature. Imported products included, for example, traditional attire and different works of arts and Malawians and Tanzanians dominated the business of importing traditional African attire. The evidence provided by these African immigrant traders was that their imported goods were very popular with both African immigrant traders and some South African citizens as well. On this basis, it is possible to advance the argument that African immigrant traders provided a choice for consumers.

It needs to be emphasised however, that, when discussing the importing function of African immigrant traders, reference is being made to fewer than half of the respondents. This being the case, the value which the African immigrants play does not diminish, but serves to highlight that this book does not intend to over-exceptionalise that African immigrant traders imported goods to the Johannesburg inner city. In addition to this, Ghanaians and Malawians claimed that they had brought special knowledge and products to South Africa such as and products of beading and embroidery. Beyond the question of choice, which the importing of goods by African immigrant traders achieved, was the view that African immigrant traders provided goods to consumers at low and affordable prices. In this vein, 36 out of 40 (90%) African immigrant traders during the first phase of the interviews, 8 out of 10 (80%) in the second phase and 2 out of 3 (66.7%) in the third phase asserted that they provided quality goods at affordable prices. These immigrant traders stated that their goods were not only of a higher quality but were also fashionable as well. This assertion was confirmed during the second

phase of interviews with both African immigrant and South Africans traders, in which 8 out of 10 (80%) of the latter group declared that they were happy with the goods which the African immigrant traders provided and added that in this regard, the African immigrant traders played an important role in the Johannesburg inner city.

Against the charge that these goods were of a lower quality, the African immigrant traders in all phases of the in-depth interview process claimed that if this was the case, they would not be in the enviable position of trying to keep up with the high and ever-increasing demand. The fact that customers flooded their shops was clear testimony that they were happy with what they were buying. This argument by African immigrant traders was corroborated by a South African trader who stated that:

> These goods meet the demand and buying power of South Africa consumers who earn low incomes. So in a way, the cheap goods are necessary. Some of these cheap goods are of a high quality and indeed the same quality as the goods that you get from stores like Edgars. For me I do not see any problem with the cheap goods. After all, the people who say these goods are cheap are those people with money who want to buy expensive goods, and they would not buy clothes from the stalls along the streets. The poor people who are the ones that buy and are dependent on these goods are not complaining. (Interview with Tshepo, a South African trader, Linear Market, Wanderers Street, 6 February 2013)

I also observed that African immigrant shops and trading stalls often had many customers and this caused congestion along streets like Bree and Plein at month end and over weekends as customers scrambled to buy from African immigrant traders' shops. The African immigrant traders argued that the best judge of the quality of the goods was someone who bought goods from them, and not someone who had had no experience of this interaction. Hence a South African trader argued that;

> The other blame is that African immigrant traders sell cheap low quality goods. The goods that the immigrants sell could be cheap, but they are affordable to many poor South Africans who cannot buy from the big

> and expensive shops. Quality in my view is relative. How is it cheap quality and to whom? The people who buy these, including myself, do not necessarily think so. (Interview with Sibusiso, a South African trader, at corner Bree and Eloff Streets, 3 February 2013)

As such, the fact that the consumers kept coming for more suggests that the African immigrant traders provided choice for consumers and they chose from both affordable and expensive goods, the former being made available by the African immigrant traders. On this basis, it appears as though African immigrant traders play a positive role in the Johannesburg inner city milieu. Other than this, African immigrant traders argued that there were shops which were owned by South African citizens which sold cheap goods but were never condemned for this. For this reason, African immigrant traders believe that:

> The complaint that African immigrant traders are selling cheap and low-quality goods is empty. I know shops that are owned by South Africans which sell cheap and sometimes low-quality goods. The shops are found all over the Johannesburg inner city, for example there is one in Hillbrow, another one in the northern parts of the Johannesburg inner city and there is another one just after Newtown. The African immigrant shops even sell better goods at low and affordable prices. If it is about cheap goods and low prices, why are shops owned by South Africans not blamed? Is it because immigrants come from poor countries, whatever they do is illegal and destructive?. (Interview with Oluche, a Nigerian immigrant trader, Metro Mall, 18 February 2013)

Investigating further the view that African immigrant traders sold cheap goods of a low quality revealed that African immigrant traders were of the opinion that such a perception was far from reality as they were not responsible for the flood of cheap goods in the first place. A Congolese trader was adamant that;

> The view that African immigrants bring and sell cheap goods is a misleading fallacy. I can tell you that it is only a few years ago that the South African government reached a deal with the Chinese government to supply a quota of textiles to South Africa. My starting point is that the South

> African government gives the green light for the import of cheap Chinese goods. How then is it a problem of the African immigrant traders that there is a flood of cheap Chinese goods in South Africa? Why does the South African government allow the import of large quantities of cheap Chinese goods in the first place? When these goods are sold by the Chinese they are not cheap and of low quality, but when African immigrants order from the Chinese wholesalers and sell the same goods at low prices it becomes a problem. My question is why it is like that or allowed to be like that? Do the goods become cheap and low quality when they are sold by African immigrant traders and expensive and high quality when they are sold by the Chinese business people, when it is the same type of goods from the same sources?. (Interview with Kasongo, a DRC immigrant trader long Eloff Street, near corner Bree and Eloff Streets, 29 January 2013)

It must be noted that in 2006, the South African government entered into a pact with the Chinese government to reduce the import of textiles, which was damaging the South African textile industry and leading to loss of jobs (Le Roux 2006; Biacuana 2009). The South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (SACTWU) reported in 2006 that over 60,000 jobs had been lost in the sector as a result of cheap Chinese imports (Le Roux 2006), a view corroborated by Biacuana (2009). It is also recorded that China is a leading exporter of clothing (Biacuana 2009). Therefore, even though the imports from China were reduced, the fact remains that cheap Chinese goods are allowed into the country by the government, which raises questions on why African immigrants are accused of selling cheap and low-quality goods from China. In addition, 'while quotas did succeed in reducing imports from China, SA's total clothing and textiles imports did not decrease. Instead, retailers predictably sourced imports from other low-cost Asian producers, such as Malaysia, Vietnam and Bangladesh. This clearly indicates the lack of competiveness in the local industry even under a highly protected environment' (Biacuana 2009: 1).

In this regard, the arguments by African immigrant traders are valid to the extent that the flood in the textile sector can be blamed on government policy regarding imports of textiles, and on the structural labour, policy and productivity issues and lack of competitiveness. This

'lack of competitiveness is aggravated by the inability of local industry to achieve short turnaround times relative to Asian counterparts who meet very short and reliable delivery times' (Biacuana 2009: 1–2). For these reasons, 'the decline of SA's clothing and textiles sector cannot be entirely blamed on imports from Asia (or China). There are serious competitiveness problems that need to be dealt with if the sector is to have any sustainable future' (Biacuana 2009: 1–2). Consequently, there may be some validity in the claims by African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city that the accusation that they sell cheap and low-quality goods may be an incomplete evaluation. As such, it is also evident that African immigrants are not responsible for the flood of cheap textile imports into the Johannesburg inner city.

The in-depth interviews also revealed the issue of business competition in the Johannesburg inner city. In the first phase of in-depth interviews, 22 out of 40 (55%) South African traders asserted that they felt threatened by other traders—both South African and African immigrants—who sold their goods in front of their shops. This threatened their businesses and had nothing to do with whether competing traders were South Africans or African immigrants, registered or not. It is also interesting to record that, during the first phase of in-depth interviews, 17 out of 40 (42.5%) African immigrant traders also felt threatened by street traders, regardless of nationality. This suggests that the mere presence of African immigrant traders is not such a big problem with the South Africans who are in daily contact with these people.

Related to the above is that African immigrants as human beings are not the threatening other; the threat is about the way they operate their enterprises and the profits that they make, which the South Africans traders seem to have been not able to do. Results show that 33 out of 40 (82.5%) during the first phase of the in-depth interviews, 7 out of ten (70%) during the second phase and 2 out of 3 (66.7%) interviewees in the third phase of the in-depth interviews with South African traders were of the view that African immigrant traders realised higher profits in their businesses than the South African traders. These South African interviewees accepted that this does not make the African immigrant traders bad. The fact that African immigrant traders achieved good profits could be due to their hard work ethic and working extremely longer

hours. The same South African traders stated that African immigrant traders achieved higher profits than them. Further, they also highlighted that African immigrants operated from spacious and smart shops and sold their goods in bulk. This lowered prices even further, which negatively impacted on the South African traders who claimed they could not afford the high rentals for spacious and smart areas where the African immigrant traders operated.

This suggests that the threat here is not about being foreign but about business practices and making a profit. This can provide a lesson for policy direction in terms of properly empowering South African traders in the Johannesburg inner city to acquire business skills through effective capacity-building programmes and also to have the necessary resources to launch viable enterprises—something the African immigrant traders are seen to have been able to do. The results suggest that the dearth of capital affects South African traders in the Johannesburg inner city. The starting point would be to properly empower them. An argument can be made that if African immigrant traders are occupying large and spacious offices which the South African traders fail to do, it is not correct to view the immigrant traders as placing limitations on the capacity of South African traders. This narrative helps to illustrate the need to always move beyond a discourse that promotes a simplistic accusation of African immigrant as the problematic other.

Revitalising the Johannesburg Inner City

Before giving an appraisal of what African immigrant traders have contributed in the revitalisation of the Johannesburg inner city, it is necessary to briefly describe the spatial and environmental conditions based on the in-depth interviews and field observations that I made.

- Between Loveday and Rissik Streets along Bree Street to the East, there were several clothing shops operated mostly by Somalis. I noted that there were two big shops which had been renovated.
- Between Rissik and Joubert Streets, along Bree Street both to the East and West, over 25 shops operated from visibly unclean trading

stalls. I identified one refurbished shop (on the eastern side of Bree Street) to be operated by an African immigrant trader.

- Along Joubert Street, two refurbished shops were identified and I interviewed African immigrant shop owners who operated from spacious and renovated shops, but the area is generally overcrowded by both African immigrant and South African traders
- Between Joubert and Eloff Streets, along Bree Street, I noticed that African immigrant shops operated side-by-side with established outlets such as Ellerines and Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). Another observation was that on the pavements and next to the streets, where some African immigrant operated from stalls, the area was filthy and full of garbage—especially dirty old boxes and bags which used to contain clothes, spoilt vegetables, used hair products and other types of litter. This was also evident along both Eloff and Joubert Streets within the study area.
- Between Eloff and Wanderers Streets, along Bree Street, a similar pattern was observed, as was the pattern between and along Joubert and Eloff Streets.
- At Linear Market (Wanderers Street), refurbishment by the City of Johannesburg had taken place but areas from which African immigrant and South Africa traders were operating were dirty.
- Along Wanderers Street, before the intersection with Plein Street, there were three refurbished shops from which some African immigrant traders operated.
- Along Plein Street, between Wanderers and Eloff Streets, there were four refurbished shops, mostly operated by African immigrant traders. The streets were dirty, mostly from cooking utensils being cleaned by both African immigrant and South African traders selling consumable goods, especially meat and *pap*. They washed their plates and threw water onto the pavement and the street.
- Between Joubert and Eloff Streets, along Plein Street, the area was crowded with stalls and the streets were dirty.
- Between Rissik and Joubert Streets, along Plein Street, there was refurbishment of two shops, some of which had been painted and tiled.
- Along Plein Street, between Rissik and Loveday Streets, the area was generally dirty and between Loveday and Harrison Streets—especially

at the intersection of Harrison and Plein Streets—the area was crowded with shops. Between Harrison and Simmonds Streets is the Home Affairs Building, to the South of which is Metro Mall.
- Metro Mall was generally crowded and both African immigrant and South African traders operated.

The revitalisation or the gentrification of the Johannesburg inner city is on the agenda of the City of Johannesburg, as expressed in the Joburg 2040: Growth and Development Strategy (2011). The refurbishment of the Linear Market at Wanderers Street is an attempt by the City of Johannesburg to clean the area and make it conducive for traders, be they immigrants or South Africans. The composition of the traders in this market suggests there are both South African nationals and African immigrant traders. However, after the refurbishment by the City of Johannesburg, Linear Market is generally dirty and littered. Considering that both African immigrants and South Africans operate from this market, without a proper quantification of which group of people littered more than others, it is possible to argue that at the Linear Market, both African immigrant and South African traders are not helping the efforts of the City of Johannesburg to clean up the area.

Within the study area, 14 shops had been revamped by African immigrant traders: two between Loveday and Rissik Streets, along Bree Street; one between Joubert and Rissik Streets, along Bree Street; two along Joubert Street; three along Wanderers Street; four between Wanderers and Eloff Streets, along Plein Street; and two between Rissik and Joubert Streets, along Plein Street. The interviewed African immigrant traders explained that the landlords had rented them shop spaces and granted them permission to partition, paint and tile the shops and also make any other improvements. The cost of refurbishing and revitalising the shops had been an effort by the African immigrant traders and not the landlords. Given the fact that 14 out of over 300 shops and stalls in the study area had been revitalised, this looks insignificant.

However, given the fact that private capital from the African immigrant traders had been used to give a facelift to buildings which were nearing dilapidation can be considered important, however small the

effort. I discussed in Chap. 3 that the City of Johannesburg wanted to clean the Johannesburg inner city by attracting both the private and public sectors to invest in and renovate the buildings. Although the interviewed African immigrant traders had not bought the buildings, they had achieved some renovation and this falls perfectly in line with the agenda of the City of Johannesburg to give the Johannesburg inner city a facelift. It is accepted that African immigrants have done a little to regenerate the area, but that little bit contributes to the achievement of the objectives of the cleaning and revitalising the Johannesburg inner city. It can be considered as a bottom-up strategy of gentrification based on individual people who invest their own money. Although these African immigrant traders repair these buildings for personal and even selfish reasons, such as to attract many customers and make more money, the indirect result is that they revitalise and develop the Johannesburg inner city, even though this happens on a very small scale.

However, it is important to state that the revamped shops operate side-by-side with environmental conditions which seem to add degeneration and dilapidation to the area. For example, along Joubert Street, two shops had been refurbished, but on the same street there was overcrowding and the area was generally dirty and littered. The same observation was made in the area between Eloff and Joubert Streets, along Bree Street, as well as between Eloff and Wanderers Streets, along both Bree and Plein Streets, and also at the Metro Mall. In some areas, African immigrant traders on the streets littered the pavements in front of food outlets such as KFC and big retail outlets like Ellerines, Fair Price among others.

This scenario questions the developmental role of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city regarding their efforts to revitalise the area. Could we call it a positive impact on the environment when refurbished shops coexisted with garbage and litter and when African immigrant traders operated in front of and littered places around food outlets like KFC? There is no definite answer to these questions, just as there can be no definite apportioning of blame. Those African immigrant traders who have clearly redeveloped the areas in which they operate should not be classified under the same label as those who litter and wash cooking utensils on the streets.

In addition, this discussion suggests that South African traders are also guilty of littering Johannesburg inner city. Thus, it appears as though, far from there being one certain answer that African immigrants have led to the dilapidation or ghettoisation of the Johannesburg inner city, they have led to both positives and negatives. They have led to the revitalisation of shops in the area; some have littered the place and some have crowded the place. Regarding the revitalisation of the Johannesburg inner city, are African immigrant traders completely bad and negative? It seems as though some can be regarded as having a negative effect and some do not. As discussed in this section, some areas have been developed by the African immigrant traders and some have been destroyed. For this cause, in the Johannesburg inner city, there are spatial and environmental manifestations of gentrification and/or regeneration and dilapidation existing side-by-side and African immigrants have been responsible for this paradoxical co-existence.

Transnational Character of African Immigrant Traders

Some African immigrant traders, such as Nigerians, Tanzanians, Ghanaians, Malawians and Zimbabweans, demonstrated a transnational character. These African immigrant traders have brought new goods to the Johannesburg inner city—for example, African traditional attire—and this enriches the market. From the in-depth interviews, it was clear that African immigrant traders also took South African products to their countries. The Nigerian entrepreneur who ran a courier company also confirmed this. Interview data show that 11 out of 40 (27.5%) African immigrant traders came to the Johannesburg inner city not for employment, but to set up business and buy various goods and services for their businesses back home.

Before a discussion of the implications of the transnational character of African immigrant traders, it is important to briefly discuss the nature and forms of transnational activities in which these African immigrant traders engaged. Malawians, Mozambicans, Tanzanians and

Zimbabweans (23 out of 40), representing about 57.5% of the African immigrant traders, imported goods to the Johannesburg inner city which they sold from their trading stalls. Once these goods were sold, they bought goods from the Johannesburg inner city for resale in their countries of origin. This is an example of 'circulatory transnationalism' (Ambrosin 2014: 622).

In addition to this, Ghanaians, Malawians and Tanzanians also imported traditional African attire for sale to fellow African immigrant traders and South African citizens. This is an example of or 'commercial transnationalism' (Ambrosin 2014: 622). Further, 17 out of 40 (42.5%) African immigrant traders who did not travel to their countries of origin explained that they sent remittances, especially money. Regarding the monetary remittances, it is instructive to note that an average of about R20,000, was sent out every month. These remittances show economic leakage. Zimbabweans, Malawians and Mozambicans also sent material goods. This transnational pattern conforms to 'connective transnationalism' (Ambrosin 2014: 622).

A discussion on the implications of this transnational aspect of African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city is important as it assists the aim of this work. Concerning the actual and potential benefits of goods which were imported by African immigrant traders, an argument was made in the preceding sections that these goods provided variety to the market. In addition, African immigrant traders also exported goods which they bought from wholesalers in and around the Johannesburg inner city. While it is accepted that there are Chinese wholesalers in the study area, what is also true is that there are South African wholesalers from whom African immigrants bought goods, which they in turn exported. Additionally, all African immigrant traders explained that they bought their goods from both Chinese and South African wholesalers, and it was impossible to work out exactly the percentages of African immigrant and South African traders who bought their goods from either Chinese of South African groups of wholesalers. This is because the same African immigrant traders who bought from Chinese wholesalers also bought from South African wholesalers, depending on the availability, price and type of goods which they were looking for.

Based on the fact that African immigrant traders bought their goods from South African wholesalers as well, it can be argued that these African immigrant traders provided easy avenues for export of South African goods to the African market. The extent to which this can economically contribute to the Johannesburg inner city economy begs further research, but what is suggested is that the immigrants do export goods made in South Africa to their countries of origin, although they also export Chinese goods. After all, these Chinese wholesalers operate from, among other places, the Johannesburg inner city. It is possible to argue that even when African immigrant traders export goods from these Chinese wholesalers operating in the Johannesburg inner city, there is an increase in economic activity which should ideally benefit the Johannesburg inner city. Again, this is a possible area for future research.

In the process of exporting goods from the Johannesburg inner city, Zimbabwean immigrant traders claimed that not only did they operate businesses in the Johannesburg inner city, but they also bought goods such as clothes and building materials which they later resold in Zimbabwe. A similar view was expressed by Malawians, Mozambicans and Tanzanians. It is not the government, South African companies and/or wholesalers that were importing and exporting these goods, but African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city. On a very small scale, this demonstrates a positive economic benefit to those wholesalers and industries in the Johannesburg inner city from which goods are exported. Furthermore, the consumers in general also benefited from tastes (imports) from other countries on the African continent. This aspect suggests that the import and export activities of the African immigrant traders are integrated with the economies of the Johannesburg inner city, thus further highlighting an interface between the formal and informal economy. This is a benefit, but more empirical research is needed to define and elaborate on the exact nature and extent of integration between the urban formality and informality in the study area and benefits that South African companies in the Johannesburg inner city enjoy as a result of goods exported to the African region by African immigrant traders.

While discussing the issue of imports and exports, it necessary to comment on whether African immigrant traders paid import and export

taxes. In the beginning of this discussion, it was noted that 23 out of 40 (57.5%) African immigrant traders were involved in the import and export activities. Of these, 9 out of 23 (39.1%) stated that they paid import duties. These respondents stated that the amounts they paid at the border were not uniform, as it depended on the goods which they were importing. They stated that they filled in 'declaration forms', and paid import duties accordingly. Although the number of people who paid these import duties is low, the contribution which they made can still count towards revenue generation. It is possible that the other African immigrant traders imported their goods without paying import taxes and in that way prejudiced the government of revenue. Even worse, those African immigrant traders who stated that they did not import actually did so, which could mean substantial economic leakage.

An interesting revelation was that the same African immigrant traders who stated that they paid import tax when they brought their goods into South Africa did not pay any tax when they exported goods. They highlighted that at the South Africa borders, it was not a challenge to export, but to import. I did not follow up on this issue. Hence, follow-up research on this is necessary to establish if it is standard procedure to export goods without paying a tax, or whether it is dependent on the types of goods exported, and how this impacts revenue collection for the government. The evidence of transnational activity by African immigrant traders aptly demonstrates the concept of transnationalising traders, which are entrepreneurial activities that take place across national borders (Yeung 2009). For example, Ghanaians, Malawians, Nigerians, Tanzanians and Zimbabwean traders have shown that they were transnationalising traders in the sense that their businesses were not limited to, but spread beyond South Africa in a periodic mobile fashion. The importing of goods from other African countries to and exporting of goods from South Africa demonstrates that the African immigrant traders were integrating the economic activities of the African countries concerned. This seems to be in keeping with the stated objectives of the African Union as highlighted in the Abuja Treaty (Treaty Establishing African Economic Community 1991) .

Taking this argument further, it is important for me to comment on the fact that the integration of the African continent to form the AEC in

2028 should be based on fully functional regional economic blocks like the EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, CEN-SAD, COMESA, GAD, UMA and SADC. South Africa is part of the SADC and the AU and by extension the proposed AEC. Therefore, when African immigrant traders from Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe import goods from their countries and also export South African goods, this can be considered as integrating the SADC region economically. This enhances functional interdependency between the South African companies in the Johannesburg inner city and consumers in other African countries. This is because these African immigrant traders sell their goods from their own countries in South Africa, and they do the same to South African goods in their countries. Such is grassroots economic integration, and this is in line with the both the objectives of the AU and SADC, the latter being stated in the *Declaration and Treaty of SADC* (1992). Indeed, Mitrany (1975) argues that bottom-up economic processes such as cross-border trade are central to regional integration, because top-down approaches tend to be resisted by people. Thus, there seems to be a case in the argument that transnational economic activities by African immigrant traders could contribute towards the integration of the SADC.

In this regard, I suggest that African immigrant traders can be a basis for regional economic integration and also a mechanism for developing those areas that lag behind; the areas from which immigrants originate. When these immigrants attempt to make a living in the Johannesburg inner city, they are attempting to economically advance themselves and their communities in their countries of origin; they are attempting to close the gap between the rich and the poor. This is of geographical relevance in terms of showing, firstly, the unevenness of development, and secondly, the gaps between the rich and poor countries and how migration can potentially and actually help to reduce these imbalances. This is one of the reasons for the formation of SADC and the proposed AEC. The African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city seem to be doing that well. For example, a Nigerian trader operating a courier company shared that he delivered goods to over 20 African countries. He was distributing goods from the Johannesburg inner city, suggesting that companies in the Johannesburg inner city were integrating with consumers in 20 African countries. In this sense, these

African immigrant traders can be seen as spreading globalisation from below, which in the same vein Yeung (2009: 211) calls 'mobile carriers of globalisation'. How these African immigrant traders can be avenues for regional economic integration and developing the underdeveloped regions in Africa deserves further research, but in this work, I point towards this potential.

Unproductive and Destructive Traders

In order to fully appreciate the contribution of African immigrant traders to the Johannesburg inner city, it is necessary to briefly explore the illegal activities of destructive and unproductive traders. Such enterprises lack legitimacy and the approval of the communities in which they operate (Baumol 1990, 1993; Anderson and Smith 2007; Van Aardt et al. 2008, 2011; Bendeman 2011). The view that African immigrants engaged in illegal activities in their shops, such as selling drugs and other crime, is widespread as discussed in Chaps. 2 and 3. To interrogate this notion, I considered the views of fellow African immigrant traders, the South African traders, in all phases of the in-depth interview process, and the JMPD, in order to get close to the reality of the situation. The first phase of the in-depth interviews suggested that 7 out of 40 (17.5%) African immigrant traders stated that fellow African immigrant traders sold drugs as opposed to 11 out of 40 (27.5%) South African traders. In the second and third phases, 2 out of 10 (20%) and 1 out of 3 (33.3%) African immigrant traders stated that their fellow traders sold drugs, as opposed to 4 out of 10 (40%) and 1 out of 3 (33.3%) South African traders, respectively.

What is suggested by these results is that both African immigrant and fellow South African traders believe that drug peddling by African immigrant traders does take place. The fact that African immigrant traders sell drugs is bad enough and this makes them a threat, especially given the fact that there is a consensus of views from both African immigrant and South African traders. Even if these views are in the minority, this should not make the selling of drugs a small problem. The interview with the JMPD inspector confirmed that some African immigrant

traders like Nigerians sold drugs. The Inspector explained that some Nigerians in the Johannesburg inner city used their shops as fronts for drug peddling. He asserted that those Nigerians pretended to be selling sweets and repairing cell phones when in fact they were selling drugs. He explained that what he was saying was based on the fact that the JMPD had arrested Nigerians who were guilty of this practice. Based on the views of fellow African immigrant traders, South African traders and the JMPD, it is clear that some African immigrant traders sold drugs.

When asked further about this issue, the African immigrant traders said that criminal activity, including selling drugs, was not a profession reserved for African immigrants. They claimed that it was true or possible that there were some African immigrant traders who were involved in illegal activities in their businesses, but there were others that were working for their money honestly. They argued that, just as there are good and bad South African citizens, why can't there be bad and good African immigrants? Why is it that all African immigrants are seen as bad and criminals? That being so, a Nigerian immigrant trader stated:

> I have seen foreigners who sell drugs. I have seen Ethiopians and even my fellow compatriots selling drugs. What is more interesting is that I have also seen South African citizens who sell these drugs as well. From this, it is clear that to blame drugs on African immigrants is untruthful. These drugs are sold to South African and other nationalities, which means that African immigrants are negatively affected by the drug peddling activities. It is not only South African citizens that are victims, but when you read newspapers about drugs, we get the impression that they are only sold to South Africans by African immigrants and South Africans are the only ones affected. That is an unfortunate misrepresentation. Problems in society affects everyone, they do not select nationality or citizenship. (Interview with Oluche a Nigerian immigrant trader, Metro Mall, 18 February 2013)

It is apparent that some African immigrant traders engaged in illegal activities, which makes them destructive. However, their South African counterparts are not innocent because some are guilty of the same practices. What must be told is that both African immigrants and South African nationals are responsible for these ills and blaming one side and

promoting the other will not solve the problem. In the light of this evidence, it is clear that media reports like these are not well informed: 'Many of us live in fear of foreign gangsters and conmen' (*Daily Sun* 14 May 2008: 3) and 'magic rats are stealing my cash, a tuck shop owner believes that a Zimbabwean merchant is sending debt collectors to her place—magical rats—the frightened woman admits that she has owed the alien merchant money since last year' (*Daily Sun* 14 May 2008). Such reports give the impression that African immigrants are con stars and cannot do business properly. In the same vein, the South African is referred to as a woman and the Zimbabwean is called an alien, when it is known that the person is from Zimbabwe. The newspaper chose to emphasise the alien part, rather than the fact that she is an immigrant from Zimbabwe

In addition, African immigrant traders argued that they were equally affected by criminal activities just like any other person in South Africa, and to apply the label of drug peddler to all African immigrant traders was inaccurate. The interviews with the South African traders, fellow African immigrants and the JMPD show that the majority of African immigrants do not sell drugs, which means the claim that there are good and bad African immigrants is true, just as it is true that there are good and bad South Africans. Therefore, the fact that a very limited number of immigrants are engaged in drugs does not make all of them in the Johannesburg inner city guilty *ipso facto*.

During the second phase of in-depth interviews, I was alerted to a Nigerian immigrant trader who had been arrested a few days earlier for selling drugs; he was out of jail and back in his shop. The African immigrant and the South African traders who alerted me to this man claimed that the Nigerian was bragging that he was out because he had bribed the police. It can therefore be argued that the issue of selling drugs would be limited if the law enforcement agents were not interested parties. Two interviewees, one South African and the other an African immigrant trader, reasoned that illegal activities such as selling drugs continued unchecked because of corruption on the part of the JMPD. Seemingly, this is a complicated set-up, and how it is the sole result of the African immigrant traders only, is difficult to understand, suggesting it is wrong to apportion the label of the threatening other

to the African immigrants traders only, at least in respect of drug peddling. In this scenario, it is reasonable to argue that the JMPD allow it to continue because they benefitted. If those who deal in drugs (however small the quantities) are arrested, there will be no more bribes for the police. In this way, the police become responsible for the continued existence of and, by extension, become accomplices in drug peddling in the Johannesburg inner city. It clearly follows that a proper and objective accusation of the role of African immigrant traders in respect of drug peddling in the Johannesburg inner city must of necessity capture these dynamics.

Linked to the issue of drugs is that of pirated goods. During all the phases of in-depth interviews, I observed that some African immigrant traders would close their shops whenever the JMPD passed by. It was established that these immigrant traders were guilty of selling fake brands and improperly imported goods. This makes their shops destructive. However, in the second phase of the in-depth interviews, I unearthed that there was a lot of corruption involved. Some African immigrant traders claimed that their goods had passed through immigration or ports of entry by paying bribes. It was not possible to follow up on the issue, but what is clear at a preliminary level is that some of the pirated goods enter South Africa at ports of entry where African immigrant traders paid bribes. Therefore, when African immigrant traders pay these bribes it is wrong, but for the South African authorities at ports of entry to accept these bribes and allow illegal goods into the country is not only bad, but worse. For this reason, African immigrants asserted that that was the reason there were tonnes of pirated goods in the Johannesburg inner city; even though they were 'imported', they were not formally registered. Consequently, the African immigrant traders argued that:

> A related point is that many foreigners from outside Africa smuggle goods into South Africa. These goods pass through some official entry points where the officials are bribed. When we order these goods, they are already pirated because the culprits who are not always African immigrants bribed customs and immigration officers. When we sell them in our shops, we would have bought them from wholesalers around Johannesburg inner city, but it is sad that we, African immigrants, are

> branded as the lawless people who sell pirated goods, when in some cases we unknowingly bought goods from big wholesalers who are not even troubled or visited by the Johannesburg Metropolitan Police. The African immigrant traders suffer and are labelled negatively because they are easy targets, vulnerable people, who cannot always speak out and be heard. (Interview with Oluche a Nigerian immigrant trader, Metro Mall, 18 February 2013)

In relation to corruption by South African authorities, the findings of these interviews were later confirmed by an Amnesty International Report that South Africa has become more corrupt since 2009, and on a corruption perception index it was now ranked 69 out of 176 countries globally. This corruption involved, among other issues, the harassment by police officers of foreign traders. The police officers are accused of confiscating and/or looting and reselling goods belonging to immigrant traders (Brooke 2012; Giokos 2012).

Closely linked to the above is the issue of pirated musical CDs and DVDs, associated with African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city. The interviews reveal that both African immigrant traders and South African nationals were involved in the selling of pirated musical CDs and DVDs. I observed and conversed with both South African and African immigrant traders who were selling these pirated goods. It is difficult to understand why the African immigrant traders appear to be the guilty party in this situation. What is certain is that this illegal trade is harmful to the music industry in that it deprives the artists of income and the government of taxes that are due to them. Both South African and international artists suffer. While the traders, whether African immigrants or South Africans, make quick profits, the long-term effect is that it amounts to stealing from the artists and the government. This cannot be celebrated as entrepreneurial.

Further, those unregistered traders who operated along the streets suffered police corruption because the police confiscated their goods, which made the traders either pay heavy fines or bribe the police in order to have a right to trade on the streets of the Johannesburg inner city. African immigrant traders commented that the JMPD was corrupt because whenever those patrolling the streets needed money, they

approached shops owned by African foreigners and made accusations about the failure of these shop owners to observe some laws, of which they had never been aware. If African immigrant traders failed to bribe them, they looted their goods from designated trading zones. Those who bribed the police earned the right to trade on the streets of the Johannesburg inner city. It can further be commented that due to the fact that the JMPD allowed all manner of people to trade on the streets, including in undesignated trading zones, this provided fertile ground for the proliferation of dangerous underground economic activities. If the African immigrant traders break the law in terms of conducting illegal activities and trading in undesignated zones, they must face the full course of the law, and not be made to pay bribes. Therefore, when police officers solicit, and the African immigrant traders offer bribes, this makes the two parties corrupt, but most unfortunately promotes dangerous underground economic activities. This has the potential of turning Johannesburg inner city into a dangerous place.

Therefore, regarding destructive and unproductive traders, interview results suggest that these could be operating just as much as there are good and productive shops run by African immigrant traders, but this cannot diminish or erase the contributions of good, honest and hardworking African immigrant traders. As such, the claim that all the African immigrant traders are the threatening other in terms of the criminal activities is not supported, because there are good and honest African immigrant traders who are themselves threatened by illegal and criminal activities by both South African citizens and African immigrants. The threatening other in this case is not the African immigrant traders only.

Spread of Disease

It is important to consider what the African immigrant and South African traders said about the spread of disease. This is relevant in view of the fact that African immigrants are accused of importing and spreading diseases such as HIV/AIDS. All African immigrant traders interviewed argued that it was not fact that they spread diseases; they claimed the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS was a result of the

interplay of many and sometimes complex factors such as culture, level of education, poverty and indeed migration. They argued that to attribute the increase in HIV/AIDS rates in the Johannesburg inner city to the presence of African immigrants was simplistic. During the second phase of in-depth interviews, a South African man who operated from a stall at the corner of Bree and Eloff Streets contested the claim that African immigrants bring in and spread disease by suggesting that in KwaZulu-Natal, especially in the rural areas, there were higher incidences of HIV/AIDS infection and there were no foreigners in these rural areas. The South African man stated that these are South African people who are based in rural areas where there is limited or no contact with foreigners. He asserted that the example that he gave showed that it was not exactly correct to accuse foreigners of being promiscuous and in the process spreading disease. This is telling to the extent that it comes from a South African citizen who is in daily contact with the African immigrants and understands that some accusations are baseless.

Taking Over the Johannesburg Inner City: Burden on Infrastructure

Against the charge that they had invaded and taken over the Johannesburg inner city, the African immigrant traders argued that this is an oversimplification of the real issue on the ground, which was that the stalls which the African immigrants currently occupied had been empty and they had applied to the JMTC which allocated them. All along the South Africans had not been interested in these stalls. Consequently, African immigrant traders contend that because they applied for and were granted permission to operate in an economic space; it cannot be regarded as taking over or invading. While it is true that there may be African immigrants who were illegally trading, it is curious that they are the ones mentioned and highlighted more than those who were legally and legitimately allocated trading stalls and spaces.

Regarding the view that the African immigrants were a serious burden on the social and physical infrastructure, the African immigrant

traders argued that this was an oversimplification and a misrepresentation of the reality. This was because the African immigrants were not exactly connected to South African resources, as they were not South African citizens. The African immigrant traders claimed that they paid for the social and physical infrastructure that they used and did not get anything free of charge. They maintained that by paying cash for the different types of infrastructures that they used, they felt that they contributed to the Johannesburg inner city, rather than taking away from or destroying the infrastructure. They asserted that both physical and social infrastructures were built to be used and the fact that they paid for their use, emphasises the inaccuracy of the view that they prey on the South African resources and infrastructures. This view was forcefully advanced by a Nigerian immigrant trader, who adamantly asserted that;

> There are claims that we prey on South African resources, which I think is not absolutely correct. I believe that the majority of African immigrants in South Africa today are not connected to South African resources. I can demonstrate this by telling you that the bar-coded green identity book is the most recognised document and rightfully so for purposes of employment and access to resources, which means that with a passport and work permit, the latter of which is nearly impossible to get, African immigrants are excluded already, they are not directly connected to employment, and this leaves them vulnerable and easy prey for unscrupulous employers who offer them meagre salaries. Secondly, the social and physical infrastructure that we use, we pay for them. We do not ask for houses, we buy or rent flats and houses. We also pay for the rates and rent. When claims are made that we prey on and use up resources what else does that mean, except that African immigrants are not wanted in South Africa? The shops that I rent, I pay the South African owner as do many other foreigners. The goods that I order from the wholesalers around Johannesburg inner city and others that I import are sold at affordable prices. I raise these points because I want to show that it is impossible for all the African immigrants to be a threat or a problem, which your research calls the threatening other. (Interview with Oluche, a Nigerian immigrant trader, Metro Mall, 18 February 2013)

However, the argument against this view can be levelled; the fact that it is not so much about paying for the infrastructure, but exerting too

much pressure. If there are many people on limited infrastructure; whether they paid for it or not, does not stop if from wearing down. After all, it was not all African immigrants who rented and paid for the business shops; others actually traded from the undesignated zones along streets, which can qualify as a burden on infrastructure. That aside, the argument from the Nigerian immigrant trader seems to highlight what they think they contributed; which contribution need not be exaggerated and must be considered against the negative outcomes that may be associated with the use of the infrastructure.

Conclusion

I have argued that African immigrant traders are, on the one hand, linked to their South African counterparts and on the other to the formal economy with both actual and potential economic and social contributions. In addition, African immigrant traders do contribute towards, for example, employment creation, South African development goals, revitalising the Johannesburg inner city, the provision of a variety of goods in the market at affordable prices as well as revenue generation. What is also suggested by these results is that, it is not all African immigrant traders who make the contributions mentioned in this section. Not all African immigrant traders create employment and contribute to the achievement of South Africa`s development goals, for example. Some actively contribute towards the deteriorating environmental conditions.

Taking everything into account, an examination of the evidence provided by the African immigrant traders—and largely corroborated by South African traders—suggests that the issue of African immigrant traders as the threatening other is not simple and straightforward because contributions made by African immigrant traders are of a variegated nature. Therefore, whether African immigrant traders are the threatening other or not remains unsettled. Hence, in an attempt to settle this question and highlight the complex nature of the issue of the threatening other, the next chapter takes up the deconstruction of the threatening other further through an intensive appraisal of the evidence obtained.

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7

Reinterpreting the Hierarchy and Finding New Perspectives

Introduction

On the basis of the analysis in the preceding chapter, the dominant discourse in contemporary South Africa which portrays African immigrants as the threatening other is not the complete assessment. By highlighting alternative perceptions, interview data denied the authority of the discourse that African immigrants are a problem, which gives way to new views on the threatening other and what is not said about African immigrants. In this way, interviews with the African immigrant and South African traders in the Johannesburg inner city necessarily included rebel voices, which troubled the dominant discourse that African immigrants are the threatening other. Based on this, this book is re-authoring the prevailing discourse, to include suppressed, marginalised or excluded views about African immigrants. This reinterpretation of the hierarchy is the deconstruction of the threatening other through in-depth interviews with the people who are actively involved in the scene—African immigrant traders and their South African counterparts. This was considered important because the views and perceptions of the people involved proved more valuable than the information from

I. Moyo, *African Immigrant Traders in Inner City Johannesburg*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-57144-7_7

the popular press and the public domain. It is important to reiterate that this book illuminates the dynamics in the Johannesburg inner city and does pretend to represent the whole of Johannesburg or the whole country. The results of this resituating is that African immigrant traders bring a mixture of positives and negatives suggesting that absolute portrayals of African immigrants as the needy, destitute, defiled and dangerous anti-citizens should not have a place and must not be accorded one in the public and private discourses.

Tracing What is not Said

What is not said about African immigrants are their positive or other contributions to the communities in which they have elected to live. I argued in Chap. 2 that, what is not said is by design, and not a result of naïve representations, because the absolute portrayal of African immigrants as problematic people takes prominence and precedence. The popular discourse does not separate between African immigrants who create employment and those who do not; the perception is that all African immigrants take away jobs and by extension do not create any employment (see e.g., *Daily Sun* 17 April 2008b: 8; *The Sowetan* 14 November 2011: 9). I argue that in the media and public discourse, there should be a separation of African immigrant traders on the basis of those who create employment and those who do not, just as there are South African traders who argued that some African immigrant traders created employment and some who said they did not. They may not be great jobs, but they are still jobs from which South Africans are salaried. Furthermore, although I did not explore the issue of salaries paid to South African citizens who were employed by African immigrant traders, it is possible that they could have been exploited. If the suggestion that exploitation of South African citizens was possible in the African immigrant shops is accepted, the aspect of employment creation by these African immigrant traders becomes open to many questions. Queries can be raised regarding the quality of employment that African immigrant traders create, such as: Are the conditions of employment good and the salaries above the minimum wage? While it is accepted and arguable that

some employment is better than no employment, these questions are brought to the fore so as to contextualise and qualify the contribution to employment creation by African immigrant traders in this work.

Further, African immigrant traders also created employment for other African immigrants. This illustrates that African immigrants help each other and may not always be dependent on the government and the City of Johannesburg. In the example of employment creation by African immigrant traders and the questioning of the discourse of the threatening other, several views emerge. The first is that, although not all African immigrant traders created employment, it is no longer debatable that African immigrant traders create employment what is debatable is the scale of this contribution. Secondly, the fact that some African immigrant traders create employment means that the complete accusation that African immigrants take away jobs is disabled. Thirdly, this means that not all African immigrants are destitute, needy and burdensome. Not all of them are anti-citizens.

However, without undermining the fact that African immigrant traders contribute towards employment creation, I take the debate further and comment on the fact that African immigrant traders who set up their businesses and exploit the business potential in the Johannesburg inner city may in fact be regarded as selfish. While it is accepted that there may be other factors which lead such businesses to fail to create employment, the views from some South African traders that such businesses may be a threat by sending profits back to their countries of origin may not be very wrong. However, in cases where such African immigrant traders have operated legally and registered their businesses, would it be wrong to invest the profits elsewhere? Do they become anti-citizens by remitting profits to their countries of origin? After all, there is direct employment which, some of these African immigrant traders did not create, but this could be looked at differently. These African immigrant traders buy and sell goods which it could be suggested generated demand for some goods and services from the wholesalers where they bought these goods. Such demand promotes the productive sector to employ more labour. The fact that they did not create direct employment may not mean that they cannot indirectly contribute towards the creation of employment.

Not much is said about the contribution of African immigrant traders to the achievement of South Africa's development goals. Although I did not interview all South African traders who were assisted by African immigrant traders to start their business, it is settled that the assistance did occur in light of the evidence presented in Chap. 6. Based on this evidence, the suggestion is that African immigrant traders have contributed towards the achievement of MDGs 1 and 8, as expressed in the Republic of South Africa Millennium Development Goals: Country Report (2013) and in relationship to the objectives of the National Development Plan Vision 2030 (National Development Plan 2011: 5). African immigrant traders have taught some South African traders skills and some of the South African traders now earn a livelihood based on the businesses which they now operate in the Johannesburg inner city. The popular press and public discourse does not pay attention to such details.

Additionally, the fact that African immigrant traders worked together with South African citizens, 'teaching' each other no matter how small the numbers of people involved may be, aptly demonstrates a semblance of a partnership for development, that is achieving MDG No. 8. If development is conceptualised as a multidimensional process which includes all attempts aimed at the improvement of the human condition, the fact that South African traders learn some business skills from African immigrant traders and apply the same to earn a living also qualifies as an aspect of development. In addition, such partnerships suggest that there is a possibility for the transfer of skills and knowledge, as in the case of embroidery which the Tanzanians and Ghanaians said they have taught South African citizensin the Johannesburg inner city who were keen to learn. This is not mentioned in the popular press and public discourse. On this basis, there seems to be a limit to the perception that African immigrants do not benefit South Africa as presented in *The Sowetan* 2 May 2012: 12. It can never be correct to state that all African immigrants do not benefit South Africa. Some of the African immigrant traders do benefit South African citizens. Some South African traders who have benefitted from the interaction with African immigrant traders seemed grateful, and indeed welcomed the continued interaction and the presence of the latter. If South African citizens who are actively

involved in the scene state that African immigrant traders have assisted them to start small businesses which have enabled them lay claim to a decent livelihood, and such South Africans were observed in the field operating such businesses, this is enough evidence that a contribution has occurred. This suggests that there are actual and potential cases of partnership for development between African immigrant and South African traders. Such dynamics are not highlighted in the popular press and public discourse.

Some African immigrant traders contributed to revenue generation in the Johannesburg inner city. Others stated that they contributed towards VAT both as registered businesses with CIPC and in their individual capacities as consumers who bought goods from shops in the Johannesburg inner city, which shops were registered for VAT. This is still a contribution towards revenue generation, suggesting that increased numbers of people may not always lead to negative results. Registered and unregistered African immigrant traders stated that they bought their goods for cash from the wholesalers in and around the Johannesburg inner city. Whether the wholesalers were Chinese-owned (Chinese citizens and/or immigrants; not Chinese as a population group) cannot hide the fact that the African immigrant traders were inextricably linked to the formal economy, actually injected capital into the latter and also that there was an active interface between these two sectors.

Even supposing that the wholesalers were Chinese-owned, the fact that they are part of the formal economy and African immigrant traders bought their goods from them suggests an interface between the formal and informal economy. On the assumption that the Chinese wholesalers were part of the formal economy and their businesses' turnover increased as a result of the capital injection from the African immigrant traders suggests that company tax from these wholesalers would also increase. It can be posited that even if some of the profits were taken back to China, some benefits such as business turnover, company tax and employment created by these wholesalers cannot be exported and would benefit the Johannesburg inner city. After all, not all wholesalers from which the African immigrant traders bought their goods were Chinese-owned; others were owned by South Africans which suggests

that there were even more benefits, as discussed in this section. This is not said in the popular press or public discourse.

This work suggests that urban formality and informality are inseparable and thus confirms other researches (Cohen 2010; Dwyer 2010; Mapadimeng 2011). If this is the case, it can be argued that African immigrant traders play an important role in keeping the formal sector operating. Although more research is needed before final conclusions can be made, it is possible to advance the argument that if the African immigrant traders interact in a positive and mutually beneficial way with the formal sector, then the African immigrant traders, together with their South African counterparts, are integrated into the Johannesburg inner city economy and the formal economy cannot do without the informal economy, and vice versa. The popular press and public discourse does not highlight the part played by African immigrants in this, but they choose to emphasise that African immigrants do not benefit South Africa and are a problem (as reported in *The Sowetan* 2 May 2012: 12; *The Sowetan* 14 November 2011: 9).

When Malawians, Mozambicans and Tanzanians import certain goods to the Johannesburg inner city, this widens the choice for consumers. If the consumers, represented by both the African immigrant and South African traders who were interviewed, declare that such imports provided variety, then this should be accepted as a reflection of how the consumers perceived goods brought by African immigrant traders. Despite that fact that not all South African traders, thought that the goods were of a good quality, they were in the minority. Just as choice is subjective, the subjective view of some of the interviewees that they were happy with the products brought by African immigrant traders should not and cannot be dismissed as a contribution. I take it as evidence that some of the consumers enjoyed choice as a result of African immigrant traders. This is not said in the popular press and public discourse. It is not stated that some consumers are happy, and some are not with the goods supplied by African immigrant traders. Granted that African immigrant traders may importdangerous goods like drugs, South African traders are not innocent either, but the fact remains—based on the evidence in this work—that some African immigrant traders import desirable goods. Therefore, some African

immigrant traders bring dangerous choices of goods and some bring good choices of goods, just as South African traders seem to be guilty of the same thing and it can never be correct to allow one view that all African immigrant traders bring low-quality cheap goods and drugs to prevail. The popular press and public discourse seems incapable of providing this analysis and portrayal.

Concerning the revitalisation of the Johannesburg inner city, what is important for me to comment on is that the spatial and environmental conditions seem to indicate both improvement and deterioration existing side-by-side, which means African immigrant traders are responsible both the gentrification or 'ghettoisation' of the area. This suggests that there are good and bad African immigrant traders, the former contributing towards the efforts of the City of Johannesburg, and the latter opposing the efforts of the City of Johannesburg to clean the Johannesburg inner city. This is not highlighted in the popular press such as the *Daily Sun* 17 April 2008c: 1, which suggests that all African immigrants are bad and destructive. The corollary of this is that African immigrants can never be capable of bringing anything good. I challenge this thin representation by highlighting the fact that it is an inaccurate representation of African immigrants, as reflected in this work. Beyond the question of the contribution African immigrant traders make to the Johannesburg inner city, it is relevant to comment on the fact that they are by no means the only ones who operate in the area. South African traders are also involved, which may contribute to the bad environmental conditions. For example, those who sell consumable goods also wash their utensils on the streets suggesting this lowers the quality of the environment. This is not said in the popular press; only that African immigrants are capable of destroying infrastructure. Regarding this discussion, several scenarios emerge. There are negative African immigrant traders who run down the infrastructure in the Johannesburg inner city by littering, preparing food on the streets, washing cooking utensils on the pavements and disposing of dirty water on the streets. The same can be said of South African traders. There are African immigrant traders who have refurbished the areas in which they operate by, for example, renovating, painting and tiling.

African immigrant traders, especially the Ghanaians, Malawians, Mozambicans, Nigerians, Tanzanians and Zimbabweans in the Johannesburg inner city, are transnational to the extent of operating shops in the Johannesburg inner city as well as in their countries of origin and in other countries. This transnational dimension plays an important role in exporting goods made in South Africa from the Johannesburg inner city to the whole African region. African immigrant traders order goods in bulk from wholesalers in and around the Johannesburg inner city for resale in their country and other African countries. The important point is that African immigrant traders play an important role in this regard. This is not said in either popular press or public discourse.

There is evidence that some African immigrant traders were destructive and unproductive, for example those who sold drugs and pirated goods. There is also evidence which suggests that there are some African immigrant traders who are honest and hardworking people. The popular press (*Sunday Times* 18 May 2008: 6; *Daily Sun* 9 May 2008b: 11; *The Sowetan* 2 June 2010: 3) seem to suggest that all African immigrant traders are bad and destructive, but this work shows that such absolute classification seems to be further from the truth. African immigrant traders are of a variegated nature: some are simply criminal, illegal and destructive and on the other extreme, some are just honest and hardworking people. In addition, some South African traders stated that there are bad and good African immigrant traders. If the people who actively interact with African immigrant traders suggest that there are groups of good and bad, the essentialist assumptions of the media and popular press that there are only bad and destructive African immigrants is rendered partially accurate.

This work did not establish whether or not African immigrant traders spread disease. It may be possible that they do, but highly improbable that all African immigrants importdiseases, including the deadly HIV/AIDS. In the absence of a study and evidence to show that African immigrant traders import and spread diseases, it remains a baseless perception. After all, Swaziland has the highest HIV prevalence rate in the world (26.1%), followed by Botswana (23.9%), Lesotho (23.2%), South Africa (18.1%), Zimbabwe and Namibia (15.3%), Zambia (15.2%), Malawi (11.9%),

Central Africa Republic (6.3%), Tanzania (6.2%). All other African countries have HIV/AIDS prevalence rates of less than 6.0%, for example, Ghana (1.9%), Mali (1.5%) Nigeria (3.1%) and Somalia (0.50%) (Stat World—Interactive Maps of Open Data). Given the countries of origin of African immigrant traders, it appears as though, in the case of HIV/AIDS, such African immigrant traders come from countries with lower rates of prevalence. It is possible to posit that, if the countries where African immigrant come from have lower HIV/AIDS prevalence rates, they cannot, in the absence of research, be accused of being responsible for higher HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in South Africa? The source cannot therefore have fewer diseases than the recipient, especially if the former is accused of spreading diseases to the latter.

Regarding the burden on infrastructure, interview data suggests that African immigrant traders pay for the use of shops and other infrastructures. The fact that they pay for infrastructure, however, does not mean that it will not be overburdened. It may be the case that indeed there are many African immigrants who are in the Johannesburg inner city, with the result that there may be a burden on infrastructure. But what are the owners of the building doing about this? The owners of the buildings may be accused of pursuing profits and thus renting out their buildings.

In addition, this case study suggests that some African immigrant traders were allocated trading stalls, yet some of them operated illegally. Regarding those who operated illegally, South African traders were also guilty. Some African immigrants were random survivalist traders who operated illegally from undesignated trading zones. This could be regarded as taking over and a burden on infrastructure, as these African immigrant traders were now converting reserved and protected areas into market places and not paying for them. This is simply wrong and is indeed a threat. For those who had been allocated trading stalls by a regulatory authority such as the City of Johannesburg, the issue of taking over infrastructure does not arise. It is an issue of regulation and allocation by the City of Johannesburg, which knows best about how to allocate infrastructure and to whom.

Regarding those who rented shops, they paid for the shops and the landlords chose their tenants. Could the fact that landlords prefer

African immigrant traders who have money to pay for rent be regarded as taking over? This may be, but could the landlords let their buildings go to waste when there are people who can pay for them? These are difficult questions which serve to illustrate that the issue of the threatening other regarding taking over and being a burden on infrastructure is a complex issue, which should show the many classes of African immigrant traders and the types of spaces which they occupy for their businesses. As argued in this section, it appears as if the issue of being a burden on and taking over infrastructure can never be a simplistic accusation of all African immigrants. Therefore, in keeping with the nature and scope of the deconstruction framework, in this part, I have highlighted those issues which seem to be missed by the popular press and public discourse. The objective was to show the multiple perceptions which have been gained in this work regarding African immigrants as the threatening other. If this is the case, it means that, in line with the deconstruction process adopted in this book, I must proceed to the next and final level of deconstruction, which is finding new perspectives.

Finding New Perspectives: Are African Immigrant Traders the Threatening Other?

The new perspectives which emerge suggest that the perception of African immigrants as the threatening other is a complex social reality which should never be reduced to a simplistic and absolute accusation of all African immigrants. As reflected in this work, African immigrant traders exist in a complicated set-up with their South African counterparts, the formal, informal and SMME economy. Such that their threat or benefit can be objectively understood as stretching the length a continuum along which some African immigrant traders benefit the Johannesburg inner city, others are destructive, yet others are both beneficial and destructive. Arising from the scenario that African immigrant traders do not fall into the neat dualism of beneficial or threatening other but straddle the two aspects, I proposes the hybrid beneficial-threatening other perspective as a useful guide to the analysis of African

immigrants in a setting like the Johannesburg inner city. This perspective illuminates the complexity of the human-people space interactions. Such a view point does not seem to accommodate a one-sided portrayal of the burdensome and all-destructive or beneficial African immigrants.

Further, the question of whether or not African immigrant traders are the threatening other is context-dependent, just as it varies from one group of African immigrant traders to the other. In the case of employment creation, it has been shown that some African immigrant traders create employment and others do not. For example, Ghanaians, Malawians, Nigerians, Somalis and Tanzanians create employment, whereas the Congolese, Malians, Mozambicans and Zimbabweans do not. This latter group of African immigrant traders assisted South African traders to form different types of businesses. On this basis it can also be posited that this has increased economic activity in the study area. Nevertheless, by failing to create employment, these African immigrant traders could be regarded as a threat, because they have exploited the business potential in the Johannesburg inner and siphoned the profits back to their mother countries. What about the transfer of skills to South African traders and helping them to form their own businesses? Does the fact that they failed to create employment but managed to help some South Africans to form businesses make African immigrant traders both a threat and a benefit? It appears as though they can be regarded as a bit of both. These details capture the essence of the hybrid beneficial-threatening other perspective which I propose.

Taking this argument further, the aspects relating to revenue collection and support for the formal economy and the link between the formal and informal economy, suggests a complex interplay of human-space/environment interactions. Regarding revenue collection, fewer than half of the African immigrant traders definitely paid rentals to the City of Johannesburg, and this is a contribution. However, I did not obtain evidence of African immigrant businesses registered with CIPC or ascertain whether they had paid company tax to SARS. In this case, some African immigrant traders were definitely beneficial and for others it was never confirmed, which raises questions regarding 'benefit or threat'. The issue of revenue generation seems to illustrate that the

question of contribution or threat is dependent on the group of African immigrant traders concerned, such as those who pay rent and taxes and those who do not.

To continue the illustration of the complexity of whether or not African immigrant traders are the threatening other or not, the issue of the provision of choice for consumers is a case in point. Some African immigrant traders import and export goods to and from the Johannesburg inner city and some do not. Some of the goods which were sold by African immigrant traders were relatively cheap, and it emerged from the interviews that both African immigrant and South African traders did not agree with the view that such goods were cheap and of a lower quality.

Some South African traders argued that quality and low price were relative. They asserted that they were the ones who bought the goods and were happy with both the price and quality and that this suited their income and standard of living. Therefore, what may be cheap and of a low quality is relative. What may be considered as cheap and low quality and thus a threat by certain groups of people may be seen as a huge benefit by other sections of the population. Some South African traders are examples. Those who were interviewed argued that whoever accused African immigrant traders of selling cheap and low-quality goods did not buy from them and were not qualified to make judgements. Rather, the people involved were better judges of price and quality of the goods in question.

Another point of discussion is the revitalisation of the Johannesburg inner city. I have argued that African immigrant traders are responsible for contradictory spatial and environmental conditions. Some have refurbished shops; others have destroyed the environment through overcrowding and misuse and/or abuse of the environment. The latter would relate to the conversion of pavements to areas for washing cooking utensils. Along these lines, and in discussing the issue of the revitalisation of the Johannesburg inner city, it should be stated that some African immigrant traders have played a positive role and some have actually destroyed the area. Hence, some are good and some are a threat, because they work against the objective of the City

of Johannesburg to improve the health and safety of the Johannesburg inner city. Not all African immigrants can be blamed for the deteriorating spatial and environmental conditions in the study area. What is noteworthy is that South African traders were also involved in the 'ghettoisation' of the area under study. This suggests that to label African immigrant traders as the threatening other should not be regarded as a simple matter.

Furthermore, regarding destructive and unproductive activities which were conducted by African immigrant traders, South African traders were also involved and it was not only African immigrant traders who sold drugs, were involved in corruption and spread diseases. For example, some Nigerian immigrant traders were accused by both their fellow African immigrants and compatriots and South African traders of selling drugs; something which was corroborated by the JMPD. Other African immigrant traders did not feature in the illegal activity of selling drugs.

What this suggests is that there are good and bad African immigrant traders—drug peddlers, honest small business people and those who spread diseases. Thus, it seems as though it is inaccurate to declare that all African immigrants sell drugs. Taking this discussion further, another case in point is that of pirated goods and corruption. Pirated goods are illegally imported into the country through ports of entry, suggesting twin acts of corruption by African immigrant traders and South African officials who clear the goods at ports of entry. Accordingly, both African immigrant traders and South African officials are threats as they deprive the government of revenue and also allow illegal goods into the country. It is debatable that South African officials at ports of entry are a greater threat because they provide fertile grounds for corruption to flourish.

After the illegally imported goods reach the Johannesburg inner city, consumers are happy to buy them. From the point of view of consumers represented by South African traders, African immigrant traders who import these goods are not a threat. They provide good quality and affordable goods, yet some formal businesses, regarded this as a threat. To such an extent, what may be a threat to certain sections of the population is a big benefit to another. This shows how the perception of

African immigrants as the threatening other should never be regarded as absolute and certain.

Notwithstanding the fact that these issues were discussed extensively in the preceding chapters, they are briefly raised again in this section for the purpose of finally showing that the contribution of African immigrant traders to the Johannesburg inner city is a motley collection of intricate interactions and interrelationships. There are different contributions that African immigrants make, just like there are different types of African immigrant traders. Some create employment while others do not; others are drug dealers and some are honest people trying to earn a living. In addition, some African immigrant traders destroy the Johannesburg inner city and others regenerate it. Accordingly, not all African immigrant traders are the threatening other, and for those who may be regarded as the threatening other, this is relative as it depends on the context and environment within which it occurs.

This should be the basis of tolerance and inclusivity. If African immigrants are understood to be a heterogeneous group made up of good and bad, the sweeping accusation that they are a monolithic entity only capable of homogenously bad activities will not arise. As suggested in this work, an objective analysis of African immigrant traders should be sensitive to differences between and within groups of African immigrants. For example, Nigerian and Zimbabwean immigrant traders should not be treated as a similar group of African immigrants, just as not all Nigerians and Zimbabweans are the same—there are inter- and intra-group differences. By extension, not all Nigerian immigrant traders in this work are drug dealers, some create employment and are honestly earning a living in the Johannesburg inner city. Not all Congolese,Ghanaians, Malawians, Mozambicans, Malians, Somalis, Tanzanians and Zimbabweans are good or bad, some are beneficial and some are destructive and/or the threatening other. Where there is evidence of positive or beneficial contribution, such African immigrants should be embraced and their positives highlighted, which should be the basis of forging a good relationship between the South African and African immigrants.

What Remains to be Thought?: Rethinking African Immigrants, Rethinking Partnerships for Development and Inclusion

At this point, it is important to emphasise that I did not, contrive, devise or invent the perception that African immigrants in contemporary South Africa are the threatening other. Several scholars (Crush 1996, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2001a, b, 2008a, b, 2011; Crush and McDonald 2001; Crush and Williams 2001; McDonald 2000; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Campell 2010; Geschiere 2010; Laher 2010; Landau 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012; Crush and Tevera 2010; Maharaj 2010; Mawadza and Crush 2010; McGregor 2010; Muzondidya 2010; Neocosmos 2006, 2008; Nyamnjoh 2006, 2007, 2010; Gordon 2011; Joseph 2011; Attias-Donfut et al. 2012; Dyers and Wankah 2012; Crush and Tawodzera 2011, 2014) have problematised the negative perception and treatment of African immigrants in contemporary South Africa. For which cause, the findings and new perspectives generated by this work integrate with and extend research on African immigration to contemporary South Africa. On the basis of these new perspectives, this book adds to literature on African immigrant traders and their contribution to the Johannesburg inner city. Such literature provides an expanded analysis and view of how they make meaningful contributions. It does this by considering the complex socio-economic and even political environment in which African immigrant traders in the Johannesburg inner city occur.

A discussion of how the African immigrant traders contribute to employment creation, revenue generation, support for the formal economy, provision of choice for consumers, and imports and exports, for example, provides a broader framework for the analysis of what and how these African immigrant traders contribute. In addition, this book suggests that the immigration of African immigrants to South Africa as reflected in this work does not always spell doom, but that there are good and bad dimensions and both must always be considered in any assessment of African immigrants in the Johannesburg inner city. If this is the case, any research on this subject which does not bring to the fore

the complexity of the place-space people environment dynamics is questioned. 'What remains to be thought' (Royle 2003: 11 cited in Royle 2003: 25) about research and scholarship on migration, immigration and African immigrants in contemporary South Africa should, I would argue, go beyond the tag of the threatening other.

In addition, some newspaper articles (*Daily Sun* 17 April 2008c: 1; *Daily Sun* 17 April 2008b: 8; *Daily Sun* 9 May 2008d: 2; *Daily Sun* 9 May 2008e: 11; *Daily Sun* 20 May 2008h: 3; *Sunday Times* 18 May 2008: 6, *Sunday Times* 2 January 2011a: 21; *The Sowetan* 2 June 2010: 3; *The Sowetan* 14 November 2011; *The Sowetan* 2 May 2012: 12) actually portray African immigrants as the threatening other. This work directly responds to the media construction of African immigrants as the threatening other by highlighting that such a construction and portrayal is not always true. Although this is a case study, it thoroughly questions the source of information of the media, which completely frames African immigrants as the threatening other. Where and how do the media obtain completely negative information about African immigrants? Consequently, this work questions 'partial or distorted' (Norris 2007: 67) reporting by the media.

Closely linked to this is that this work implies that there is a huge difference between the negative perception of African immigrants and what they actually do. While popular perception, which may be fed by media reporting, is that African immigrants are burdensome and destructive anti-citizens, this work suggest that in reality this is not always the case. For example, this case study shows some evidence of redevelopment of areas in the Johannesburg inner city. Some African immigrant traders have refurbished and painted some of their shops. When these African immigrant traders use their private funds to develop and regenerate certain parts of the Johannesburg inner city, this is an illustration of a possible and potential partnership between the City of Johannesburg and the African immigrant traders. This partnership may assist in eradicating destructive impacts by other African immigrant traders such as those who litter and trade illegally.

Such a partnership may instil a sense of responsibility on the part of African immigrant traders, implying that they can work together with the City of Johannesburg. It would therefore be beneficial if the

City of Johannesburg embraced their efforts and entered into partnerships with African immigrant traders in order to redevelop the Johannesburg inner city. The City of Johannesburg encourages public and private partnerships in the revitalisation of the city (Winkler 2009, Olitzki and Luiz 2013), which suggests that they can do the same with those African immigrant traders who have a demonstrated development impact in the area of revitalising areas that are sinking under dilapidation. Such activities by African immigrants on the ground need publicity and reporting to show the difference between the negative perception of African immigrants and their positives. Perhaps the media could play a role in reshaping public perception of African immigrants.

Furthermore, concerning African immigrants as the threatening other, it can be advanced that their negative portrayal and treatment restrict efforts to limit xenophobia. I argue that unfairly portraying African immigrants as the threatening other and fighting xenophobia cannot coexist. There is either the objective portrayal of African immigrants and fighting xenophobia, or the negative portrayal of African immigrants and fuelling xenophobia. Promoting the latter will lead to the denial of xenophobia, as illustrated in newspaper articles (*Daily Sun* 17 April 2008b: 8) which convey the idea that there is no xenophobia, but rather isolated criminal acts. It can be argued that the consistent negative portrayal of African immigrants provides fertile ground for a xenophobic discourse, as it engenders animosity and angst between the citizens and immigrants.

However, if African immigrants are objectively and positively portrayed, this can contribute to fighting xenophobia, because objective and positive portrayal and reporting could encourage a culture of tolerance and acceptance. This is because positive and objective reporting is accommodative and welcoming. Hence, it could reduce the chasm between 'us' and 'them'. It could obliterate the image of the 'barbarians at the gate' (McDonald 2000: 2) plotting to 'break into the house', and instead build the image of 'all people in the house', building and taking care of the same.

It was argued that African immigrants were especially targeted due to the perception that they were the harbingers of a plethora of problems

in South Africa. Thus, the fact that African immigrants are perceived as the threatening other justifies the extra legal efforts by police who arrest and detain African immigrants (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Krieger 2010; Landau 2010), tear up valid immigration documents (Kalule-Sabiti et al. 2012) and close off refugee reception centres (Landau 2012). To this list can be added what Peberdy (2009) regards as the advancement of an exclusively South African identity. It follows that this helps to inform restrictive immigration policy. Although immigration policy affects all immigrants in South Africa, this work argues that African immigrants are negatively affected the most. The targeting of African immigrants suggests that they are the threatening other. As the work shows, I contest this view. Regarding the opinion that African immigrants are the threatening other and contribute to restrictive immigration policy—as evidenced by the Immigration Regulations 2014—I argue that such immigration policy may be based on partial and/or distorted information.

On that account and supposing African immigrants, are objectively portrayed and perceived, this may perhaps correctly inform immigration policy. Granted that African immigrants, as discussed in this work, positively contribute to their host societies, there should be limited preoccupation with attempting to keep them out of South Africa. If this is the case, this work questions the basis of restrictive (regarding, but not limited to, the granting of business permits) immigration policies as evidenced by the Immigration Regulations 2014. Finally, there is a need to directly address the question of whether I have fully deconstructed the perception that African immigrants are the threatening other in the Johannesburg inner city. Based on the understanding and deployment of the deconstruction model (Fig. 7.1)—and using the views of both African immigrant and South African traders, triangulated with those of the JMPD and officials from the City of Johannesburg—it was possible to deconstruct the view that African immigrants are the threatening other. The findings on which the new perspectives stand were built on data collected in a natural setting in the field, the deconstructionist analysis of which yielded these conclusions (new perspectives).

Conclusion

If this book, through a deconstructionist approach, was contesting the view by the media and popular discourse that African immigrants were the threatening other by gathering and assessing what people, represented by African immigrant and South African traders in the Johannesburg inner city do and say, then this work has fully deconstructed the threatening other. The critical issue for this book was to establish alternative interpretations to the one that African immigrants are the threatening other and the answer is that, African immigrants in the Johannesburg inner city are not always the threatening other. Since this work suggested that there were complex and competing interpretations to the one that African immigrants are the threatening other shows that the deconstruction project was achieved. By reason of this study showing that African immigrants are not always the threatening other and in direct opposition to the position of media and public discourse suggests that 'knowledge is always insufficient or incomplete without the alternative representations (Burman and MacLure 2005: 287) and that there is 'no generality and no configuration that is solid and given' (Derrida in an interview in 1993 cited in Royle 2003: 26). On the ground that this book advances the view that African immigrants are not necessarily the threatening other, suggests that there are 'other layers of meaning, layers that are different from the supposedly present' (Frers 2013: 433). In such a manner, deconstruction of the threatening other is confirmed.

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About the Author

Inocent Moyo is a Lecturer in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Zululand, South Africa. Inocent is a seasoned researcher on the issues of migration and development, immigration politics, cross-border traders, regional integration in the SADC, transnationalism, and urban informality and governance. He has published and presented internationally on these topics. He serves in the Steering Committee of the International Geographical Union's (IGU) Commission on Political Geography and is a member of the Association of Borderlands Studies and The African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE).

I. Moyo, *African Immigrant Traders in Inner City Johannesburg*,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-57144-7

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