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DECLARATION

I, Neerali Gajjar declare that *A Tale of Two Temples: An Exploration of Caste in Cape Town* submitted for the Master of Arts Degree in Political Science at the Department of Political Science, School of Social Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, is my original work and has not been submitted before, at this or any other institution of higher education. I further declare that I am the owner of the copyright thereof, and all used materials in the dissertation have been duly acknowledged.

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Student's Signature Date: 3 January 2016

”A Tale of Two Temples”

An Exploration of Caste in Cape Town

By Neerali Gajjar

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Abstract

A Tale of Two Temples: An Exploration of Caste addresses the notion of caste in South Africa, specifically among the Gujarati community in Cape Town. Caste within this community has been discussed with regard to the Indian diaspora in general and Natal in South Africa, but there is not a vast amount of literature regarding this phenomenon among Indians in Cape Town. Through the description of a dispute between a caste-based organisation of *mochis* –those of a leatherworking and cobbler caste- and a non-caste-based organisation predominantly of agricultural *patidars* over control of the space of worship, the recreation, dynamics and interplay of the caste system are discussed. Louis Dumont's influential synoptic theory of caste serves as the frame of reference when addressing the system. Dumont focuses on the idea of purity and hierarchy. The system includes four *varnas* or classes, which are positioned along a pure-to-impure hierarchy. In Cape Town, this hierarchy is not entirely recreated; all four *varnas* are not represented. Instead *patidars* or agriculturalists have claimed to be of high status, which is normally attributed to a Brahmin or clerical caste, and have asserted themselves as the reference group for other castes. They perceive the *mochis* to be of low caste. The *mochis* have not accepted this and through the influence of the Arya Samaj, they have recreated a new historical narrative classifying themselves as high caste. This new narrative and the empowerment of the *mochis* created a conflict that escalated as a result of apartheid's Group Areas Act, which legally enforced racially segregated residential areas. This conflict provides insight into the recreation of caste in Cape Town.

Keywords and Terms

Cape Town, Caste, Diaspora, Dumont, Durban, Fiji, Gujarati, Indenture, Indian Diaspora, Johannesburg, Migration, South Africa, Trinidad

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I dedicate this to you.

This journey began with your story.

Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
CDC	Community Development Board
CHCS	Cape Hindu Cultural Society
CHSS	Cape Town Hindu Seva Samaj
KHMM	Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
NGF	National Growth Fund
NIC	Natal Indian Congress
NP	National Party
NRA	Natal Rajput Association
OBC	Other Backward Castes
SAK Mahasabha	South African Kshatriya Mahasabha
UHA	United Hindu Association

Glossary

Brahmin	priest, highest ranking caste group, considered to pure
Caste	social category based on traditional occupations in India, this category determines status and is often associated with class
Coloured	descendants of intermarriage and concubinage between European settlers and their slaves
Chamar	caste of leather workers, includes mochis
Commensality	the eating of meals together
Dalit	the politically correct term for the Untouchables in India
Endogamy	the practice of marriage exclusively within the sub-caste or, on a macro level, within in the caste or community.
Ghaachi	oil millers
Gujarati	those who's roots stem from the Indian province of Gujarat
Hajaam	barber caste
Hypergamy	when a woman is of a slight inferior status marries a man of higher status
Jati/Gnati	a caste group that is thought to be more accurate
Koli	a fisherman caste
Kshatriya	warrior caste, inferior to the Brahmin caste but superior to the other caste categories
Kunbi	pot makers
Mandir	temple
Mochi	caste of leather workers, specifically cobblers in South Africa
Narak	Hell (used in Fiji)
Patidar	agriculturalist, they are the second largest caste group in Cape Town
Sanskritization	the process by which a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of lie in the direction of a high and frequently, 'twice-born' caste.
Sirdar	Indentured labourers who were promoted to overseers and foreman
Shuddhi	Hindu reconversion ceremony used by Arya Samaj, later became a caste purification ceremony
Shudra	servants who are not twice born
Untouchable	considered the impure caste, it remains outside the caste hierarchy
Vaishya	the merchant caste, they are below the Brahmin and Kshatriya but above the Shudra caste
Varna	the four caste categories: Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishyas and Shudras

Introduction

This dissertation seeks to address the existence of caste among the Gujarati community in Cape Town and the form in which it has been recreated in South Africa. Indians have resided in the Cape[1] since the arrival of the Dutch East India Company in the late 17th century and initially were absorbed into the fold of the racially mixed Cape Malay or Coloured community. The Indian community as it currently stands has resided in the Cape for three to four generations. The cultural landscape, in comparison to India, is quite different. Indians are a minority in the Cape and are surrounded by a diversity of cultures and ethnicities.

The ongoing significance of caste in Cape Town raises a multitude of themes and questions. Caste was used to segregate groups within the Indian community and allowed discrimination by 'othering' a subgroup. This dissertation deals centrally with the issue of whether caste travels, and what forms it assumes among an Indian diaspora. Certain customs, traditions and social habits are recreated by the diaspora but caste in India is a very specific system and it is unclear whether this could be recreated by the diaspora. Actions that divide society should be studied critically, especially within the context of South Africa, which has suffered a history of legalised discrimination through apartheid.

This study will address the persistence of caste dynamics in Cape Town, i.e. why caste identities remain significant in interactions and social dynamics within the Gujarati community. The Gujarati community predominantly arrived in South Africa as merchants from north-west India. This community has sustained itself for generations and it is unusual that such identities have persisted in a social and political setting that is quite different to India. Whether these identities are maintained in order to replicate Indian social hierarchies or whether the context of apartheid exacerbated differentiation remains to be determined. I explore this issue by focusing on the Gujarati community of Cape Town and studying a dispute that arose within the community in the 1970s and 1980s that played out along the lines of caste affiliation and rejection. The culmination of events that led to the dispute has its genesis in the Group Areas Act of 1950. This Act segregated communities into uniracial areas; one of the areas in Cape Town to which Indians were relocated to was Rylands. The once dispersed community was now confined to demarcated areas where caste distinctions became more apparent.

Discrimination between castes led to a split in the community. The dispute occurred between the *mochi* (cobbler), Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal and the predominantly *patidar* (agrarian dominant

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[1] The Cape refers to the Cape of Good Hope or Cape Colony. In 1994, the area was partitioned into the Eastern, Northern and Western Cape while a small portion of the colony was incorporated into the North West Province (MacKinnon, 2004:191, 169).

caste), Cape Hindu Cultural Society. Within the Gujarati community *mochis* are considered to be Untouchables, rendering them polluting to the higher castes. The perceived polluting nature of the *mochis* was the cause of discrimination against them by the *patidars* who feared caste pollution. Their polluting nature is a result of their traditional occupation, shoe making. The *mochis* are associated with the larger caste of *chamars* or leather workers in India. Due to their association with and the handling of leather, the caste was deemed polluting and classified as Untouchable. In Hindu ideology, cows are sacred animals therefore dealing with their dead carcasses or hides renders one impure. The dispute resulted in the construction of two temples, which illustrates a struggle for power within a religious context. The construction of these temples by the two communities provides a unique insight into caste dynamics at a public level and may aid in understanding an exploration of its maintenance.

The notion of castes discussed here is based on Louis Dumont's classic exposition, *Homo Hierarchicus* (1988). Dumont's synoptic theory rests on the following key concepts: purity, hierarchy, interdependence and separation. The categorisation of castes is constructed via these principles. A scale ranks castes based on notions of purity and impurity and they are ranked relatively between the poles of the Brahmin and the Untouchable. The Brahmin embodies the pole of purity, and the Untouchable, impurity. According to Dumont's theory, the classification of South African *mochis* as Untouchables is correct. However the *mochis* in modern times have not accepted this rank; they have constructed a narrative that justifies claim to a higher caste.

The exploration of the rift in the community provides a space within which larger questions regarding issues around cultural identity can be explored. Caste societies exist in other parts of the country, and societal records indicate interaction with other caste organisations in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng[2]. However, while these caste societies may have existed and encouraged discrimination, Cape Town is the only place where a caste-based organisation built a temple specifically for its community. The separation and construction of a caste-based temple caused the conflict within the community. Preliminary research into temple archives showed that caste identities were maintained during and after apartheid. Caste in India is rooted in religious ideas of purity and translates into political and economic dimensions as well, Dumont focuses on the religious aspect of caste (Dumont, 1988). While a notion of caste has caused discrimination against the *mochis*, status has increasingly become associated with socioeconomic indicators. Caste no longer dictates occupation in South Africa (although in some cases, caste occupations have been maintained and resulted in a monopoly of trade), it has transformed into a class identity.

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[2] Natal became known as KwaZulu-Natal after 1994. The Transvaal was partitioned into four provinces: Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and the North West after 1994 (MacKinnon, 2004:191, 169).

Although the concept of caste in Cape Town has shaped this study, understanding caste in the diaspora provides a comparison that enriches the understanding of caste in Cape Town. Indian communities in Trinidad and Fiji are discussed because these two countries share a history of indentured labour with South Africa. This provides a reference point for understanding the way in which caste was recreated in migrant communities. In Trinidad, caste does not exist as a form of labour differentiation; instead, status is based on education and economic standing (Niranjana, 2006:29). In Fiji, caste was fluid as labourers reclassified themselves while the government position stated that caste did not exist. The divergent experience of indenture and passenger migrants indicates that caste waned in the former's migration because it was not practical, while passenger Indians had the capital and freedom to retain and recreate notions of caste. Kuper (1960:20) stated that although the caste system could not be transplanted among the indentured labourers, the idea of caste cannot be ignored as it influenced social interactions by dictating social hierarchies among the Indians. It still remains unclear whether these identities transcended the apartheid system in South Africa or the system itself ensured its presence.

Research Question

This thesis, titled *The Tale of Two Temples: An Exploration of Caste*[3]*,* seeks to answer the question: what is the significance of caste identities in interactions and social dynamics within the Gujarati community in Cape Town and how do they provide an understanding of how caste is recreated outside of India? I further explore questions like: did the experience of indentured labourers make caste impractical? What were the different experience of Indians in the Cape, Transvaal and Natal? What effect did the continuation of caste politics have within the Gujarati community of Cape Town? How did this have an impact on social interactions, religious worship and political engagements within the community?

Method

The temples in Rylands were selected because they provided a material background from which caste identities can be explored. The construction of temples linked to caste identities is unique and it is a tangible case within which caste dynamics take place in a public domain. The temples have maintained documentation from the 1970s and 1980s and many of the executives are still alive and were able to provide firsthand accounts of the events. The construction of both temples provides an insight into the internal workings of caste that has not been provided quite so neatly elsewhere.

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[3] The phrase, "A Tale of Two Temples" is taken from Dhupelia-Mesthrie's *Speaking About Building Rylands (1960s - 1980s): A Cape Flats History.*

Both temples were constructed in the apartheid government's designated Indian area. The community, being numerically small, was confined to this area and many still reside in the former Indian area. Even though the temples are perceived to be worlds apart, they stand within a few kilometres of each other[4].

Research was conducted through interviews with the male elders of the community who were committee members of the religious organisation during the 1960s (before the split), 1970s and 1980s (during the split and construction of both temples) and present committee members. Due to the size of the Gujarati community further detail cannot be provided without jeopardising the anonymity of the interviewees. Informal interviews were conducted with these actors in both group and individual settings. Unstructured interviews provided interviewees with the freedom to reflect and provide accounts that were anecdotal and unrehearsed. The narrative style "emphasise[d] the temporal, the social and the meaning of structures" and "narratives are one of the natural cognitive and linguistic forms through which individuals attempt to organise and express meaning and knowledge" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009:153). Participants were more relaxed and therefore more forthcoming when I asked for elaboration alluding to the sensitive topic of caste. Aside from initial questions and clarification, I was able to remain a listener and focus on the story. Interviews were both biographical and historical in nature, providing oral accounts of the community's history (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009:153). Additionally, this style of interviewing was not limited by my preconceived ideas from my research. The interviews were conducted guaranteeing the anonymity of respondents as the conflict remains a sensitive subject within the community.

Members of both committees have maintained documentary sources such as historical records, minute books, correspondence and legal documentation. I was granted access to these archives. Other documentation included hymn books, lease agreements, a report written by youth from both communities explaining the split, letters to government officials and, monthly and annual publications aimed at the community. The archival documents were written in both English and Gujarati, I translated some of the Gujarati documents with the aid of my family.

Additionally, this study draws on literature regarding caste, providing an understanding of Dumont's notions and its criticisms against his argument. Literature which discusses Indians in South Africa, specifically their experiences in Natal and the Transvaal as well as caste organisations in Natal, provide context and comparison to Cape Town. Works on Indian migrant communities in Trinidad and Fiji are particularly significant as these areas experienced similar migrations and settlements of Indian indenture.

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[4] See Appendix for map

Limitations

Potential problems have occurred regarding documentation that is not in English, translation was required and in some cases the archival documentation could not be translated. Interviewees were not always forthcoming with their discussions on caste, discrimination and the split. In some cases their omissions were rather telling. However, I was able to gain anecdotal information on caste from the interviewees.

After completing this research, it became clear to me that there was not an exploration and comparison of caste based organisations and umbrella bodies across South Africa. Many of the officials of umbrella organisations such as the South African Kshatriya Mahasabha and Gujarati Mahaparishad had passed on, making research into their influence and decisions rather challenging. Perhaps this can be explored in a later study.

It is not within the scope of this study to explore day-to-day illustrations of caste dynamics. In addressing the divisions within the community, events and social groups which have remained caste free have not been studied. Additionally, to my surprise, since this study began, there has been an attempt to unite the two temples for the religious celebrations of Diwali. It is unclear what has sparked this call for unity and while this provides hope for reconciliation for the community, I will not be able to explore this outcome as it occurs outside of the given time frame of research. This new dynamic provides a field for further exploration and study.

Within the scope of this study, I seek to address the gap in literature. This gap is geographical in nature; Indians, specifically the Gujarati community, in Cape Town have not been the primary focus of study within the literature on South African Indians. Historians such as Bradlow (1979), Dawood (1993) and Dhupelia-Mesthrie (2009 & 2013) have been exploring this community from a historical perspective while Bhana & Bhoola (2011), Dhupelia-Mesthrie (2012) and Hiralal (2013) have written papers on specific caste groups and their organisations. Ebr-Vally (2001)[5] has written about the role of caste among South African Indians and identity formation at the macro level and discusses the

[5] However her text does not contrast the practices in Gujarat and South Africa and it is unclear whether they are indeed reproducing values from India or if they are reinterpreting them to suit their context in South Africa. Additionally, the book fails to provide substantial evidence regarding the persistence of caste. Although apartheid is believed to be the primary factor in the persistence of caste, this is not adequately addressed. Comparisons are not made between Indians in Johannesburg, Durban or Cape Town, it is assumed that all of these locations and that all Indians who are of passenger descent are homogenous. Furthermore, she states that indentured labourers lost their caste because they crossed the *kala pani*, passenger Indians also crossed the *kala pani* and have reproduced notions of caste. Therefore the crossing of the *kala pani* cannot be a substantial reason for the persistence of caste.

significance of apartheid in perpetuating social stratification within the Indian community. Vahed (2010) discusses the Gujarati community but primarily focuses on the Muslim community. While Desai and Vahed (2010), provide a more discursive discussion on indenture. This study will differentiate itself by specifically looking at the construction of two temples and explore this event through interviews and publications. This community is suspicious of outsiders, especially those who address issues that are of a sensitive nature. I have been granted access and obtained insight due to my upbringing within the community and familial ties.

A Point of Self Reflection

I feel that it is important for me to take a moment to pause and reflect on the personal association I have with this study. I became interested in caste issues after my parents narrated the events that led to their wedding. Both of my parents are from a small town in the Eastern Cape called Uitenhage. The population of the town was rather small and the Indian population itself was limited to a few families. The proportional minority status of Indians and the size of the town resulted in a friendship between my parent's families. This friendship was interesting as my mother's family is of the *mochis* and my father's family is of the *suthars*. *Mochis* are traditionally shoe makers and their association with leather classifies them as impure and therefore Untouchable. My mother's family was not vegetarian; within Hindu society the vegetarian diet is viewed as pure. My father's family was strictly vegetarian and their traditional occupation was carpentry, this occupation did not render them impure therefore they were not considered Untouchables.

Their courtship did not take place in the public space; courtship was not acceptable as the community in the 1970s was rather conservative. However, my parents courtship resulted in an engagement and wedding. Even though my paternal and maternal families maintained a friendship, my father's family was against this union. Their wedding was not attended by a majority of my father's family. When I asked why this happened, especially if they were friends, I was told that it was because my mother was a *mochi* and viewed as lower caste. What made this revelation even more puzzling was that when a relative in my paternal family's household passed away, my maternal grandmother had cooked for the entire family. The family of the deceased is considered to be temporarily impure until a ritual cleansing occurs, resulting in the need for food to be prepared by a non-relative, ensuring its purity.

According to Dumont's theory, pollution occurs via endogamy[6] and commensality[7]. Thus consumption of my *mochi* grandmother's food should have rendered the *suthars* impure. Their action indicates that they did not view this food as impure on the occasion of a death ritual. They did however believe that my father had subjected himself to pollution when he married my mother. It is clear from this anecdote that notions of caste are used rather selectively in South Africa. Whether this is for practical reasons or in the interest of the given parties is unclear. This anecdote further indicates that the *mochi* claim to a Kshatriya heritage was not accepted, indicating a power dynamic. I mention these anecdotes so that the reader has an understanding of what has driven this study. After I heard this anecdote my engagement with the issue of caste became more pronounced and I realised that the two temples were separated by this notion of caste and required further exploration.

My parents moved to Cape Town in 1974 and have been part of the Gujarati community in the city. The Cape Town Gujarati community is not very large and many of the migrants arrived from the same or neighbouring villages in Gujarat. Thus, the community is not only bound by its cultural and linguistic identities, it is bound by the notion of kinship. These two factors have aided my ability to gain access to archival documents, garner support in my research and have impacted my interviews. My father's younger brother was on the Cape Hindu Cultural Soceity committee during the dispute and was rather vocal regarding caste. While this has aided my interviews with CHCS's members I believe that it would be a hindrance with the Cape Hindu Seva Samaj who believed that I shared my uncle's view.

The reason I chose to conduct this research was the fact that I grew up attending two *mandhirs* with seemly different atmospheres and members. The attendance at the two temples was mutually exclusive, I did not see cultural members at the Vishnu Mandhir and vice versa. This was then exacerbated by the fact that people of my generation did not know each other; there was a definite chasm in the community. I am pleased to note that this changed; an effort has been made to attempt to unite the two communities and jointly host religious festivities. The two societies have not been able to unify; the older generation who remember the split remain bitter and unwilling to join while some of their descendants have maintained discriminatory beliefs. I think the situation will resolve in my generation with new leadership. The migration to areas outside of Rylands has led to a decrease in attendance. Perhaps with unification the societies can be revived and attract those that have been alienated or are apathetic.

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[6] Endogamy, on a micro level in this paper, refers to the practice of marriage within the sub-caste or, on a macro level, within in the caste or community.

[7] Commensality' refers to the eating of meals together. This practice is significant in the study of caste as the presence of lower caste members during meals may result in the food becoming impure. The preparation and serving of food is intertwined to caste hierarchies. As the highest caste, Brahmins are the only caste that is able to prepare food for the remaining lower castes, while maintaining the food's purity (Dumont, 1988:52).

I have tried to remain objective in this study and used my experience and ties with the community to develop a broad understanding of the split.

Chapter Outlines

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Points of Comparison

This chapter is divided into two sections; the first discusses Dumont's synoptic work on caste, *Homo Hierarchicus* (1980) that provides the framework for this dissertation. This framework rests on four pillars: purity, hierarchy, interdependence and separation. The definition of these pillars is followed by a critique of Dumont, primarily derived from a symposium organised by the journal *Contributions to Sociology* discussing *Homo Hierarchicus* in 1971, as well as Gupta's (2004) edited book on caste. The second section of this chapter explores the caste system in Gujarat and the recreation of caste in the diaspora. The discussion on caste in Gujarat acts as a specific reference point to the primary concern of this dissertation: the replication of caste among the Gujarati community in Cape Town. Caste was also recreated in indentured communities outside of South Africa, the recreation of caste in Fiji and Trinidad provides a comparison to the South African experience as Indians in all three countries share a history of indenture. Indenture occurred in the countries during the same time period and similar recreations of caste occurred among the indentured communities, providing a contrasting experience to the passenger Indians. This allows us to explore the factors that encouraged the degree to which passenger Indians recreated caste structures.

Chapter Two: Journey of the South African Indian

An understanding of the South African landscape is required to fully contextualise the dispute between the Gujarati community in Cape Town. This chapter discusses South Africa's general history as well as the divergent experiences of Indians in Natal, Transvaal and Cape Town. Indian arrival and population size resulted in varied restrictions against Indians across the nation nor were the resultant reactions uniform, thus creating a unique experience for Indians in Cape Town. The nature of their journey to South Africa and their regional ancestry also affected the recreation of caste. I study caste in South Africa using two organisations in Natal and one in the Transvaal as points of comparison for Cape Town.

Chapter Three: Cultural Dynamics of Cape Town

This chapter discusses caste in Cape Town by providing a brief outline of the castes that exist in the city; followed by an examination of Rylands, one of the apartheid government's designated Indian areas in Cape Town where the majority of the Gujarati community relocated and where their temples were constructed. Thirdly, an attempt is made to understand the redefinition of identity in the *mochi*

community, the impact of the continual ties with India and the organisations of the non-*mochi* castes. Finally, the gendered experience of Indian women is addressed through the dispute as members of the caste organisation were predominantly male, and women were not significant actors in conflicts.

Chapter Four: A Tale of Two Temples

Chapter Four provides a chronological discussion of the two main Gujarati organisations, the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal and the Cape Hindu Cultural Society. These organisations were the primary actors in a bid to control the Gujarati community's religious and social affairs. This led to the construction of two temples that led to deep divisions in the community. The chapter ends with an analysis of caste based on the actions of the organisations and community that led strife.

Chapter One: Theoretical Framework and Points of Comparison

This chapter intends to address the question of whether caste travels. A framework is required to provide consistency and for comparison. The theory providing this framework is based on Louis Dumont's *Homo Hierarchicus,* which is recognised as a significant text in Indian sociology that provides a synoptic view of caste ideology (Berreman,1971:16; Madan, 1971:8). The text is addressed to a European audience to demonstrate "that caste has something to teach us about ourselves… the castes teach us a fundamental social principle, hierarchy… This ideology is directly contradicted by the egalitarian theory which we hold" (Dumont,1988:2-4). By contrasting hierarchy with equality, Dumont hopes that his French audience in particular, will gain a better understanding of the principles of egalitarianism that govern their society (Madan,1971:5). Dumont's synoptic theory rests on the following key concepts: purity, hierarchy, interdependence and separation. The categorisation of castes, is constructed via these principles. A scale ranks castes based on notions of purity and castes are ranked relatively between the poles of the Brahmin and the Untouchable. The Brahmin embodies the pole of purity, and the Untouchable that of impurity. Notions of impure and pure cannot exist without each other. Although the system is not only based on occupation, it is the interdependence between pure and impure occupations that maintains relations within the system. Interdependence is regulated by separation between castes in order to maintain purity; pollution from below is feared. Laws regulating commensality and endogamy illustrate the strict adherence to separation and the maintenance of purity.

There has been a sustained academic critique of Dumont ever since his work was first published in 1971. In *On the Nature of Caste in India: A Review Symposium on Louis Dumont's Homo Hierarchicus* - a special issue of *Contributions to Indian Sociology* - a panel of ten authors discuss varying aspects of Dumont's text and provide insight and criticism regarding his theorising of caste. Berreman (1971) provides the harshest criticism in the panel calling Dumont's work an intellectuallist enterprise, while other criticisms have stemmed from empirical discussions regarding the sociology of caste. These criticisms range from the idea that purity is not a static notion; that definitions of purity differ regionally; and that the notion of purity determining status has been overturned by modern symbols of status, such as education and wealth. That the hierarchy is premised on purity and that Brahmins embody purity have not been generally accepted by critics of Dumont. Affirmative action policies in India have been tipping the scale in favour of the lower castes. Interdependence has additionally been affected by modernity and urbanisation, and education has granted access to a number of occupations. Modernity favours the individual; this is incompatible with interdependence

and the emphasis of society. Separation has also been affected by modernity but it has not become extinct, endogamy is still prominent. Online Indian dating sites continue to include caste in their profiles, allowing one to filter potential matches by caste.

As this thesis is focused on South Africa, more specifically caste among a Gujarati community, an understanding of caste in Gujarat is required. This aids the comparison between notions of caste in the Gujarati community in South Africa and India. Claims of higher status by leather workers were made in both spaces. The discussion on the treatment of lower castes by *patidars* is especially important as caste behavior was transplanted to Cape Town.

While caste has been affected by time, it has also been affected by travel. The experience of Indian indenture in the 19th and early 20th century represents a large organised migration into British colonies. The system has been compared to slavery due to its inhumane working conditions. The indentured labourer's caste did not only alter on arrival but was altered by the journey itself. Identities were reimagined and renegotiated on the maritime journeys; they were no longer confined to their native identities. Upon arrival at the sugar plantations, no provision had been made for the practical elements of the caste system. Separation could not be achieved; Indians of differing castes, religions and regions lived together, ate together and worked together. The notions of purity could not be practiced. Endogamy was not practical as the male to female ratio was skewed towards the former. Interdependence was irrelevant, they were reliant on the plantation owners for their income, rations and housing. Indenture provided a level playing field. Analysing caste in indenture provides an answer to the question of whether caste travels or not. The majority of the Indian population in South Africa arrived via indenture, a historical fact shared with Trinidad and Fiji. Therefore caste in the diaspora, specifically Trinidad and Fiji are discussed to illustrate whether caste travels. Niranjana (2006) provides a gendered lens into the world of indenture. Her text illustrates the impact indenture had on culture, caste and the notion of 'Indianness' in Trinidad. Carter and Torabully (2002) explore the world of indenture through artistic works; personal and direct accounts in the form of poems and prose. The work engulfs the global experience of indenture. Kelley (1991) discusses the effect of the Arya Samaj on caste in Fiji and the evolution of Indian politics. Through the aforementioned texts, the journey and impact of indenture regarding caste is discussed.

Theorising Caste: Dumont's *Homo Hierarchicus*

Dumont has been described as a significant figure in the field of anthropology, focusing on India and the West. He believed that by contrasting ideas of egalitarianism and hierarchy seemingly characterising the West and East respectively, the comparison would provide greater insight into both ideas (Dumont, 1988:1-2; Madan, 1999:473-475). This is what he sought to achieve with *Homo*

Hierarchicus (1988). In his introduction Dumont contrasts India's hierarchical caste system with the seeming Western model of egalitarianism. His specific audience is French: "it appeared as a duty to provide the French reading public with a book on this subject [caste]" (Dumont, 1988:xlv). He continues by stating, "The caste system is so different from our own social system in its central ideology… the conviction of caste has something to teach us about ourselves" (Dumont,1988:1). By contrasting the ideology of hierarchy to egalitarianism, Dumont believes that a greater understanding can be obtained regarding the latter. His analysis stems from his fellow French anthropologist, Bouglé, "I accepted Bouglé's theory as a starting-point and tried to expand it" (Dumont, 1988:xlvii). The starting point that Dumont is referring to is the diametrical principles of pure and impure. It is from this principle that Bouglé constructs the following definition of the caste system:

> "…the caste system divides the whole society into a large number of hereditary groups distinguished from one another and connected together by three characteristics: separation in matters of marriage and contact, whether direct or indirect (food); division of labour, each group having, in theory or by tradition, a profession from which their members can depart only within certain limits; and finally hierarchy, which ranks the groups as relatively superior or inferior to one another" (Dumont, 1988:21)[8].

Not mentioned in Dumont's quotation is the principle of interdependence that is linked to the division of labour, which constructed the second part of Bouglé's definition (Madan, 1971:3).

Notions of Purity: The Basis of Caste

The Brahmin embodies and signifies purity and as such is held in esteem. This results in the following privileges in theory: he is exempt from certain punishments; from tax; is able to claim goods that have defaulted to the king, under a law regarding lost objects; additionally, upon death his goods do not default to the king (Dumont, 1988:69-70). Brahmins are intrinsically linked to the value of purity, therefore the maintenance of purity is of the utmost value. Permanent purity cannot be achieved because of inevitable biological functions (excretion, menstruation etc.), therefore the adherence to rituals re-establishing purity are crucial. The Brahmin *varna* (category) however, is not exempt from subdivision, an internal hierarchy exists placing domestic priests lower to Brahmins who are not required to serve (Dumont, 1988:70). Brahmins are the reference point when caste classification is unclear; the caste's ranking is based on the Brahmins acceptance or rejection of water[9] from them. Acceptance denotes a secondary position while rejection relegates to a lower ranking. The lower

[8] This definition is applicable to the case study of the Gujarati community in Rylands, Cape Town. However, the criteria are applied selectively and adhered to only by certain groups. This will be discussed further in latter chapters.

[9] Water is purificatory and therefore an important tool to gauge purity.

ranking may itself be divided between those with vegetarian or non-vegetarian diets, with the former possessing a status relatively higher to the latter (Dumont, 1988:80).

There are a variety of categories determining purity; dealing with the deceased, soiled clothing or leather renders one impure. The Brahmins adopted other practices such as vegetarianism and therefore a vegetarian diet is considered to be superior to a non-vegetarian diet (Dumont, 1988:56). Non-vegetarian diets additionally contain their own hierarchy and the type of animal consumed can determine subdivisions of caste. Animals such as pigs are considered impure as a result of their diet of scraps and garbage. Other practices, such as those relating to marriage are considered to be pure or not depending on whether the Brahmin caste practices them: these practices include the prevention of remarriage of a widow and the dissolution of marriage (Dumont, 1988:56). It is unclear if these practices would be considered pure if they were not associated with the Brahmin caste. Pocock (1957:19) notes that this display of behaviour denoting a higher caste only occurs in the higher economic echelons. Thus ranking of caste and its subcategories is complicated by adherence to certain practices e.g. one could eat meat but not allow the remarriage of widows or contrastingly one could be vegetarian but allow the dissolution of marriage. Territorial distinctions matter: a barber caste may deal with death by serving as a funeral priest in one region but may not in another. The former is considered impure relative to the latter (Dumont, 1988:57-59).

Contact between castes can lead to pollution, there is a distinction between internal and external pollution. External pollution can be rectified through purification rituals e.g. baths, however internal pollution cannot. Internal pollution refers to the absorption or ingestion of polluted items, such as the ingestion of food and sexual intercourse; the reference to sexual intercourse reiterates the importance of endogamy, especially as premarital sex is forbidden (Dumont, 1988:131). Internal pollution that occurs on account of consumption emphasises the vulnerability felt during mealtimes, therefore the caste of those preparing the food is significant. It is preferable to have a cook of a higher caste or even a Brahmin cook, as all castes can consume without fear of pollution. The vessels used in the preparation of dishes are also significant, if a clay vessel is polluted by a lower caste, it must be replaced, however a brass vessel can be washed (Dumont, 1988:132). A distinction is made between raw food and cooked food, a Brahmin can receive raw food from a lower caste but the same cannot be said regarding cooked food (Dumont, 1988:142).

The Hierarchical Structure of Caste

Dumont states that hierarchy is a fundamental social principle, which is ostensibly contradicted by modern society. Modern society emphasises liberty and equality, which Dumont assumed to be a universal truth. Dumont believes that this is contradictory to the fundamental principle of hierarchy,

which is linked in anthropological circles to traditional societies. Modern societies emphasise the individual: humanity consists of individuals who are considered sacred and absolute; their rights are only limited by the legitimate demands of other individuals. Within traditional societies, the idea of the individual is believed to not exist; there is instead a collective idea of man. Society as a whole is far more valued than the individual. Thus order and hierarchy are far more emphasised than equality and liberty, each man contributes to the global order. Dumont believes that hierarchy is natural and that the idea of equality is artificial (Dumont, 1988:2,4-9). The hierarchical system in India is not merely a form of social stratification, it is far more complex and viewing caste through this lens alone provides only a narrow understanding of the system. The ideology of caste cannot be viewed as secondary; ideology is ingrained within the society (Dumont, 1988:3). Dumont's views run contrary to an understanding that equates caste with social class, where interdependence of castes would be secondary to its hierarchical nature (Dumont, 1988:36)

The caste system cannot be reduced to a simple hierarchy, consisting of static groups ranked from one extreme to the other (Dumont, 1988:39). The system is not homogeneous; each geographical area has variants of a caste system and therefore the hierarchical status of certain occupations is not uniform across the country (Dumont, 1988:33). Thus there is no uniform caste category as categories are subdivided, however there are consistencies which allow the system to be studied and for a general definition of caste to be constructed. Additionally, castes cannot be precisely ranked in a relative scale (Dumont, 1988:33,39). Although a precise position is difficult to ascertain, a relative scale of purity does exist and one's caste determines one's position on this scale. Thus the primary principle of the caste system is the contrast between pure and impure. These contrasting ideals determine the division of labour, the nature of separation between castes and dictates social life. Dumont describes the purity scale as an ideological element that is not dependent on empirical facts, such as the territorial differences in castes and the subdivision of castes (Dumont, 1988:45).

Brahmins and Untouchables occupy extremes on this purity scale. Traditionally, Brahmins are priests and inhabit the highest rank in the caste system, one could allude to the notion that they are considered to epitomise purity. On the other extreme are the so-called Untouchables, they are considered impure, and they are generally dependents that are tasked with unpleasant duties allocated to them because of their impure status. This group is generally segregated from the village and are barred from various communal and public facilities and functions e.g. they are not permitted to use wells that service other caste groups and were previously barred from entering temples[10] (Dumont, 1988:46-47). The other castes are placed between the Brahmins and the Untouchables. Dumont defines hierarchy as "the principle by which the elements of a whole are ranked in relation to the whole" (Dumont, 1988:66). In the case of caste, the principle dictating the ranking of elements is

[10] This barring was opposed in principle by Gandhian reform (Dumont, 1988:47).

religion, more specifically the religious notions of purity and impurity. Additionally, a more static or parallel hierarchy exists. This hierarchy is based on the varnas - Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishyas and Shudra. Untouchables are placed outside this hierarchy. Brahmins, as mentioned earlier are traditionally priests, Kshatriyas are warriors, Vaishyas are farmers, and Shudras are servants[11] (Dumont, 1988:66-67). Kings generally stem from the Kshatriya varna, and may have terrestrial power but are subject to the Brahmins in terms of religious authority (Dumont, 1988:68). There is a distinction between religious and terrestrial authority and royalty supports the Brahmins materially through donations of land. From these statements, Dumont notes the distinction between status and power, which he claims is required in a hierarchy. In a pure hierarchy, status is superior to power therefore the varna system can be considered a pure system where the religious and moral status of Brahmin overshadows the power of the Kshatriya (Dumont, 1988:72, 74).

Interdependence between Castes and Traditional Specialisation

While caste groups are significant, interactions and practices occur within subcaste categories. It is within these categories that rules dictating endogamy and excommunication occur. Therefore it is within the subcategories, that we see the embodiment of caste theory (Dumont, 1988:61). As mentioned earlier, this more 'traditional' society is not orientated around the individual but is instead oriented towards the whole or the society. Therefore, specialisation in the caste system serves the needs of the society and creates interdependence between castes. This is in direct contrast to the specialisation that occurred after the Industrial Revolution in the West, which was orientated towards individual profit (Dumont, 1988:92). The specialisation does not confirm the notion that the caste is purely a professional category; caste and profession are related but the system does not function as a guild. One's profession, depending on its function, is related to religious notions of purity, therefore the caste system is an intersection of function and religion. Thus, it can be inferred that one can choose a more modern profession as long as it is not considered to be less pure than the traditional vocation (Dumont, 1988:93). The interdependence between castes is related to the *jajmani* system. This describes the closed economic system of the village i.e. a system that is self-reliant and where primary goods and services are available locally or within a short distance. It is linked to the patron client relationship, with certain specialisations seen as clients and the families who require them as

[11] Shudras are defined as the "unfree servant" (Dumont, 1988: 68). They serve the higher castes. There is an association between the "Untouchables" and the Shudras as they are sometimes categorised as similar but most scholars maintain that there is no fifth varna. However Shudras have acquired rights and recognition and distinguished themselves from the "Untouchables". Untouchables are the impure, their occupation dictates that they deal with all things impure. It is this distinction of purity that separates them from the Shudras (Dumont, 1988: 71).

patrons, thus each family has their designated specialist (Dumont, 1988:98). Inferring from the relationship between family and a specialist who meets their needs, it is clear that interdependence is vital to the system, more so because the system is orientated towards the whole and not individuals.

Separation of Castes

Another significant aspect of the caste system is separation. This separation occurs primarily through the practice of endogamy i.e. adherence to marriage within the caste and the prohibition of intercaste marriage. Endogamy is central to the separation that occurs via contact and commensality and ensures the closure of the caste. The practice of endogamy serves not only as a tool for separation but also for perpetuating the caste group. Endogamy ensures caste's survival through reproduction as caste is designated hereditarily (Dumont, 1988:110). Endogamy is adhered to and significant due to the importance of marriage that is a significant event in the Hindu religion. Socially, it is a prestigious event and accounts for the largest and most expensive function for a Hindu family. Weddings also require a number of specialist castes to perform various indispensable duties such as intricate rituals and pre-wedding functions that accompany marriages. Marriage rituals illustrate caste divisions as each caste adheres to certain rituals and practices specific to that caste (Dumont, 1988:110). A woman is however, allowed to be of a slight inferior status to a man she will marry as she obtains a higher status through marriage, this is known as hypergamy and is practiced in North India. One traditional form of hypergamy is that, in theory, a maiden can be gifted to a Brahmin in exchange for spiritual benefits (Dumont, 1988:117).

Dumont's theory is rooted in the binary idea of purity and pollution. A hierarchy exists which ranks castes on a relative scale. Their ranking is dependent on the idea of the pure and impure. Classifying castes according to these categories is not simple, ideas of purity vary regionally and therefore caste status differs across the country. Despite this complication, traditionally Brahmins occupy the highest rank and the Untouchables occupy the lowest rank. Caste pollution is feared from lower castes resulting in separation. Separation is illustrated in marriage; endogamy is practised within the caste. Castes are also vulnerable to possible pollution during commensality therefore separation is ensured during meals and food preparation. Although separation occurs, interdependence is important. Traditional division of labour ensures interdependence between castes regarding economic and religious activities. In conclusion, it must be borne in mind that Dumont's is a theoretical, synoptic view of caste that attempts to look at caste as an ideal-type separate from sociological diversity.

Criticism of Dumont

The journal, *Contributions to Indian Sociology* held a symposium in 1971 regarding Dumont's *Homo Hierachicus*. Criticisms addressed the classification of caste, the notion of purity, hierarchy,

interdependence and the perceived lack of empirical evidence. Gupta (2004), an Indian sociologist, consolidates two decades of thinking about Dumont. Finally, discussion regarding contemporary India indicates an incompatibility with Dumont, as affirmative action and the political landscape illustrate the evolution of caste identity.

Varnas as an Ideal Type

Dumont's claim that hierarchy is based on purity is not empirically instantiated; instead hierarchy is determined by the dominant caste in a region (Gupta, 2004:ix). Secular power, rather than traditional hierarchy, is significant in determining dominance. Caste leaders and political parties determine dominance, caste identity determines alliances, which are constantly negotiated between castes (Gupta, 2004:xiv). During the colonial period, caste associations began to conduct themselves as interest groups in order to gain advantages in education and civil service from the British (Jaffrelot, 2007:58). Sub-castes began to identify and unite with caste organisations with shared interests resulting in a reduction of endogamy. The emergence of an alternative social structure - one that was premised on emancipation and egalitarianism - led to the dilution of strict principles of separation (Jaffrelot, 2007:58). Castes no longer conceived of mobility in terms of to Brahminical notions of purity alone and therefore no longer sought to emulate them through the process of *sanskritization*[12] (Jaffrelot, 2007:65).

While the varna categories do allow for a pan-Indian study and comparison of caste, they oversimplify the situation and ignore subcastes, regional differences and accept the system as static, with the exception of temporary impurity in the case of menstruation, birth and death. Dumont does note that within the *varna* theory, those who rule while remaining inferior to the Brahmins are to be considered Kshatriyas. And while the Brahmin is considered to be the ideal *varna*, achieving Kshatriya status is easier and Kshatriyas and Untouchables are the only two *varnas* which can be entered from the outside[13] (Dumont, 1988:74). It is argued that caste does not manifest in the *varnas* but occurs in *jatis*. *Jatis* are caste groups while *varnas* are linked to classes. Traditional labels are to be viewed as deceptive, they ignore how castes identify and rank themselves (Gupta, 2004:xii). Increasingly, low castes are claiming higher status and creating new historical narratives. Social mobility does not occur

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[12] "Sanskritization is the process by which a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of lie in the direction of a high and frequently, 'twice-born' caste. Generally such changes are followed by a claim to a higher position in the caste hierarchy than that traditionally conceded to the claimant caste by the local community" (Srinivas, 1966:6).

[13] While it is not stated, I assume that because the Kshatriya *varna* can be claimed by a ruler on the basis of secular power, the given function of the Kshatriya caste. Similarly, one can become an Untouchable by practicing occupations considered impure.

within the *jati*, the group is endogamous. Varnas, can be categorised as open, providing socially mobile *jatis* a reference point for the new identities (Lynch, 1969:71). The claim of *jati* as separate to the *varna* requires explanation and justification regarding their professions, the legitimisation of this aids acceptance by other castes. It is through this claim that new narratives are constructed such as those constructed by the Gujarati *mochis*. Generally, the new narrative located in history depicts the *jati* as having been threatened by conversion, plundering or persecution; they sought impure occupations to protect themselves from these dangers (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2012:178; Gupta, 2004:xvi; Hiralal, 2003:596; Lynch, 1969:72). Dumont gives the example of the Pasis who are traditionally low caste. They rear pigs, which according to Dumont designate their low status, pigs are seen to be impure because they consume garbage (Dumont, 1988:56). The Pasis have created a historical narrative in which they are no longer low ranking but are Kshatriyas. This assertion is aided by their re-definition of their name, through a creative etymology to mean, to grip, entrenching their warrior status. The historical narrative claims that their pig rearing was a defensive practice against the Muslim invaders. Pigs are considered unclean in Islam and are avoided by Muslims, thus preventing the invaders from plundering the Pasis. A similar narrative occurs among the cobbler and leather working c*hamar* castes in India, the *mochis* in Cape Town and the *dhobis* in Natal (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2012:178; Gupta, 2004:xvi; Hiralal, 2013:596).

The Idea of the Sacred and the Differing Definitions of Purity

Das and Uberoi (1971) criticise Dumont's binary formulation and his exclusion of the idea of the sacred. For instance, Dumont's notion of purity reduces marriage and death to pure and impure rituals respectively. A comparison of the two rituals illustrates its incompatibility with Dumont's binary notions. The wedding parties' and the corpse are treated similarly; both are bathed, dressed in new garments and sprinkled with rice (Das & Uberoi, 1971:35). The similar rituals indicate the sacredness of both life events. A dichotomy still arises between the positive sacredness and negative sacredness (Das & Uberoi, 1971:36). Dumont's notion of purity and caste pollution does not correspond with the participation of Brahmins in impure rituals, such as death or the involvement of an impure caste in a pure ritual such as a barber's involvement in a wedding (Das & Uberoi, 1971:37). The final criticism from Das and Uberoi (1971:39-41) addresses the idea of reciprocity. Dumont addresses the notion of pollution from high to low castes but does not discuss the removal of pollution from the low castes. Reciprocity occurs regarding the removal of pollution within the lower castes.

With regards to purity, Dumont does not provide a concrete definition for purity within the Indian context, he attempts to create a pan-Indian understanding of purity, but this is too theoretical. The concept and definition of purity is dependent on the context, e.g. purity can be confined to social rules, such as avoidance of caste pollution, or it can be religious in nature (Cort, 2004:84). Local hierarchies affect notions of purity; theoretically if the Brahmins were not vegetarian in a certain region

then vegetarianism is unlikely to be an important indicator of purity (Pocock, 1955:71). Rank is both religious and secular; it is far more complex than the pure and impure dichotomy. Rank can differ regionally, historically, socially, economically and politically. Furthermore, rank is dependent on the status of those determining hierarchy as each caste views ranking differently (Berreman, 1971:20). Modernisation has impacted the notion of purity, which is no longer seen to determine status; instead status is measured by economic gain (Gupta, 2004:xv).

Power vs Status and Brahminical Bias

In his discussion on hierarchy, Dumont maintains that power does not equal status in a hierarchy, "for pure hierarchy to develop without hindrance it was also necessary that power should be absolutely inferior to status" (Dumont, 1988:72, 74). The superiority of status over power refers to the relationship between Brahmins and kings or dominant castes. However, observation indicates that power does intersect with hierarchy (Dumont, 1988:77). This remains problematic as the role of power is excluded from Dumont's theoretical notion of hierarchy. Dumont concludes that even though power does interact with hierarchy, his theoretical notion still stands (Madan, 1971:6). Village dominance, dominant castes and wealth indicate that power is equal to status in reality (Madan, 1971:6). A dominant caste with political power may maintain the same relationship with the Brahmins as the Brahmin-Kshatriya relationship discussed by Dumont. The dominant caste becomes the secular benchmark for status (Pocock, 1955:71). Berreman states that power is in fact synonymous with status; power determines the acceptance of a lower caste's claim of a higher caste, thus the claimed caste is not the same as the designated caste (Berreman, 1971:18). Power determines the nature of the caste relations as power is elemental to hierarchy; power and ritual combine to determine the system (Berreman, 1971: 19-20). The recognition of power within the caste system would allow for a more realistic account of caste.

The British understanding of Hindu culture enforced Brahminical privilege, thus allowing the Brahmins to shape society to their benefit (Gupta, 2004:xii). However, Brahmin priests are not as privileged as they once were, in some cases they no longer fulfil their religious role and are viewed as being of a lowly status as a result of their reliance on alms and consumption of donated food (Gupta, 2004:xix). Furthermore, the Brahmin is said to be dependent on the Kshatriya for food and gifts, while the Kshatriya is dependent on the Brahmin for spiritual services. This relationship complicates the power-status dynamic (Heesterman, 1971:45). Castes that do not accept the purity hierarchy, such as Shudras exercising secular power (landownership etc.) claim to be of a higher status than the Brahmin and Kshatriya castes. This extends to the merchant classes who do not view the Brahmins and Kshatriyas as superiors (Gupta, 2004:ix-x).

Instead of a hierarchical system, caste inequality has become less vertical, with each caste claiming superior status and privilege. This creates confusion as a uniform hierarchy no longer exists (Gupta, 2004:x). This has had political repercussions in India. All castes are now able to participate in the democratic process; this has enforced caste identities and associations in order to create political mobility. This has led to increasing hostility between castes as they vie for political and economic power (Gupta, 2004:x, xv). Thus the castes no longer adhere to the Brahminical hierarchy, they have become empowered by acknowledging the value in their identities and histories irrespective of their traditional standing. It is this empowerment that has made political engagement and economic contention an option (Gupta, 2004:xi, xi). Although urbanisation and political participation has altered the caste system, certain aspects such as endogamy and commensality have not been eradicated (Gupta, 2004:xix-xx).

Interdependence and The Idea of Change

Dumont's assertion of the closed economy of the village does not presume a monetary economy, it occurs naturally (Berreman, 1971:94). Gupta states that caste is not confined to the closed village system, and that castes interact beyond it (Gupta, 2004:ix). The relatively closed economic system of the village within which the hierarchical system occurred has been erased by modernisation and in turn, urbanisation (Gupta, 2004:x). The village and the city are connected through migration, remittances and interdependence. The notion of change within the caste system remains problematic for Dumont, he states that, "there has been change *in* the society and not *of* the society" (Dumont's emphasis) Dumont, 1988:218). Madan argues that Dumont ignores the numerous indicators of systemic change, such as: "judicial and political changes, social-religious reform, Westernisation, growth of modern professions, urbanisation, spatial mobility, and the growth of market economy" (Madan, 1971:8). For Dumont, the structure of the caste system is given, while Madan regards Dumont's theory as incompatible with development and social change (Madan, 1971:13). Berreman further states that Dumont's interpretation of Indian hierarchy is sterile and unreal (Berreman, 1971:18).

The Untouchables' and Other Backward Caste's political aspirations and achievements echo the belief that the caste system is not accepted by those it has disadvantaged. Affirmative action policies in India have attempted to equalise all segments of the population. It is interesting to note that these policies have created an Untouchable elite but have not extended to Other Backward Classes (OBC). The former received support as they were believed to be unthreatening. The latter represented a threat, "[the] upper caste [feared] being overwhelmed by groups that were far more consequential demographically and economically than the Untouchables" (Jaffrelot, 2006:186). This fear confirms the notion of the significance of power in hierarchy. The upper castes fear relinquishing their power to

the OBCs. Affirmative action and the increase in political representation and leadership illustrate not only an attempt at changing society but also an attempt at changing the structure (Jaffrelot, 2006:187). These systemic changes indicate a deficiency in Dumont's theory and present a contrast to his static idea of caste.

Dumont's Theory and Sociological Fact

Dumont's primary concern is constructing a theory regarding caste; Madan argues that he initially constructs the theory and selectively uses ethnographic information to support this theory (Madan, 1971:4). Berreman finds Dumont's understanding of caste distorted by his selective use of sources and, as such, views the latter's work as fragmented, incomplete and incompatible with empirical evidence (Berreman, 1971:17; Khare, 1971:30). Dumont is accused of a selective reading of Sanskrit texts and empirical literature. This results in his artificial view of the caste system (Berreman, 1971:23). However, the power of Dumont's work lies not in its empirical detail, or lack of it, but rather in the systematic theoretical exposition that allows for cross study comparison.

Dumont's theory provides a theoretical view of the caste system that arguably provides insight without complications. However, this simplification has been widely criticised. The system is not as simple or as static as Dumont would have us believe. Notions of purity vary regionally therefore affecting rank and status. Caste no longer remains in the realm of religion; it has become a vehicle for secular power. This evolution has reduced the quest for Brahminical purity, secular notions such as economic and political power determine rank. Modernity has affected interdependence, castes are no longer confined to their traditional occupations nor are they confined to the village. Urbanisation and political engagement have diluted the adherence to endogamy. Finally, Dumont has been criticised for his selective use of ethnographic information. This deficiency has resulted in the belief that his interpretation of caste is static, incompatible with reality and biased.

Caste in Gujarat

This section discusses the caste system in Gujarat in order to determine how caste was recreated within the Gujarati community of Cape Town. While indenture illustrates caste's ability to travel as well as transform itself, an understanding of the intricacies of caste in Gujarat provides a reference point with which to compare caste in the Gujarati community of Cape Town. Pocock's (1957) discussion of the *patidar* caste in Gujarat, provides a comparison for the *koli* and *kunbi* caste in Cape Town who identify themselves as *patidars*. They are the primary actors enforcing caste discrimination in Cape Town. Lynch (1969) discusses the social mobility of the *Jatavs* in Agra in Uttrar Pradesh, Northern

India. The *Jatavs* reconstruction of their status and history is akin to the *mochis*[14] in South Africa; both are traditionally leather workers or *chamars*. Hardiman's (2007) work on the Arya Samaj is significant as the Samaj played a vital role in the emancipation and reconstruction of the *mochi* community's identity.

The theoretical notions of caste have focused on the dynamic between the Brahmin and the Untouchable. While this may ensure a simplified version of caste with focus on high and low castes, the middle castes are not dealt with. This middle class contains the merchant class, which is significant in Gujarat (Cort, 2004:75-76). The *Vaniyas*, or the merchant castes gained prominence in Gujarat as a result of the absence of the *rajputs* or ruling class for the last five centuries (Cort, 2004:76). Agricultural castes, such as the *Patels*, who achieved economic success in agriculture, became industrialists and merchants who replicated the wealthy *Vaniyas* instead of Brahmins or Kshatriyas. This emulation illustrates the increasing value placed on wealth, rather than purity (Cort, 2004:76-77, 80-81). Brahmins are not as privileged as they once were, and those who maintain their traditional religious roles are viewed with disdain by the *Vaniyas* who value self-sufficiency over dependency (Cort, 2004:81). While hierarchy may not be not strictly adhered to, separation is still significant as a degree of endogamy and commensality occurs (Cort, 2004:78-79). *Vaniyas* and *Patels* may dine together; however intermarriage is rare (Cort, 2004:88).

Pocock (1957:19) focuses on the dominant peasant landowning caste of the *Patidars* in Charottar, Gujarat, and their relationship with the *Baria* caste. The *Baria* caste were landowners, the rank below the *Patidars*. Despite the commonality between the two castes of language and customs, the *Patidars* remained closed and maintain their relative hierarchical status in Gujarat. As the largest landowners in the area, the *Patidars* were the dominant caste. They practiced hypergamy but only within the confines of their caste, the father of the bride and by extension his kinsmen were granted prestige by the 'marrying up' of their daughter (Pocock, 1957:21). Remaining within the confines of caste theory, the status of caste is determined by their interaction with Brahmin: whether they received water from the caste allots them a high status. Brahminical purity in Gujarat was based on vegetarianism, the investiture of the sacred thread, infant marriage and the prohibition of the remarriage of widows (Pocock, 1957:22). However within the caste an internal hierarchy existed based on the number of homes within the village. Those at the top of the hierarchy would accept brides from other villages but would not marry their daughters outside the confines of the internal hierarchy. Thus an internal hypergamy was allowed and by refusing to marry their daughters to lower ranking villages, the higher villages maintained their superior status. This hierarchy is a product of purity, higher ranking *Patidars* maintained Brahminical purity, they were vegetarian and did not permit the remarriage of widows, it last occurred generations ago, and although the low ranking *Patidars*

[14] The *mochi* community is the largest caste group in Cape Town (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2012:168)

denied it, remarriage of widows has taken place within the last decade and vegetarianism is not strictly adhered to (Pocock, 1957: 27-28). This situation provides insight not only into the internal hierarchy of the *Patidars* but also their relationship with the *Barias*.

The *Barias* were considered to be of a lower caste than the *Patidars*, but were similar in population size and maintain a similar standard of living. The *Baria* did not emulate the Brahmins but emulated the slightly higher-ranking *Patidars*. Pocock noted that this emulation was unique to each village i.e. the *Barias* in the high ranking *Patidar* village emulated their customs and adherence to Brahminical purity whereas those *Barias* in low ranking *Patidar* villages emulated those *Patidars* and were therefore not as strict in their adherence to purity (Pocock, 1957:25-27). However the *Patidars* did not consider the high economically ranking *Barias*, who were wealthier and could claim stricter Brahmanical purity, superior to the low ranking *Patidars*. High-ranking *Barias* were equated with low ranking *Barias* and therefore as a collective were lower than the *Patidars*. A system of inclusion and exclusion occurred, the *Patidars* included the high-ranking *Barias* with the low ranking ones thereby excluding them from claiming equality. This exclusion is interesting as it occurred even though some *Barias* could be considered purer than some *Patidars* (Pocock, 1957:27-29). Pocock does note that wealth could increase caste status with the exception of the Untouchables and that the model of prestige was determined by the dominant caste and not necessarily the Brahman caste.

The Arya Samaj, a reformist Hindu organisation has played a role in creating avenues of social mobility for lower caste and non Brahmin groups in general. It is a mass organisation with a following from the *koli* caste. The Arya Samaj gained popularity as a result of a spate of Christian conversions during the colonial period in India. Through *shuddhi*, a removal of pollution, the Samaj reversed Christian conversion. *Shuddhi* was not only used for conversion reversal but was used to remove pollution from high caste Hindus (Hardiman, 2007:41,43). After the threat of conversion reduced, the Samaj focused on the Untouchables via social work and education. Although they provided support for the Untouchables, they were utilised by high caste Gujaratis as well. The Samaj was known for its anti-Muslim rhetoric (Muslims had replaced Christianity as a threat in their rhetoric) and paradoxically, their support of Gandhian politics. The Samaj has been instrumental in caste mobility and unity (Hardiman, 2007:62). In South Africa, the Samaj taught Hindus, including *mochis*, religious rituals and conducted a sacred thread ceremony that is normally reserved for high caste Hindus (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2012:179).

According to Lynch (1969), the Arya Samaj has played a great role among the *Jatavs*[15] in Agra (similar to the *mochi* community in Cape Town). They were able to change their economic status, but were still isolated residentially and professionally. Their Untouchable caste status remained until the rise of

[15] The *Jatavs* are leather workers, *chamars*, and belong to the Untouchable caste (Lynch, 1969:2)

the Arya Samaj (Lynch, 1969:67). The movement allowed the *Jatavs* access to Brahmins and religious education. Like many other Untouchables who sought a higher status, they claimed to have Kshatriya lineage. The Arya Samaj emphasised the importance of education, which was crucial to the *Jatavs'* upliftment. They learned behaviour befitting their higher caste rank. In order to legitimise their new status, the *Jatavs* decided that their collective status needed to be altered through education and achievement. The Arya Samaj attracted low castes by promising a rise in caste rank and religious education. Through this system, Untouchables, such as the *Jatavs* were able to rise in status (Lynch, 1969:68-70).

Castes no longer maintain only their traditional occupations; this is especially true of the lower castes (Dumont, 1988:93; Gupta, 2004:ix; Jodhka, 2004:182). The lower castes and Untouchables are separating themselves from their traditional occupations in order to sever the association between their identity and their 'impure' occupations (Jodhka, 2004:182). This is reiterated by Dumont:

> "A caste bearing such a strong religious mark as that of the 'leather people' [*chamars*] … wants to end its infamy, it tries to put an end to the function which justifies this infamy" (Dumont, 1988:93)

This is echoed in South Africa. Occupational specialisation was not as significant in Cape Town; however, there are still families who have maintained their caste occupation (Mesthrie,1990: 337). The *mochi* community particularly adheres to this; many are shoe retailers who specialise in repairs. Dhupelia-Mesthrie states that *mochis* were the largest caste groups and estimated that there were 190 *mochi* families in Cape Town (2012, 168). This subcaste-group has maintained social and commercial networks to ensure the upliftment of their community. Education was the most significant factor in their path to self-improvement, it allowed them to seek other commercial avenues. Even those that remained in the shoe industry learnt new techniques and specialised skills, creating a niche market. Education has been the primary vehicle in removing the association with the impure. Professions which provide superior social standing and provide economic gain are favoured by the *mochis*, these include careers in medicine, law, pharmacy, finance, dentistry, engineering (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2012:180).

The Indian Diaspora: The Impact of Indenture

Indenture refers to the large-scale colonial-state sanctioned emigration of Indians that started in the late 19th century following the abolition of slavery (Lal, 2014:1146). The system of indenture provides an opportunity to compare native Indian culture and religion to diasporic recreations of culture and religion. Caste was recreated and reimagined to an extant by indentured labourers in their new surroundings. This allows us to examine whether this altered caste system resembles Dumont's framework or if caste manifestations are entirely different. Indian indenture occurred in the British

colonies within the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans between 1834 and 1916 (Lal, 2014:1146). The study of indenture in Trinidad and Fiji provides a comparison for indenture in South Africa and therefore the understanding of caste in South Africa. While significant proportions of Indians returned to India, all three countries have large Indian populations resulting from settlement by the labourers. Indenture to these three countries occurred within decades of one another in order to solve the labour shortage on sugar cane plantations. Colonial rule, poverty and natural disasters as well as the desire for social mobility in India created a destitute and desperate labour pool that could be recruited (Carter & Torabully, 2002:30; Niranjana, 2006:24). A majority of the labourers were single males, roughly a quarter were women. Working conditions were akin to slavery causing India to campaign for its termination.

Caste could not be maintained in indentured systems, it was not practical. Labourers resided and ate together, the ratio of men to women made endogamy impossible and all of the Indians maintained the same occupation, division of labour was minimal. Niranjana (2006) discusses indenture, gender and creolisation in Trinidad. She focuses on notions of 'Indianness' resulting from the relationship between India and Trinidad. Kelley (1991), an American anthropologist, examines the political landscape of Indians in Fiji. Carter and Torabully (2002) provide an understanding of indenture in the Caribbean, Fiji, Mauritius and South Africa through poetry and song. They redefine the notion of the 'coolie' through their experiences, which shaped their identities. Bhana (2008) compares the indentured experience in the West Indies, South Africa and Fiji.

Shared Indentured Experiences

The sea voyage represented a significant platform for the reinvention of caste. Some believed that the crossing of the *kala pani* would result in a loss of caste. Others adamantly attempted to retain their caste status by refusing food prepared on the sea voyage and adopting a diet of uncooked rice. Food was refused on the basis that it was not prepared by those of the same or higher caste (Carter & Torabully, 2002:37). Many Indians also refused work that was associated with lower castes. This refusal indicates Dumont's notion of separation and fear of pollution. Carter and Torabully maintain that through reaffirmation of traditional values and principles, labourers sought protection (Carter & Torabully, 2002, 108). The indentured may not have maintained the hierarchies of their native land, however they did construct an intermediary class. The creation of this class of *sirdars* (overseers and foremen) allowed the indentured to construct their own social hierarchy. These *sirdars* were responsible for the recreation of values and religious life; temples were constructed, festivals and rituals were observed and customs such as cremation maintained. Under indenture, status was derived from plantation hierarchy; as indenture ended, status was attained by spiritual and cultural performance observance (Carter & Torabully, 2002: 108-110, 129).

While all indentured labourers potentially faced exploitation and ill treatment, women were the worst hit. Single women were frequently required to attach themselves to a man. Migrant women were considered to be of low character and sexual objects so attachment did not ensure their safety. The phenomenon known as “Coolie wife murders” was rampant, committed by angered husbands who suspected their wife's fidelity (Carter & Torabully, 2002:43, 53, 63). Abuse and extramarital relations explain the settlement of many indentured women; they were not able to return home to India as their reputation had been ruined. “According to Indian tradition, when a woman left her house - especially having spent the night out — she was not accepted back” (Carter and Torabully, 2002:96). Men did not escape abuse either; many were treated as prisoners (Carter & Torabully, 2002:52). Indians as a whole were seen as pariahs, this view increased with the arrival of passenger Indians, intensifying discrimination (Carter & Torabully, 2002:61).

Indenture in Trinidad

In the West Indies, indenture replaced labour shortages that resulted from the emancipation of slaves (Bhana, 2008:216). Indentured labour to Trinidad began in 1845 and concluded in 1917. The descendants of Indian labourers represented 40 percent of the island’s population (Niranjana, 2006:19, 23). The context of indentured labour in the sugar plantations in Trinidad differentiated the Indians there from the Indians in India (Niranjana, 2006:3,7,18). The system of indenture forced labourers to enter into a capitalist mode of production far earlier then those in their motherland (Niranjana, 2006:23). The migrants were mostly male and North Indian Hindus. 40 percent of the labourers were Untouchables, 18 percent were from high caste groups, the remaining percentage consisted of artisans and agricultural castes. The majority of indentured labourers were low castes, they were thought to be suited to strenuous labour, while high castes were not. These percentages do not account for the number of labourers who reclassified themselves in Trinidad (Niranjana, 2006:38, 40). The process of reclassification indicates that native understanding of caste and its status was still significant, indenture allowed lower castes to reclassify themselves and possibly ensure an improved standing. Bhana (2008:217) maintains that caste hierarchy was maintained by Indians. However, there were creative adaptations and aspirations to higher status through observing performances of ritual and song. These labourers endured slave-like working conditions. These circumstances created an environment for changes in social structures such as caste - Indians were housed together and not divided by caste status, they were forced to eat together, dietary restrictions were not possible making caste pollution impossible to surmount. The lack of women made endogamy impractical. The dominance of the lower castes also prevented the reconstruction of the caste system in Trinidad. The situation did not allow for adherence to caste regulations thus allowing the system to fade into one that simply distinguished between high and low castes (Niranjana, 2006:39).

Identity in the diaspora is not static, its historical context, culture and notions of power alter it. This fluidity explains the diversity of identities within the Indian diaspora (Carter & Torabully, 2002:11). The retention of the Indian identity correlates to the size of the Indian population. Within the Caribbean, the antagonism between ex-slaves and indentured labourers resulted in prejudicial views of Indians. This prejudice was maintained by colonial's use of divide-and-rule. The Indian population's work ethic was contrasted with that of black labour, seen as lazy and hedonistic. As a result of the diminishing of black labour's bargaining power and their marginalisation, the Black Legislative Council opposed the importation of Indians. Indians in the Caribbean who viewed Creole identities as impure and associated it with low caste Indians (Bhana, 2008: 217-218, 223; Carter & Torabully, 2002:12-13, 73, 75, 130). Carter & Torabully provide an account by a missionary to Trinidad who claimed that many of the Indians had bettered their positions and more importantly "[had] been delivered, to a great extent, from the intolerable yoke and curse of caste" (Carter & Torabully, 2002:59). It is estimated that 71 percent of the workers settled in the Caribbean (Bhana, 2008:218).

Tension characterises the Indo-Caribbean experience. The desire to distance themselves from their 'cooliness' and tradition was contrasted by the Indianness with their identity, i.e. "the desire for culture separation and the opposing urge towards creolisation" or tradition versus assimilation (Carter & Torabully, 2002:138-140). The West Indians sought social mobility through education and occupation; this resulted in a slow erosion of social stratification. They deviated from the social structures in India in other ways; family structures, wedding rituals, worship and occupations were altered (Niranjana, 2006:28). Niranjana (2006:21) distinguishes the older diaspora from the new professional migrants. The latter consist of well-educated, high caste and class individuals. Their wealth allowed them to maintain strong ties to India, while the former did not share the same access. All of these changes among the older diaspora did not completely sever the ties with Indian social stratification, a distinction was still made between high and low caste, and between race and religious beliefs. Caste did not serve as an organisational tool. High and low castes existed, but were not based on the traditional notions of purity, distinctions were made based on education and economic status. Occupation did not correlate to caste. During the later economic growth and the advent of independence in Trinidad, Niranjana noted a decline in religious ceremonies and rituals and material acquisition was emphasised instead (Niranjana, 2006:29,40). The emphasis on material acquisition and its link to status corresponds to the assertion that purity is replaced by economic status. What distinguishes Trinidad from South Africa is the creolisation of Indians. They may identify racially with Indians from India but culturally they are Creole. Racial endogamy was generally adhered to, exogamy did occur and increased in urban areas. The large settlement of Indians can be attributed to fear of chastisement or rejection in their home villages due to intercaste and interracial marriages (Niranjana, 2006: 34-36).

Indenture in Fiji

Fijian Indians share a similar historical context to South African Indians regarding their arrival as labourers. As in South Africa, Indian indentured labourers arrived to work on sugar cane plantations in the British colony of Fiji. Indenture began in 1879 and ended in 1919. Approximately sixty thousand Indians had arrived in Fiji by the end of indenture (Kelley, 1991:1). Indians entered indenture either voluntarily or in the case of many women, to escape abuse (Carter & Torabully, 2002:19-20). Women did not escape discrimination; they were seen as amoral and promiscuous in Fiji (Carter & Torabully, 2002:60). Those who came voluntarily were on occasion misinformed; the maximum daily wage in Fiji was less than half of what was advertised. The Fijian experience of indenture resulted in detailed records describing the severity of the treatment they were subjected to. Indentured workers described their experiences in Fiji as '*narak*' (hell) (Carter & Torabully, 2002:21, 115). The labourers settled in Fiji resulting in an economy based on the majority Indian population. The majority of the indentured were North Indian and Hindu, however there were significant populations of South Indians and Muslims (1991:1-2). Labourers were recruited from bazaars and recruiters denied Brahmins and other high castes. This is a result of an incident involving a group of *Pathans* Muslims who protested working conditions and were severely punished and separated from other labourers. Recruiters therefore preferred individual labourers who were unattached. Claims to higher castes were made by labourers to distinguish themselves, even though caste could not be maintained. Caste rights, relationships and privileges were not perpetuated (Kelley, 1991:68-69). The nature of indentured labour in a foreign country resulted in the loss of caste. Kelley attributes this loss to the "radical pollution of indenture" (Kelly, 1991:1-2). Carter and Torabully argue against this notion of castelessness, they view it as unrealistic (Carter & Torabully, 2002:85).

The Fijian government was unclear on legislating caste, though they did note birth as an indicator of caste for incoming labourers. The officials in Fiji later deemed caste to be extinct as a result of intermarriage and pollution. Furthermore, the government did not deem it practical to include caste legislation; since many of the different castes had different observances. Caste was also fluid as labourers reclassified themselves as higher castes (Kelley, 1991:106-109). Indenture allowed castes to obtain landownership status; land provided prosperity through its cultivation. Indian landownership grew rapidly. It was met with resistance and restrictions were placed on land acquisition by immigrants in Fiji (Carter & Torabully, 2002:104-105). If personal laws regarding caste were to be legislated, instances of fraud where one claimed to be of another caste would be impossible to determine therefore complicating issues regarding marriage (Kelley, 1991:106-109). Brij Lal's personal account describes his place of birth in Fiji as a village consisting of Hindus where Indian institutions such as *panchayat* and *mandali* and religious rituals were maintained. Caste had been significant but had eroded, although marriage across castes was rare (Bhana, 2008:222).

Hindu reformist Arya Samaj missionaries arrived in Fiji in the 1920s to impart teachings from the ancient Hindu texts called the Vedas. The group rejected the notion of static *varna* and instead promoted the notion of aspirational castes: one could improve ones standing through ritual and observance. This social upliftment was not restricted; Untouchables were able to achieve higher status through rituals. However, even though the Untouchables achieved higher status through the rituals, the high caste members of the Arya Samaj did not accept them. Untouchables and other low castes are more susceptible to conversion to Christianity and Islam, the Samaj sought to reconvert them to its form of Hinduism (Kelley, 1991:127,130). Indentured labourers gained linguistic knowledge and assets in order to empower themselves. Linguistic knowledge of the colonial language, English, was a prerequisite for socio-economic mobility; it further improved their relationships with the colonists The indentured realised that bilingualism provided access to employment as administrators or interpreters. Knowledge, especially Western education, would free them from *narak*. Westernisation aided the dilution of Indian culture and allowed subsequent generations to distance themselves from their forefathers' servitude. (Carter & Torabully, 2002:120,127,133,135). Mention of caste in Fiji is made till 1931 in a satirical petition regarding caste, that listed caste requirements, such as the separation between high and low castes, marriage and the pollution of leather. The petition highlighted the irrelevance and impracticality of the caste system in Fiji. The official position was that caste did not exist in Fiji (Kelley, 1991:109,212).

Conclusion

Dumont's construction of caste provides a model that is based on the notions of purity and pollution. Hierarchy is based on a notion of purity. While the definition of purity is uncertain, the Brahmin represented these notions and occupies the highest rank, while the Untouchable represented impurity and were therefore placed in the lowest rank. Caste pollution resulted in lower ranking and therefore was avoided via separation. Separation mainly manifested itself in commensality and endogamy. If pollution did occur, purification rituals could eliminate the transgression. Traditional occupations within the village system created interdependence between castes. This was exemplified in the Brahmin-Kshatriya relationship; the Brahmin was reliant on the Kshatriya for patronage, while the Kshatriya was reliant on the Brahmin for spiritual status and rituals. Dumont's postulations have faced criticisms; he was accused of having an inadequate understanding of caste as a result of his selective use of ethnographic material. Dumont's notions of purity, hierarchy and interdependence have been disassembled. However it is important to note that Dumont did not attempt to provide a historical account of caste, he sought to provide a model that could be compared to the putative western ideal of egalitarianism. Dumont has succeeded in providing a conceptual model, whether this model is accurate or resembles reality is debatable.

Caste manifests itself quite differently in Trinidad and Fiji; the voyages to the sugar plantations were sites of assertion or reconstructions of caste in India. Generally, separation became impossible or impractical and resulted in the dilution of caste. Labourers ate together, resided together and maintained the same occupation. The ratio of men to women made endogamy impossible. Some did adhere to native understanding of caste and refused to eat food prepared by lower castes or tasks associated with lower castes. The indentured experience did not eliminate notions of castes, hierarchies were reimagined with the replacement of purity by socio-economic factors. Mobility by lower castes became easier, especially if the Arya Samaj was involved. Mobility occurred primarily as a result of education. The indentured experience did not indicate a complete disregard of Indian culture and society; instead, Indian conceptions were altered abroad.

While the Gujarati community in Cape Town do not share the entire indentured experience, their reconstruction of culture and religion was impacted by their journey to South Africa and their experience in a foreign land. Notions of caste in Gujarat has been influenced by the Arya Samaj movement. Although initially concerned with reversing Christian conversion, the Samaj was instrumental in the social mobility of lower castes in Gujarat. Pocock and Lynch's study of the *Patidar* and *Jatavs* respectively, provide reference points for comparison to the South African Gujarati community. Both castes are comparable to castes in Cape Town, the *Patidars* perpetuated discrimination, while the *mochis* (who share a traditional occupation with the *Jatavs*) represented the largest caste group in Cape Town. Both of these castes are significant actors in the dispute regarding religious grounds in Cape Town which illustrates caste interactions and will be discussed in Chapter Three and Four. While this chapter provided an understanding of caste, the following chapter will construct the South African landscape and Indian experience within its boundaries.

Chapter Two: Journey of the South African Indian

This chapter describes the South African landscape and the experiences of Indians in the district areas of the Cape, Transvaal and Natal from the 19th century onwards. Indians in these three areas have had divergent experiences that have distinctly shaped their demography. Indians arrived in the Cape as slaves for the Dutch settlers; this population did not maintain their cultures and traditions as the result of intermarriage and concubinage. Although Indians had arrived in the Cape as slaves from the beginning of Dutch settlement, the majority of Indians arrived on the opposite coast from 1860 as a result of the 1859 Law 14 of the Colony of Natal (Hill, 1980:186). The Natal government required labourers for their sugar plantations, and an agreement was reached between Natal and the colonial government in India (Lloyd, 1991:705). Labourers additionally worked for the Natal Government Railway and as domestic servants in residences, hotels, schools and hospitals (Swan, 1985:20). It is estimated that by the end of indenture, 152,184 labourers had arrived in Natal from Calcutta and Madras (Prabhakara, 2003:1839).

South Africa contains the largest post indenture population (Visweswaran, 1997:25). Passenger Indians were merchants who had followed the indentured in order to profit from their needs by establishing commercial trade in Indian goods. These passenger Indians initially settled in Natal but after commercial success they expanded to the Transvaal and the Cape. The Transvaal was also home to ex-indentured labourers who sought opportunities in the mining industry. Indians in South Africa experienced two district forms of migration and faced discrimination in the Transvaal and Natal as their commercial success threatened Europeans.

The Indian population was estimated to be 2.5 per cent of the South African population (Waetjen & Vahed, 2011:24). The size of the population of Indians in Cape Town is significantly smaller than in Johannesburg and Durban. Durban's Asian population[16] is 16,7 per cent, Johannesburg's is 4,9 per cent, while Cape Town had a significantly smaller Asian population of only 1,4 per cent (Statistics South Africa, 2007:17). The composition of the population in Cape Town is also demographically and historically different from Durban and Johannesburg. The chapter will begin with a discussion on the

[16] The Asian population does not only consist of Indians, this category includes the South East Asian population as well. A population groups is defined as, "A group with common characteristics (in terms of descent and history), particularly in relation to how they were (or would have been) classified before the 1994 elections." (Statistics South Africa, 2007: 17)

distinct experiences in the Cape, Transvaal and Natal, followed by a summary of the experience of Indians in South African history. Finally the chapter will conclude with a focus on the experience of caste.

The South African Landscape

The foundation of South Africa stems from the maritime trade between Europe and Asia. Cape Town's Table Bay served as a stop for ship repair, convalescence and replenishment of fresh meat from its indigenous population. This led to the construction of a permanent stop by the Dutch East India Company (hereafter referred to as the Company) in 1652. The settlement expanded and included retirees; at the end of the 18th century the settlement was approximately 25,000. Trade between the Company and passing ships included agriculture and cattle. The cattle trade led to conflict between the European settlers and the indigenous people, the Khoi (Freund, 1984:55). The Company began importing slaves from Mozambique, Madagascar and Asia, while continuing the slave trade from its settlements in South East Asia, the Malabar and Coromandel coasts of South Asia. The Cape's 'establishment' and expansion was a direct result of the shipping trade (Freund, 1984:56). The community can be described as a mixture of Dutch, French, Scandinavian and German; the melting pot of these settlers created the Afrikaner society (Freund, 1984:56). Although the settlers constructed a racial hierarchy, intermarriage and concubinage resulted in multiracial offspring. The distinction between freedom and slavery determined status in this poorer community and some were accepted into the Afrikaner community (Freund, 1984:56). The Coloured population are descendants of these free slaves.

The Dutch government was replaced as the British who had settled from 1795 began to dominate the Cape. The British were determined to hold the colony as the port held strategic and economic importance (Freund, 1984:76). Agriculture and commoditisation of the area focused on benefitting Britain. The abolition of slavery resulted in capital loss for many of the landowners resulting in several rebellions. These rebellions by the Afrikaner farmers or *trekboers* were hopeless, causing the Afrikaners to embark on the Groot Trek. The Groot Trek of 1834 saw the establishment of Afrikaner settlements across what is now known as the Republic of South Africa. Many of these establishments were situated near the Vaal River or what was known as the Transvaal. Afrikaners who had reached Natal faced conflict with the British and Zulus; the British feared the establishment of a rival port by the Afrikaners in Natal and defeated them, Natal became the second British colony in South Africa in 1843 (Freund, 1984:77). Thus from this history we can see the distinction in the three areas of the Cape, Natal and Transvaal; the Cape and Natal developed under British rule, while the Transvaal became distinctly Afrikaans.

As a result of an early history of immigrant settlement, South African cities that were established by European settlers are more institutionally complex and larger than their pan-African counterparts (Freund, 2007:107). These towns have come to shape urban living. The South African landscape differs demographically from its pan-African neighbours; the Cape and Natal have a large population of Coloured and Indian immigrants (Freund, 2007:107). Urban cities were faced with the conundrum of maintaining white dominance while allowing black labour access to their white employers (Freund, 2007:109). This dilemma has remained since 1840 when the Cape's native population entered the towns seeking employment (Freund, 2007:109). The entry into cities by black Africans resulted in early forms of segregation and the creation of African townships (Freund, 2007:109). Locations that were within walking distance of the city centre soon faced demolition under expansion; permanent locations were forced to the periphery, outside of areas of white activity (Freund, 2007:113).

The establishment of the Union of South Africa in 1910 resulted in a state that attempted to regulate urban populations. The Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 contained segregation policies but did not result in the removal of the black population; the poor just moved from one area to another (Freund, 2007:113-114). The Slums Act of 1934 provided policies for future destruction of non-white residences and constructing new residence for only the white population, while the 1937 Natives Laws Amendment Act encouraged the creation of barriers to isolate locations. These policies were put under pressure by the increasing need for black labour in the urban areas; during World War II, the pass law that controlled the movement of blacks was suspended. During the 1940s, the urban black population increased with the migration of women and the establishment of families. The Fagan Commission was created to address the issue of the urban population; it recommended "the need to acknowledge permanent black residence in towns" but did not encourage racial integration (Freund, 2007:114-115). The National Party's Sauer Commission in 1947 countered Fagan by encouraging the need for white cities and a prevention of integration but maintained that for economic reasons blacks were required in urban employment (Freund, 2007:115). White dependence on the urban black population was highlighted as a result of the bus boycotts in Alexandra in 1957; the boycott affected the white population's needs (Freund, 2007:115-116).

The apartheid system officially began in 1948 with the National Party's (NP) election victory. Afrikaner voters believed that the incumbent United Party was not sufficiently addressing the issue of black urbanisation; the NP's campaign of apartheid was far more appealing. The system became a legal form of racism. Policies were created to favour the minority white population; land was unequally distributed, races were separated both publicly and privately. Although blacks bore the brunt of the system, it affected all non-white populations. Apartheid policies affected public and private spheres; one of the most significant laws was the Group Areas Act of 1950. Groups Areas enforced racial segregation in commercial and residential areas; the Population Registration of 1950 act defined these

racial groups. Indians were defined as “any person who [was], in fact, or generally accepted as a member of a race or tribe whose national home [was] in India or Pakistan” (Alexander, 1950: 230; Hill, 1980:198).

The National Party’s apartheid system practiced some of the Sauer Commission recommendations, although they added two new practices: destruction and construction. The Group Areas Act of 1950 allowed the state to designate race to specific urban areas and destroy areas that did not meet this classification (Freund, 2007:123). Influx controls were not limited to Africans; the Group Areas Act saw the relocation of Indian and Coloured populations from areas declared white. Apartheid policies ensured the removal of Indian and African competition for white merchants (Marais, 1998:19). Areas that were not clearly segregated were particularly targeted, such as the mixed areas of Sophiatown, District Six and Cato Manor; these areas were seen as autonomous and operating beyond state control. The destruction took place under the guise of modernisation and clearance of slums (Freund, 2007:123). These destructions particularly affected the Indian and Coloured populations; the former were homeowners while the latter were intermingled across Cape Town, their homes became gentrified for the white population (Freund, 2007:123).

Natal: The Arrival of the Indentured

Natal was the port of call for Indians arriving in South Africa from 1860 and many, including passenger Indians chose to reside there and seek economic success; Durban was known as "the largest 'Indian' city outside India" (Mukherji, 2011). This stems from the indenture system, some chose repatriation but it is estimated that approximately 52 percent remained in Natal (Swan, 1985:20). They either re-indentured or sought commercial enterprises, which served or employed other indentured and ex-indentured workers. Passenger Indians, once established in predominantly Indian areas, began to expand to other parts of Natal and finally some extended their enterprises into the Transvaal. The predominantly Gujarati network of passenger Indians expanded through partnerships with new immigrants, in some cases these immigrants chose to then open their own enterprises (Swan, 1985: 8). Indian political activity occurred primarily in Natal and was focused on merchant interests. Protests and petitioning resulted from restrictions impacting merchant trading such as the expulsion from the Orange Free State or the increasing restrictions in the Transvaal (Swan, 1985:38).

Two-thirds of South Africa’s Indian population resided in Durban as a result of indenture (Freund, 2007:112). Workers were to sign a renewable contract for 5 years, after which they were to be repatriated at their own cost; free repatriation occurred after 10 years of indenture (Niranjana, 2006:23; Swan, 1985:1). According to an Immigration Department notice addressed “to coolies intending to emigrate to Natal”, the Acting Protector of Immigrants stated that:

> "Your religion will in no way be interfered with… You will have a house rent free to live in… care is taken not to separate families and relatives… there is an abundance of good water, fruit and vegetables. If you are ill, medical attendance, medicines, and nourishment, are provided free of charge" (Desai & Vahed, 2010:38).

Transportation, housing and rations were provided in addition to a wage (Swan, 1985:1, 20). Many could not economically afford to return, their caste status had been altered or ignored and their families had passed away reducing the appeal of home (Desai & Vahed, 2010:viii). The indenture agreement was terminated by India in 1866; the termination was a result of the ill treatment of labourers. This termination was short-lived and in 1874 the system resumed until its permanent termination in 1911, once again termination was a result of ill treatment (Lloyd, 1991:705). After their contracts elapsed and/or the end of indenture in 1911, many relocated to Durban or its periphery, often outnumbering the white population. They developed skills that allowed them to enter urban trade; commercial and professional men resided with their families in attractive neighbourhoods. The edge of town consisted of predominantly Hindu traders, while a commercial Muslim population resided adjacent to the city centre (Freund, 2007:112). Severe segregation policies did not diminish the Indian influence on the city (Freund, 2007:112).

Passenger Indians had followed 15 years after indentured workers arrived in South Africa and had successfully developed commercial ventures (Lloyd, 1991:705; Swan, 1985:1-2). The first passenger Indians arrived in 1875 and came via Mauritius. By 1885 the population was 30,000 (Swan, 1985:3-4). The majority of this population was under indenture, however there were about 4,000 ex-indentured in 1874. These ex-indentured were the first owners of Indian stores, initially they competed with the passenger Indians, but the latter's capital strength was too strong. In 1880, ex-indentured Indians owned 30 of the 37 retail licenses; by 1885, 60 of the 66 retail licenses were owned by passenger Indians. The passengers had larger capital, owned increasing amounts of property, were from merchant or trading families and employed fellow Gujaratis, expanded by partnering with Gujaratis, they even sold their businesses to incoming Gujaratis, thus creating a monopoly. The passengers had successfully created a network excluding the ex-indentured (Swan, 1985:3-4). Interaction between the labourers and the passengers occurred via property rentals and moneylending (Swan, 1985:22). The passenger network primarily identified itself through commercial interests rather than social and religious groups. Ex-indentured Indians sought economic opportunities in fishing, gardening and hawking, as these professions did not require large capital investments (Swan, 1985:21).

By 1911 there were 2,000 passenger Indians in Natal and 1,000 in the Transvaal. They represented the privileged class; they were merchants, traders, professionals, farmers and white-collar workers. It is these workers whose needs and aspirations were expressed in politics (Swan, 1985:2). They generally followed a pattern of initially establishing themselves on the coast of Natal, then expanded throughout Natal and finally across the Boer republics. The distribution of trading licenses indicates that the majority of commercial enterprises were in Natal, concentrated in predominantly Indian areas, however these extended to other areas in Natal, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State (Swan, 1985:5). The general pattern indicates that the stores in the Transvaal were branches of established Natal enterprises. In Natal, they primarily catered to the low income Indians; similarly, in the Transvaal they catered to low-income clients but these were not limited to the Indian population (Swan, 1985:5-6.

The whites in Natal did not accept Indians as residents. While Indians were to a small proportion of the South African population, the majority of them resided in Natal. Thus the 'Indian problem' was focused in Natal. European discrimination was exacerbated by white fear of being swamped demographically and escalating economic competition; in 1945 the Indian fecundity rate was 25.9, while the European rate was 9.34. The decrease in Indian mortality rates further enhanced the issue (Alexander, 1950:230).

Africans also harboured anti-Indian sentiments in Natal:

> "Apartheid's forced isolation of Indians through the state's racial definitions of Indianness reinforced a sense of identity that eventually became homogenised across linguistic, class, and religious divisions" (Radhakrishnan, 2005: 267).

According to Radhakrishnan (2005:267), this physical separation created a sense of superiority among the community and this idea was reinforced with Verwoerd's notion of "separate development" that was the basis of apartheid. This was illustrated by the animosity between Indians and Africans in Durban which culminated into race riots in 1949 and 1985. The adoption of the word coolie, *ikula*, by the Zulus and the use of the word *kaffirs* by Indians while referring to black Africans further highlights this tension (Prabhakara, 2003:1841). This tension can be linked to Gandhian campaigns in Transvaal in the early 20th century which aimed at differentiating Indians from Blacks as well as the rejection of joint campaigns that included Africans (Prabhakara, 2003:1841; Swan, 1985:79-97). The seemingly privileged position of Indians under apartheid further increased resentment by Africans; Indians were not required to carry a pass and could own property in certain areas (Alexander, 1950:231).

Cato Manor, an area destroyed under the Group Areas Act, contained Indian smallholders. The area was known for its illicit activity, specially the brewing of alcohol. During World War II, Africans arrived

from the countryside and rented land or housing from Indians. The cohabitation of Indians and Africans resulted in race riots in the area in 1949. The area became increasingly uncontrollable, police clashed violently with women beer-brewers during the 1950s. As a result, the area was declared white and its African and Indian residents were forcibly relocated (Freund, 2007:191-192). Indian families returned to the area toward the end of apartheid with new bungalows constructed during the mid-1980s. The success of the Indian claim for land, as a result of dispossession under apartheid, of Cato Manor infuriated Africans who invaded and seized properties in 1992. Africans also set up informal housing in parts of Cato Manor (Freund, 2007:192).

Transvaal: Merchant Enterprises

GUJARATI MERCHANT IN TRANSVAAL (IMAGE TAKEN BY NEERALI GAJJAR, 2010)

Many passenger Indians were drawn to Johannesburg's economic opportunities before the Anglo-Boer War or South African War (1899-1902), seeking opportunities in the mining industry (Swan, 1985:21). Mines offered attractive terms, enticing sugar cane workers (Swan, 1985:26). During the Anglo Boer War, the merchants returned to Natal. After the British appropriated the Transvaal in 1900, the merchants returned till the end of the war in 1902. The Indian population in the Transvaal included elites and ex-indentured traders and hawkers. Political action in Transvaal focused on Law 3, restricting Indian trade and residence to designated areas. Petitions were made by both the elite and by ex-indentured traders, who shared common interests. The threat to merchant interests was the

identification with the African population, their primary strategy was to enforce their superiority over Africans and not, as in Natal, over the ex-indentured Indians. The war suspended the implementation of segregation. However Resolution 97 in 1902 reaffirmed the policy of segregation. In 1903, a government notice stated that Indian trade and residence would be confined to designated areas however, those who held trading licenses before the war outside of the designated areas were able to continue trading (Swan, 1985:79-97).

That same year saw the establishment of the British Indian Association (BIA); it was limited to Gujarati merchants, however it differed in structure. There was no formal membership roll, general meetings were advertised to address the matter and were to include the entire Indian community of Transvaal. BIA did not succeed in its aim of removing Law 3 (Swan, 1985:104-105). Anti-Indian sentiment escalated and focused on Indian occupation and ownership of mining areas in the Transvaal and fear of inflow into white areas. This resulted in the Transvaal Asiatic Land and Trading Act of 1939; Indians were banned from procuring or hiring property previously occupied by whites or receiving new trading licenses for two years (Hill, 1980:196; Lloyd, 1991:707). This policy of the prohibition of property purchase was extended to Natal under the 1943 Trading and Occupation of Land (Natal and Transvaal) Restriction Act, also known as the Pegging Act (Lloyd, 1991:709).

The Cape: From Slavery to the End of 'Privilege'

Although popular narratives of the entry of Indians in South Africa dates the beginning to the arrival of the *SS Truro* in 1860, Indians have arrived as slaves in the Cape as early as 1653. Cape Town was a significant port within the Indian Ocean. In 1915-16 the port accounted for 37,4 per cent of the national industry (Freund, 1995:31). Its link to Asia has shaped trading, shipping patterns and the demographic of the city. The population in the city was highly diverse and Indians were visible in the Cape as early as the 1880s (Worden, Van Heyningen & Bickford-Smith, 1998:212: Worden, 2007:142-143). These Indians became part of the colonial labour system (Freund, 1995:1). As a result of Asian crews manning vessels from Batavia and Ceylon, there were 233 sailors of Indian origin in the city in 1792; however, most of the Indian population in the Cape were slaves who were owned by the *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (VOC) (Worden, 2007:144). Furthermore, British administrators relied on Indians, and there were "so many Indian men of some ability" who resided at the Castle of Good Hope (Worden, Van Heyningen & Bickford-Smith, 1998:96). Slaves were commonly acquired during times of destitution. Raids conducted in villages in coastal Bengal also brought many slaves. Ceylon exported their slaves to the Cape as early as the 1650s. Not all Indians were brought to the Cape by enslavement - some migrated: "The migrations from poorer agricultural areas were characterised by extensive village and kinship chains, connecting new hopefuls to established migrants" (Jayawardane, 2012: 59: Worden, 2007:145-146). Failing health additionally caused many

Indians to come to the Cape en route to Europe as the climate was deemed similar to the subcontinent (Worden, Van Heyningen & Bickford-Smith, 1998:96). The diversity in the city has had an impact on its culture and Asian influences can be seen in Malay cooking and in the textile industry (Worden, 2007:152).

Cape Town's diluted racial policies could be attributed to the unclear racial boundaries that resulted from the city's history of racial mixing (Freund, 2007:111). The Cape Malays' ancestry was believed to be limited to Indonesia and Malaysia; it is now known to include the coastline of India. Several slaves are identified by the inclusion of their origin in their name, indicating that they came from Bengal, Malabar and other Indian districts. This history has been ignored and the slaves have not been recognised as kin by the Indian community of South Africa (Prabhakara, 2003:1839). The Indian population in Cape Town is overshadowed by the Cape Malay or Coloured population, the latter's political position was the focus of the apartheid government (Alexander, 1950:230).

The exact date of entry by Indians in the Cape is unclear as there were no restrictions on immigration prior to 1902 nor were new immigrants differentiated from returning Indians. It is estimated that they came in the 1870s and 1880s (Bradlow, 1979:134; Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2009:115). The majority of these immigrants came from India, while some came via Mauritius (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2009:115). The majority of these passenger Indians were Maharashtrian. The second largest group were Gujarati and came from a territory that was not unified politically; Gujarat in the late nineteenth century consisted of independent Princely States (Hiralal, 2013:594). According to Hiralal (2013,594), Gujarati immigrants came from Bardoli, Dhabel, Ghara,Kachholi, Kathor, Karadi, Kholvad, Matvad, Panoli, Rander, Sisodra, Varad and Varachha. Their castes ranged from *sonis*, *khatris*, *rajputs*, *patidars*, *kolis*, *kacchias*, *navs* and *mochis*. Many of these groups established their own caste communities. The numerous sub-caste groups that still exist, such as the Transvaal Patidar Society and the Natal Rajput Association are evidence of this. Many Gujarati immigrated as a result of the famines during 1896 and 1900, chain migration and village communication networks helped to promote the notion that new opportunities were available in South Africa (Hiralal, 2013:595).

The 1891 Censure indicated that there were 1453 Indians in the Cape who represented a mere one percent of the population, there were 1065 men and 388 women; this number more than doubled in 1899, as the urban settlement of Indians numbered 3471, 600 of which were in city of Cape Town (Bradlow, 1979:134; Dawood, 1993:11). Many of these passenger Indians were Muslim (Bradlow, 1979:136).
Entry into the Transvaal and Natal was difficult, after the South African War (1899-1902); in Natal Indians could only enter if they were indentured, the spouse or offspring of a domiciled Indian or if they could demonstrate English literacy (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2009:117). Many of these immigrants fell

under the pattern of chain migration; they were either aided or brought over by their fellow villagers or family members who provided emotional and in some cases financial support (Dawood, 1993:7). Chain migration allowed for the continuation of religious, social and cultural traditions such as caste, it additionally resulted in a degree of homogeneity when compared to settlers in the Transvaal and Natal (Dawood, 1993:9). Many of the Cape settlers who sought retail opportunities were Gujaratis (Dawood, 1993:24). Ex-indentured labourers from Natal migrated to the Cape in 1897 to work on docks, railways and farms (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2009:113).

Before 1892, Indians experienced very little prejudice, a Cape Times editorial stated that, "one obscure Hindoo [sic] priest has more mind, faith and genius than all the South African savages put together. The Brahmins and Mohomedans are in their fashion, heirs to as ancient a civilisation as ourselves and in some respects may be said to go beyond us" (Bradlow, 1979:143). This friendly view was supported by the privilege Indians received; they benefited from the low property qualification for franchise and were represented in local government (Bradlow, 1979:144; Brand, 1966:134). As the number of Indians on the voters roll was too small to be perceived as a threat, this was permitted (Bradlow, 1979:144). This changed in 1893 as particular interest groups were threatened by the increase in Indian traders. Indians were viewed as dirty and immoral. Anti-Indian sentiment was strong in Natal and Transvaal and it had spread to the Cape; the restrictions in Natal and Transvaal caused fear in the Cape as it was thought that there would be an influx of 'unwanted' Indians from Natal and Transvaal. This was exacerbated by the influx of Indian refugees into the Cape from the Transvaal during the South African War, resulting in increased housing shortages and overcrowding in the Cape (Bradlow, 1979:144-148). Racial segregation was proposed by whites but was rejected as it went against the notions of Cape Liberalism; however in Kimberley and East London, Indian locations were set up. Anti-Indian sentiments were quite strong in East London and resulted in a curfew that was justified in preventing health hazards. The strength of prejudice in East London is attributed to the port being the first stop after Natal (Bradlow, 1979:150-151).

Restrictions against Indians entering the Cape began with the passing of the Immigration Act of 1902. Unlike Natal, immigration restrictions in the Cape were not aimed at excluding merchants, rather they were targeted at preventing entry of uneducated and unskilled labourers (Bradlow, 1979:154). The Act required potential settlers to be able "to write [their] name and sign in the characters of any European language"; "required proof of visible means of support, such as family or friends resident in the Cape"; and possession of a minimum of £20 (Bickford-Smith, 1987 in Dawood, 1993:15; Hill, 1980; Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2009:118). Those exempt from the 1902 legislature were those Indians considered domiciled on the 30th of January 1903 and their wives and children, however those Indians who had left mid-January were also exempt if they could prove they could get six months of respectable employment. To prevent reentry by settler Indians, an amendment was added to the Immigration Act

in 1906 requiring a permit to return: 187 to the Cape. The permit cost £1 and was initially valid for one year but this was extended to three years[17] (Dawood, 1993:17). In 1906 the term domiciled was altered to those born in South Africa (Bradlow, 1979:159). The restriction also exempted immigrants and travellers deemed to be respectable or gentlemen-like, such as a renowned Indian cricketer (Bradlow, 1979: 154-156). No passports were issued for those travelling to India from the Cape (Bradlow, 1979:54). Indian reaction was driven by their economic interest, they requested the inclusion of Indian languages to the literacy test to ensure that educated Indians needed for business would still be allowed entry (Bradlow, 1979:157). In order to reduce overheads, shopkeepers hired and accommodated assistants, usually young men found through village networks. Since the assistant's accommodation and meals were covered, the shopkeeper could justify providing them low salaries (Dawood, 1993:73). Thus, aside from the licensing restrictions, immigration policies that prevented the entry of family members or kin from village networks, adversely affected Indian traders. They became increasingly reliant on family members and the incorporation of their children (Dawood, 1993:73-74).

In 1913, the Immigrants' Regulation Act restricted inter-provincial movement nationally. The Act stated that a special permit was required for inter-provincial movement and prohibited ownership or leasing of land by illegal immigrants in the Cape (Dawood, 1993:20-21). The permit or domicile certificate was often denied, aside from the length of residency in the Cape, Indians were only considered domicile if they owned property and if their family was in the colony, thus Indians with wives in India were not considered domicile. The only permitted new entry into the Cape was the family of a domiciled Indian (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2009:119). Unlike ex-indentured labourers who could return to South Africa by reindenturing, Indians who had settled in the Cape were restricted by the cost of return from India. Some could return to India under the assisted emigration scheme but they could not necessarily return as their domiciled status was revoked (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2009:120). In 1927 the Immigration and Indian Relief Act No 37 was passed. According to Hill (1980:188), this refused entry to Indians who had fraudulent domicile[18] permits, while condoning those who had already entered the Union. However, Dawood (1993:24) states that the government proposed to pardon those who entered South Africa prior to July 1924; they were given protection certificates but this did not extend to their family. Those who arrived in the Cape illegally were forced to leave (Dawood, 1993:28).

Unlike disruptive protests and the use of *satyagraha* in Natal and Transvaal, protest by Indians in the Cape followed official channels such as petitioning parliament and sending deputations to ministers;

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[17] It is uncertain when this extension took place

[18] The definition of domicile is unclear, "when Indians go to the Immigration Department; they are at one time told that domiciled means those who are married here, at another time they are told that it is one who has property here or who has lived here for several years." (*Report of Select Committee of 1908:*2 in Dawood, 1993:18)

this may be a result of the fear that any active protest would result in the removal of their privileged position. "[T]hey prided themselves on being free men and British subjects" which was significant as these ideas fitted in with the notion of Cape Liberalism, and in comparison to Natal and Transvaal, they faced fewer discriminatory practices (Bradlow, 1979:167-168; Dawood, 1993:21-22). Dawood (1993:142) supports this view and stated that, "Cape Indians did not perceive themselves to be part of the larger South African Indian community[19]", due to their heterogeneity, they organised themselves into "collectivities which function[ed] within different structural levels of society" which "coincide largely with religious and linguistic divisions" and traditional occupation structures (Brand, 1966:133). However, the cleavages within the community were not always clear; for example, political organisations included Hindu and Muslim Indians (Brand, 1966:135). Their protests as a minority group were not ignored, the Cape engaged with its minority citizens in rational debates and created platforms for this such as the Select Committee which examined Indian grievances arising from immigration and trade restrictions (Bradlow, 1979:169). While the idea of Cape Liberalism ameliorated the degree of discrimination, especially regarding segregation and immigration, felt by Indians in Natal and the Transvaal, it was compromised to favour the trade interests of whites (Bradlow, 1979:170).

Many of these immigrants came from agricultural villages and became hawkers, while others became "barbers, shoemakers, tailors, butchers and general dealers" (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2009:115). Aside from political rights, Indians in the Cape were also privileged commercially. They could operate freely as "hawkers, peddlers, general dealers, shoe repairers or other small-scale independent business people" (Dawood, 1993:32). Before the 1906 restrictions, trading licenses were unrestricted, in 1897 137 Indians had trading licenses, this number rose to 714 in 1905, while records indicate there were 256 hawkers (Bradlow. 1979:137). Bradlow (1979:138-139) believed that Indian traders made a meagre living at best, their trade was primarily in poor areas causing them to operate with small margins which resulted in small profits. They were unable to escape petty trade as there were no means of higher education. Resentment from British traders culminated in restrictions legislated in the General Dealers Act of 1906 (Dawood, 1993:32-33). Licenses for general dealers and hawkers were restricted as "the small Indian trader was viewed as a formidable competitor" (Dawood, 1993:33). Applications for a trading license were to be submitted to the respective municipal council and could be refused, rejected applicants could only reapply after six months. Prejudice from the white councillors and village shopkeepers skewed the approval process (Dawood, 1993:34). Additionally, shop owners already possessing licences faced restrictions regarding their trading hours, while

[19] Brand concludes that the Cape Indians do not sufficiently qualify as a community; their only point of collectivity is that they share a national origin and restrictive policies treated them as a homogeneous group. Other than political protests, the only activity they participated in as a community were the annual celebrations of India's independence, which were attended by a rather small percentage of the population. The 'Indian community' represented a term for administrative convenience regarding a population group (Brand, 1966:170).

hawkers were restricted to certain areas and their licence fee tripled further affecting their meagre incomes (Dawood, 1993:35-36). Hawkers petitioned the Governor of the Cape seeking a resolution regarding the licenses. The Governor's office responded stating that they could not interfere in a parliamentary act.

No further action was taken until July 1908 when the Indian Conference of the Cape Colony[20] petitioned the governor requesting that the issuing of license should be done by a local magistrate. The response from the governor's office was unchanged however a committee was appointed in 1908 to discuss the Immigration Act and the General Dealers Act. The committee heard evidence from Indian hawkers, general dealers, and white members of the House of Assembly, the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce and the vice president of the Grocer's Association. The testimony from Indian traders described economic hardships as a result of the Act and the decrease in Indians in Cape Town. While white traders and representatives made racially bias comments, aided by the perception that the Indians in the Cape were inferior, as they had been rejected by authorities in Natal that hid their economic insecurity. They testified that their interests were akin to those of the Colony's and that the refusal of licenses was based on applicant's unsuitability and not racial bias. Whites could not compete with the low prices Indians offered because "their [Indians] prices were lower than those of wholesalers because, owing their low standard of living, they were able to live very cheaply", that they sold stolen goods and short-weighed customers and that Indians were to blame for insolvency among whites (Dawood, 1993:43-44, 48, Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2009:117). The Conference did not manage to overturn the General Dealers Act.

What the whites ignored was that the working class poor relied on the Indian trader for credit, and the Indian trader relied on the steady patronage. Aside from Jewish traders, other white traders were not willing to employ this system and therefore unable to compete with Indian traders in poor areas (Dawood, 1993:48). There were also a number of poor Indians as Indians were also unable to enter certain industries as a result of exclusive trade unions and could not find alternative occupations (Dawood, 1993:33, 52; Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2009:116). Certain industries such as tailoring were already monopolised by the Coloured and Malay population who were preferred over Indian workers. With the exception of catering wage employment was nearly impossible for Indians (Dawood, 1993:53). The increasingly restrictive trading regulations against hawkers culminated with the Group Areas Act of 1950; Indian hawkers were relocated outside of the city ending the viability of their occupation (Dawood, 1993:56). Hawkers and businessman were not the only targets of economically motivated racism. Many ex-indentured labourers from Natal were recruited to the Cape as waiters. Many of these wage earners were in the Cape illegally and found themselves the target of returning white soldiers who faced unemployment. The working class Indians, who were mainly Tamil, were

[20] A lobby group that claims to represent diverse interests (Dawood, 1980:36).

unsupported by the Indian merchants, who were mainly Gujarati, who supported the law in deporting these Indians to unfavourable conditions in Natal (Dawood, 1993:58-59). This explains the reaction of Cape Indians to the restriction on trade and the inaction against the restrictive immigration policies. Fearing the loss of their privileged position, the Cape Indian's economic interests[21] fuelled selective confrontation against whites rather than ethnic ties (Dawood, 1993:24).

During the 1940s, Indians increasingly became landowners, which further fuelled anti-Indian sentiments. In 1947, Prime Minister Smuts stated that if Indians increasingly purchased land in European areas, the Asiatic Land and Tenure Act of 1946, would be extended to the Cape (Dawood, 1993:92). The Act, known as the Ghetto Act,

> "ended holding of land by nominees… that if the controlling shares of a company are held by an Asiatic, that company would be regarded as Asiatic. No persons not Asiatic may enter into an agreement with an Asiatic, except by permit, to acquire fixed property in Natal… other than in an exempted area. Communal franchise was also offered to Indians, with a White parliamentary representation." (Hill, 1980:197).

Opposition leaders in parliament could not understand why the Ghetto Act had not been applied to the Cape, where Indians were not prohibited from purchasing property (Dawood, 1993:94-95). This became moot in 1950 when the ruling National Party introduced the Group Areas Act. It was contended by a journalist, that Indians be regarded as Coloured in the Cape, for the purposes of the Group Areas Act, as they were not politically active, numerically small, they provided "invaluable services in the commercial field" and they were "instrumental in the distribution of essential food" (Cape Times, 1958 in Dawood, 1993:98-99). Indians were not classified as Coloured in the Cape and the distinction resulted in a mildly privileged or rather ambiguous position; Indians remained in areas such as District Six long after other races had been evicted because the City Council failed to allocate an Indian area in province (Dawood, 1993:99-100). This may also be attributed to the lack of active participation of the City Council of Cape Town in the rezoning process required by the Group Areas Act; they felt that it was

> "… so blatantly stupid to risk disturbing the racial harmony and goodwill which is a happy characteristic of Cape Town, due in no small measure, to the enlightened and liberal attitude of the City Council" (Cape Times, 1956 in Dawood, 1993:100).

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[21] Factionalism was significant in the political organisations, they were not considered to be fully representative, by those who felt ignored such as the Tamily community, and believed to protect the Muslim (merchant) interests (Brand, 1966:149).

However, the housing needs of Indians became a significant matter in 1962 with the creation of the Department of Indian Affairs (Dawood, 1993:100). The issue of designating an Indian area was further complicated by internal ethnic-based divisions within the Indian community; Gujarati traders preferred areas in which they had established their business, while the Tamil working class, sought Council housing (Dawood, 1993:100). Rylands became the designated India area in 1957 (Hill, 1980:62).

The Group Areas Act significantly impacted Indian traders and hawkers. Many were unable to reside in the areas in which they traded; the commute to their shops from Rylands would have been unfeasible. Prior to their relocation, most Indian homes were attached to their shops, eliminating commuting costs and allowing them to maintain their extensive trading hours (Dawood, 1993:103). Between 1950 and 1975, 897 Indians were removed from their business premises in the Cape, many of these traders did not recover financially after relocation as the area was either too saturated or they had lost their regular clientele (Kharsany, 1971 in Dawood, 1993:116, 121). This experience resulted in a changed education pattern. Instead of incorporation of children into the family trade after leaving school with rudimentary skills, the next generation was encouraged to pursue professions (Dawood, 1993:124).

Indian Political Activity

To ease tensions which resulted from anti-Indian sentiments, re-indenture and/or repatriation was encouraged in 1895, a £3 head tax was imposed on Indians who remained in South Africa but were not re-indentured (Lloyd, 1991:705). In the same year, Indians faced restrictions aimed at reducing competition in the Transvaal; Asians were prohibited from acquiring property or citizenship. This law was amended; Indians were confined to separate locations and were only allowed to purchase property in these areas (Swan, 1985:39). The Orange Free State prohibited Indian property ownership or trading unless they were registered; none of the Indians had registered and were therefore barred from trading and expelled (Lloyd, 1991:705; Swan, 1985:40). The hostility in the Orange Free State and the Transvaal threatened the merchants' livelihoods and illustrates a pattern that would extend to Natal. The Durban Indian Committee[22] launched a campaign in 1891; the campaign was aimed at protecting the merchants' interests' in Natal, Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Swan argues that, "this was the genesis of the politics of the Natal Indian merchants and… it set the pattern for their political activity" and distinguished the merchants from the "indentured coolie" (Swan, 1985:40-41).

The Natal Indian Congress (NIC) was established in reaction to the Franchise Amendment Bill which limited Asian franchise. NIC launched a defiance campaign that resulted in concessions to the laws: the immigration acts were altered and the £3 tax was removed (Lloyd, 1991:706). NIC held prejudicial

[22] The Durban Indian Committee consisted of merchant traders (Swan, 1985:40)

beliefs, harbouring racist notions towards Africans and distinguishing themselves from the indentured (Swan, 1985:54). From 1897 onwards stricter regulations targeting Indians were passed; in Natal, the municipal council began controlling trading licenses in order to reduce competition between Whites and Indians and to reduce immigration to the Cape and Transvaal, education (English literacy), health and finance (possession of £25) had to be met by prospective immigrants and permits were required by Indians seeking entry to areas of South Africa. In the Cape, immigration was unrestricted if criteria regarding education, English proficiency, financial standing and desirability were met (Hill, 1980:186-187; Lloyd, 1991:706; Swan, 1985:67).

Of the Apartheid policies evolving from the previous eras of discrimination, the Group Areas Act of 1950 was the most significant. This act, as mentioned earlier, destroyed multiracial areas and relocated non-white populations to the urban periphery. South African Indian politics was primarily focused on combating policies within the confines of the legal realm (Swan, 1985:41). The Natal Indian Congress was composed of conservatives who were driven by their merchant interests. Indian politics was not a unifying force; the merchants' activity distanced and distinguished themselves from the indentured who they believed were the root of anti-Indian sentiments. The merchant politics,

> "far from unifying the Indian population as has been asserted in the past, were directed specifically towards attaining white recognition of fundamental differences between the two major social groups in the community: merchants and workers" (Swan, 1985:44).

In Transvaal, the distinction was made between the Indians and Africans; the association with Africans was thought to be the cause of racial bias. Therefore causing entrenching the belief that Indians were superior to Africans and therefore could not be equated in discriminatory laws aimed at all non-whites. By distinguishing themselves, the Indian merchants believed that they could alter white perceptions and be viewed as desirable citizens, therefore combating these restrictions (Swan, 1985:50).

Racial superiority prevented political alignment to African parties until the mid-1940s (Padayachee, 1999:393). Indians were urged even by the Indian Agent-General in South Africa to maintain a uniracial struggle, "by making common cause with them [Africans], our community will only be disabling themselves in the very severe combat that has fallen their cause" (Desai, 1996:6 in Padayachee, 1999:393). The Indian liberation struggle under the apartheid regime would prove to be futile without the liberation of Africans (Prabhakara, 2003:1840). The evolution to multiracial politics in the NIC emerged as a result of a new politically aware generation of Indians, who were influenced by the trade unions and the Communist Party and adopted an all-encompassing non-white struggle. Thus multiracial alliances and campaigns characterised the new NIC leadership in the late 1940s and 1950s (Padayachee, 1999:393). The NIC's involvement included the 1947 Doctor's Pact, the 1952

Defiance Campaign and the 1955 Freedom Charter. The 1960s saw the NP creating the South African Indian Council in order to encourage development within the Indian community; the majority of South African Indians viewed the Council as illegitimate and discredited it (Padayachee, 1999:394). The multiracial alignment additionally saw Indians joining the armed wing of the ANC, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), and the student protests that arose from the Black Consciousness Movement and "provided the backbone of the progressive, anti-tricameral movement, the United Democratic Front in Natal" (Padayachee, 1999:394).

While many Indians joined the non-racial movements, election results in 1994 from Indian areas in Durban saw support for the National Party. This was paralleled in the Coloured areas in Cape Town (Padayachee, 1999:394). According to Radhakrishnan, the status of Indians was complicated by feelings of not being black enough, therefore not garnering privileges over Africans and feeling unheard as a minority group in the democratic South Africa. The end of apartheid created an ambiguous position for Indians. "South African Indians gained citizenship but lost certain material privileges that reinforced the position of Indians as a buffer group between Africans and whites under apartheid" (Radhakrishnan, 2005: 263). This has not remained true in certain sections of the Indian elite. Indians who have been involved with the ANC, play a significant role in government and are proportionally over represented in leadership positions. In 2003, four cabinet ministers out of twenty-seven were Indian. Indians occupy pivotal administrative positions and are professionally successful (Padayachee, 1999: 395; Prabhakara, 2003:1840). The Indian elite has benefited from their affiliations with the ANC, but this has not been extended to the Indian working class who have felt isolated and maintained their conservative uniracial politics (Padayachee, 1999:395).

Caste in South Africa

The indentured system impacted cultural and religious practices. During their voyage to the sugar cane fields, many low caste workers converted out of Hinduism or reinvented themselves by claiming higher caste status. The crossing of the *kala pani*, the black sea, was believed by some to result in loss of caste status, but for those at the bottom of the caste hierarchy, there was nothing to lose. The sea voyage, characterised by deprivation, proximity and hardship, removed the constraints of the caste system on those labourers who were generally from the lower caste groups. Strict religious observances fell by the wayside and there was no practical way to observe dietary restrictions and separate accommodation. Caste practices were thus practically impossible. Additionally the ratio of men to women made endogamy impossible. Thus with the removal of structural practices and elements of purity the norms of the caste system seemed to have dissipated among the indentured population. As Mesthrie states, "people of different social status would have been reduced to equals in labour" (Mesthrie, 1990:339). Many chose to remain in South Africa once their contracts expired, as

their caste status became uncertain and they married across caste and in some cases, across race (Lloyd, 1991:705). While unlike India, caste did not regulate all aspects of the South African Indian's life, it was prominent in the suitability of a spouse, suggesting that not all Indians married across caste (Kuper, 1960:22-23).

The prominence of caste among the indentured and ex-indentured was indicated via their choice of surname. To improve social standing, caste names were either altered to traditionally higher caste names or removed (Kuper, 1960:26-27). Removal of a caste name was thought to provide anonymity or even disapproval of the system itself, as low caste names were stigmatised. Kuper (1960:27) provides the example of the surname Maharaj that has been appropriated in South Africa by Hindi speakers to indicate their Brahmin status, while in India it is a used as an epithet. This practice did not occur across the board, many could not alter their caste names as their status was known upon arrival and could not easily be altered due to their interrelations with the South African Indian community (Kuper, 1960:27). The social status indicated by caste names remained even after conversion out of Hinduism (Kuper, 1960:28). The perceived static nature of caste resulted in the popularity of organisations such as Arya Samaj and Divine Life Society who disapproved of the caste system and encouraged egalitarianism (Kuper, 1960:29).

The same cannot be said for those who would be known as 'passenger' Indians, those who had funded their own way and were seeking commercial opportunities through shops, trades and services. They arrived from 1874 onwards for the purposes of trade and commerce (Jithoo, 1991: 345). The narrative of this second group differs from those that arrived earlier. Passenger Indians were mainly from merchant castes and groups, they had business acumen and represented a different demographic. Initially this demographic consisted of Gujarati Muslims. Later on this allowed them to utilise the separatist dimension of apartheid while maintaining their status as a disadvantaged minority (Radhakrishnan, 2005: 262). These groups somehow managed to maintain their caste affiliations. It has been suggested that this occurred due to their wealth and thus frequent connections with India and maintenance of religious observances, especially the Gujarati community who is linked to the rather wealthy echelons of Indian society (Waetjen & Vahed, 2011: 25). The Gujarati community has maintained practices of endogamy, religious traditions, language facilities and distinctions between caste, class, religion and ethnicity (Waetjen & Vahed, 2011: 24). Kuper (1960:30) supports the argument that the Gujaratis' adherence to caste stems from their passenger status which allowed them to maintain their exclusivity from the time of embarkation from India, they were economically privileged, could retain ties to India and could prevent intercaste marriages and therefore pollution. Thus the Immigration Amendment Act affected this community to a large extent as they were unable to travel to India as freely nor were they able to bring their families or potential spouses from India. The latter resulted in reluctant acceptance of inter-caste marriage.

The Indians in South Africa may have established themselves locally and assimilated to some degree but their values stemmed from the Indian networks and family structures (Waetjen & Vahed, 2011: 23). It seems as though their belief in the effect of *kala pani* may not have been as strong as previously thought as many returned to their villages to visit or to find spouses. It is not entirely clear why many adhered to notions of caste and caste practices. It is this adherence that is the crux of this study. Mesthrie (1990:337) notes the most significant attributes of the caste system among Indians in South Africa as the following: endogamy, occupational specialisation, hierarchy, commensality, hereditary membership, the idea of pollution, *panchayat*, the adherence to the notion of *karma* and dress.

Kuper (1960:30) reiterates the common belief that Gujaratis perpetuated caste to an extent that other Indian communities did not. However, she does acknowledge that some Hindi speaking Kshatriyas and Brahmins and Telugu Naidu's are the exception and attributes their adherence to caste on their isolated locations. She distinguishes between caste practices and consciousness. Caste consciousness is described as "an awareness of pollution through breach of caste laws though not necessarily an attempt to follow the 'right' caste practices" (Kuper, 1960:30), while her definition of caste practices ambiguously implies the recreation of the entire system, specifically social distance, traditional divisions of labour and garb, and importantly, purification ceremonies (Kuper, 1960:24, 30, 34). Caste consciousness and its emphasis on pollution is easily observed in the approval of spouses by their prospective in-laws. Gujaratis and indentured Hindus actively practiced endogamy (Kuper, 1960:31). This is indicated by ranking either castes or families within castes with high or low status (Kuper, 1960:32).

Transvaal Patidar Society

The history of the Transvaal Patidar Society was self-published in a book which provides a general discussion on Southern African *patidars*. The book describes *patidars* as "adventurous in their daily socio-economic pursuits and also deeply devoted to their religion (read Hinduism)" and "include four sub-castes and they are namely: Matiya, Leava (Vaishnavas), Kadva and Bhakta" and are referred to by their surname, Patel (Bhatt, 2002:9,15). Like the Kshatriyas, they had an education trust and a community hall (Bhatt, 2002:13). Even though the Patels were of a particular caste, they were described as having qualities of all four varnas: they acquired knowledge (Brahmin); were adventurous (Kshatriya); embraced trade and business (Vaishya) and undertook hard, physical labour (Shudra) (Bhatt, 2002:15). From a list of donors, the author of this text infers that the organisation was not limited to caste connections and has aided organisations across caste and religious boundaries (Bhatt, 2002:10).

The *patidars* indentured in Fiji and Mauritius, while some arrived in South Africa. Thus the *patidars* were not only passengers, but indentured labourers as well who settled across eastern and southern Africa. Those arriving in South Africa settled primarily in Durban; from 1881 some *patidars* settled in the Transvaal (Bhatt, 2002:21). Those arriving as passengers followed patterns of chain migration and were supported by family members or found opportunities via their village network as traders or hawkers; those who could afford it visited India and returned with spouses, family members and/or fellow villagers (Bhatt, 2002:26-27). To maintain their common interests, the Transvaal United Patidar Society was established in 1912. Although established with a caste title, Bhatt (2001:38) alleges that they did not operate as an exclusive society; their *mandhir* did not restrict entry to other castes or religions. Their alleged non-casteism was repeated throughout the text, as was their relationship to Gandhi and the role they played in politics, it can be inferred that this is mentioned to garner social capital and promote a superiority based on their alleged open mindedness, charitable and political activity. This self-congratulatory rhetoric is similarly repeated in the Natal Rajput's publication, where the *rajput*'s inclusiveness and charitable actions are emphasised.

Natal Rajputs

Like the *mochis,* the *dhobis* (washerman) claimed Kshatriya heritage. Their narrative claims that they were soldiers prior to India's independence, post independence the wealthy became landowners or *zamindars*, this system was abolished causing many *rajputs* to find alternate occupations. Some became washermen or *dhobis* and referred to themselves as *Dhobi* Rajputs. This group continued their caste occupation in South Africa and formed the Durban Dhobi Mandal in 1917 which was eventually renamed the Natal Rajput Association (Hiralal, 2013:596). In 1921, the Mandal removed Dhobi from their name and became the Chouhan[23] Rajput Mandal as the term *dhobi* had low caste connotations. Hiralal (2013:596) states that this group faced discrimination from s*onis, brahmins* and *patels.* This resulted in the departure from their caste occupation, as some *dhobis* became retailers. The Mandal replaced the title Chauhan with Durban in 1939 as Chauhan was deemed no longer suitable as other *dhobis* settled in Durban with different clan heritage. The organisation's name underwent a final change as Durban was thought to be too exclusive; the society became the Natal Rajput Association in 1961 (Hiralal, 2013:597). The varying name changes indicate the shifting identities of the caste and as an attempt to signify a more inclusive nature. Their disassociation with the term *dhobi* indicates their desire to remove their lower caste status, the inclusion of the term *Rajput* supports this notion and serves as a reminder of their alleged Kshatriya heritage. This identity was additionally perpetuated by endogamy, if appropriate spouses were not found in South Africa, many resorted to importing brides from India. This continued the preservation of ethnic and caste identity (Hiralal, 2013:600).

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[23] Chohaun indicated clan ancestry (Hiralal, 2013:596)

Like the United Hindu Association and the Kshatriya Mitra Mandal, the Durban Rajput Mandal held Diwali programs, promoted educational achievements, fostered community spirit with cultural shows and picnics and formed an associated youth group, the Rajput Yuvak Mandal (Hiralal, 2013:597-598). Due to the larger numbers of immigrants in Natal, Indians were far more regulated by legislature; they were required to apply for domicile certificates if they wished to settle in Natal and caste members were able to assist in these procedures as well as aiding assimilation and settlement (Hiralal, 2013:598-599). The primary focus of the Mandal was improving their caste based economic activity; they also aided opportunities for new immigrants who were members of their caste (Hiralal, 2013:599). These caste preferences characterised business partnerships and the Mandal provided a platform for resolving conflicts. According to Hiralal (2013:600), caste occupations became less economical[24] in the 1950s and 1970s causing *dhobis* to seek other opportunities, however this may have also been as a result of their disassociation with their perceived low caste status.

Kathiawad Gujaratis

Unlike the other organisations mentioned in this paper, the Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj (established in 1943) in Durban did not wish to perpetuate caste identities and exclusivity, rather their goal was the promotion of the Gujarati language and religious teachings (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:15). However, they did establish themselves as an organisation that perpetuated language and traditions from a specific region of Gujarat known as Saurashtra but justified this by "declaring its willingness to help others" and associating with other Gujarati organisations such as the Surat Hindu Association (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:15-16). These organisations supported the notion that, "marginalised sections of a population are always more likely to attach themselves to real or imagined 'homes'" which in this context was India, thus traditional values and customs were to be preserved in order to maintain this link to India (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:16-17). The Kathiawad immigrants comprised of brahmins, sonis and a variety of other castes who established their own subcaste associations. However, these caste organisations and their associated social status "had prevented them… from taking part in wider opportunities". It was felt that a broadband organisation would mitigate this and allow fellow Kathiawadis to pool resources and promote cultural and religious values, as well as their vernacular language (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:18). This inclusive attitude did not extend to the Surat Hindu Associations as caste and regional identities were still entrenched and the Surat Hindu Association maintained exclusive interests. The two aforementioned Gujarati associations did co-host cultural and religious events throughout the 1940s and 1950s (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:20).

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[24] Kuper (1960:36) states that caste occupations were generally not adhered too, while this may be true of caste occupations which are not functional or were restricted in South Africa, such as smiths and oil pressers, other castes have maintained their traditional occupations. Kuper (1960:36) notes that Hindi Brahmins have maintained their caste occupations as priests, while many goldsmiths have retained their caste surname of Soni.

Like the Cape Hindu Cultural Society, the Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj delayed the construction of a temple in favour of building a school (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:23). However, unlike the CHCS's prolonged process, the Kathiawads' managed to construct their school as a joint project with the Education Department and received land from the Durban City Council (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:23). There was an English medium school and a Gujarati school which were opened in 1947 (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:24). Aside from government grants, funding for these projects was limited to the Kathiawad community and only in 1947 did they solicit donations from non-Kathiawads (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:24).

Although apolitical, the group created ties with the state which was supported by the state's desire to engage with minority leaders. The Kathiawadis' believed in the benefit of cooperation and networking (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:16, 28) The government's support of the Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj's projects provided a platform for the state to "show up organisations that insisted on fundamental rights", it viewed the organisation as an "acceptable channel" rather than the politically minded Indian organisations (Bhana & Bhoola, 2011:28).

Caste organisations in Cape Town allowed for the discussion of issues believed to be pertinent to a specific caste and promotion of a certain unitary identity (Personal interview, 2014 March 5). These organisations discussed the social welfare of their own caste e.g. Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal provided bursaries and scholarships for their own caste-community. Some adopted a more guild-like focus on their shared occupations and coordination in business affairs such as the division and allocation of areas where they could establish businesses or the coordination of funds to purchase assets (Personal interview, 2014 March 5). The establishment of caste organisations did not prevent socialising with other castes. Caste only became prevalent when marriage was discussed. Intercaste marriages were not the social norm, caste marriages allowed groups to retain their sense of identity. Marriage rituals were performed slightly differently according to caste (Personal interview, 2014 March 5). The largest single caste consists of *mochis*, a shoemaker class that is akin to the *chamar* caste in India and according to Dhupelia-Mesthrie, "they would display the greatest caste-consciousness" (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2012:168). Other castes include *patidars* (agriculturalists), *hajams* (barbers), *dhobis* (launderer), *ghaanchis* (oil miller), *darjees* (tailors) and *suthars* (carpenter) (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2012:168). The interaction and relationships between these castes will be discussed in the following chapter. The following chapter will take up the details of the working of caste within the *mochi* community in Cape Town.

Conclusion

South Africa's history has shaped the areas of the Cape, Natal and the Transvaal distinctly. Cape Town pioneered European settlement and was shaped by a demographic that included various Europeans and slaves from across Asia and neighbouring African countries. A multiracial demographic, known as Coloured or Cape Malay, arose out of interracial coupling and marriage, giving the Cape a distinct multicultural flavour. Indians initially arrived in South Africa as slaves but they did not remain a distinct category, they were absorbed into the multiracial demographic. The arrival of Indians is therefore primarily linked to indenture. Indians labourers were imported to work on the sugar cane fields in Natal from the late 19th century to the early 18th century. As contracted workers, they were encouraged to re-indenture or return to India, settlement was not encouraged. Indian settlement occurred despite policies attempting to curb their permanency. Passenger Indians, generally Gujarati Muslims, who sought economic success in South Africa, followed indentured labourers. They primarily catered to the local Indian population.

Natal and Transvaal followed restrictive and regulative policies that stemmed from anti-Indian sentiments. As the first port of call, Natal still houses the majority of South African Indians. Merchants expanded across Natal and after some success established branches in the Transvaal. Thus Transvaal merchants had ties to the Natal community. Indians in Transvaal also comprised of merchants and ex-indentured labourers seeking fortune in the mining sector. Competition from Indian traders fuelled anti-Indian sentiments resulting in policies that restricted Indian trade and housing to designated areas. This policy was extended to Natal. Attempts to extend housing policies to the Cape were not successful as the policies restricting trade. Indian political activity was focused on combating this direct threat to their mercantile interests. Instead of presenting a uniform front against discrimination, political organisations primary consisted of merchants, representing their specific interests. This distinction was thought to aid their cause in gaining privilege and reducing anti-Indian sentiments in the white communities by claiming their rights as British citizens. As apartheid intensified, Indian politics continued to represent a narrow set of interests. Group Areas entrenched earlier policies of segregation and led to the destruction of Indian townships that were considered too close to whites. Political activity under the apartheid regime saw the rise in a new Indian political leadership who drew from the trade union movements and the Communist Party, resulting in multiracial alliances and the acceptance of a non-racial resistance.

The Indian experience differed in the Cape, Natal and the Transvaal. However, all three states contained caste based organisations which followed similar patterns of improvement and emphasised the continuation of religious and cultural traditions, although the Kathiawad organisation was based on regional ties, rather than caste. Initially the Cape Indian population was not large enough to pose a threat to white interests; the much larger Coloured population was more of a concern for the whites.

However restrictive trading policies were implemented. Finding literature on the Indians in the Cape has proved to be rather difficult since there have been few academic studies. Literature on Indians has predominantly focused on Natal and the Transvaal. However, the experience of caste within the indentured community even in Durban has not been extensively studied. The reconstruction and reimagination of caste within the Gujarati community is the focus of the following two chapters.

Chapter Three: Cultural Dynamics of Cape Town

This chapter provides the landscape within which the dispute occurred in the 1970s over property ownership between a one-caste and a multi-caste organisation leading to the construction of two temples in the 1980s and 1990s. Essentially the fight is about power and status, and social control over the Gujarati community. This dispute takes place in Cape Town within the designated Indian area of Rylands. Under the Group Areas Act of 1950, Indians, who were scattered across the Cape metropole, were restricted to living and trading in demarcated Indian areas. Confinement forced continual interaction between Gujaratis which possibly occurred only weekly, when they met at religious services. This continual interaction and the apartheid ideology of separate development highlighted the diversity within the community, forcing them to address issues of caste.

While caste organisations and identities are present throughout the South African Gujarati community, they have not caused such a significant and public dispute elsewhere. Cape Town is therefore rather unique; caste became an issue of contention and manifested itself in a fight for religious control over the Gujarati community. Before the departure to Rylands in the late 1970s, the scattered community[25] congregated at a temple in Mowbray. Within this space, notions of identity, community and religion were explored through religious services and social activities. The struggle for control over this space occurred when the Group Areas evicted Indians out of Mowbray. Although Rylands was sparsely inhabited, the infrastructure was rather poor and the land was not developed. Therefore a new temple had to be constructed in Rylands. The struggle for control over this new space brought forth caste prejudices and caste identities began to dictate community divisions and interactions.

In order to understand this public display of caste identities, this chapter will begin with a description of Rylands based on Dawood (1993), Dhupelia-Mesthrie (2009 and 2013) and Hill's work (1980). Following the discussion on Rylands will be an assessment of caste and its manifestations in Cape Town. This section is based on interviews conducted in Cape Town, Dhupelia-Mesthrie's work on the *mochi* community in Cape Town (2012), Lynch's study of untouchables in India (1969) and archival material in the form of publications from the community. Interviews were conducted with members of the two Gujarati organisations that were involved in the dispute: the Cape Town Hindu Seva Samaj members were *mochi* and the Cape Hindu Cultural Society had a variety of castes as members.

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[25] Unlike other immigrant communities, Indians in the Cape did not establish themselves in "segregated pockets" (Brand, 1966:2).

Members of a non-caste organisation, the Dharmic Samelan were also interviewed to provide an objective view. Interviews were conducted informally with assurance of anonymity of the respondents being maintained, in a mixture of English and Gujarati. Anonymity was necessary, respondents would not have discussed caste and the conflict in the community otherwise; it is still considered to be a sensitive subject. Some interviewees discussed the matter with caution while others showed quite a bit of emotion. The subject has resurfaced in the last two years as the two organisations are attempting to merge. This section will provide an understanding of caste in Rylands provided by these interviews. An initial discussion of the composition of castes, will be followed by a discussion on the respective organisations. The chapter will conclude with a discussion on gender. Members of the organisations during the time of conflict were generally male, the absence of women requires some reflection.

The Setting of Rylands

According to Dhupelia-Mesthrie, in the early 1970s, Hindus represented 15 percent of the population in the Cape Peninsula. Under the Group Areas Act, these Hindus had been forced to relocate to the Indian areas of Rylands and Cravenby from 1957 (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013: 2; Hill, 1980: 62). The area is located to the South-East of central Cape Town and Mowbray, and South-West of Wynberg[26]. Situated within the vast Coloured area, known as the Cape Flats, Rylands is not a large area, roughly 1km by 1.5km (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:356 citing Herald, 1981). The area consists of four subdivisions, Rylands Estate, Gatesville Estate, Hatton Estate and Doornhoogte Estate (Hill, 1980: 63). Prior to the enforcement of the Group Areas Act of 1950 and the declaration of Rylands as an Indian area in 1957, the area was underdeveloped and lacked suitable infrastructure, and contained 10 percent of the Indian population (Hill, 1980:62). Additionally, the soil was akin to beach sand, making it both costly and arduous to grow plants (Western, 1981, quoted by Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:354). The area was a stark contrast to the developed suburbs of Central Cape Town, Wynberg and Mowbray. An affluent middle class dominated Rylands; the vast number of palatial homes illustrates this. Superficially, Rylands did not seem like a poor area, it did contain government housing and flats but those were sparse in comparison to the large homes.

Rylands was chosen as an Indian area as the result of the establishment of the Habiba Koknie[27] Educational Institute and the Habibia Masjid, as well as the vast amount of underdeveloped land (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:357). The city council, the Department of Community Development (DCD)

[26] These areas are significant as 30 percent of Indians before 1957 resided in Wynberg, District Six and Salt River, while the remaining Indians resided in areas, such as Mowbray, along the popular Cape Town to Muizenberg route, and the southern suburbs (Hill, 1980: 62-63).

[27] Koknie refers to those from the Konkan area on the south west coast of India (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013: 6).

and private individuals owned the underdeveloped land. It is worth noting that 7.9 percent of this land was owned by a Gujarati, Shiba Jeram Patel[28]. This land was purchased after a farmer, Mr. Rix informed Patel of the DCD's plans and his relocation to Philippi. Patel thus managed to purchase two farms in 1962 and 1964 (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:360). In 1970, 13,000 Indians resided in Cape Town, 7,500 of those lived in Rylands with a further 3 500 seeking accommodation in Rylands or Cravenby (Hill, 1980:65). Bribery was not uncommon in housing and land allocation. Dhupelia-Mesthrie's (2014) interviews illustrate these occurrences; "Houses promised by the DCD on one day would suddenly not be available the next day. Certain people developed closer relationships with officials and managed to secure sites reasonable in price." (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:358). Although the area was underdeveloped, there was a sense of pride and creativity in the building of one's home from scratch. The Gujaratis who had lived in cramped houses or apartments were able to construct palatial homes, which had not been feasible in developed areas (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:360).

Dhupelia-Mesthrie states that her focus on Rylands stems from Bozzoli's idea that "apartheid may have created "bounded' spaces", and that "people gave these [spaces] meaning over time" (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013:4). Bozzoli describes the change in meaning and significance of the territories and boundaries of Alexandra in Johannesburg. "Confronted with borders designed to separate and confine - to keep black people in - the rebels transformed the township's boundaries… to keep outsiders out" (Bozzoli, 2004: 69). Dhupelia-Mesthrie argues that this process may have occurred in Rylands as well (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013: 4). Meaning was given to the area as a community grew, and residents felt pride in the homes that they constructed. The Rylands Civic Association and the Rylands Indian Welfare Association managed the development of the area. Their activities included creating a 'dry' area, through the opposition to liquor outlets, and the improvement of infrastructure such as roads. The sense of community included Indian Hindus and Muslims. Those who shared a love of Indian music formed the Rylands Cultural Association; this association sent a young woman to India to further her dancing career, illustrating the significance placed on the retention of Indian culture (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:356; Personal interview, 2014). Dhupelia-Mesthrie speaks of the sense of community amongst the Gujaratis, Hindis, Tamils and Muslims (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:356).

However there was also a sense of segregation within this putative community of Indians: between Hindus and Muslims, Tamils and Gujaratis, Coloureds and Indians. There was further segregation along the lines of caste amongst the Gujaratis. Thus while from outside the area may have appeared too 'Indian', it remains a fact that Christians were marginalised, and many of the social and religious groups were based on Indian regionalism and religion (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:365-366). The

[28] Commonly referred to as SJ

'Indianness' of the area has gained traction, as there has been an increase in new Indian and Pakistani immigrants. However, these narratives are dwarfed by the sense of comfort in living with people who share a common language, religion or history (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:368).

The Organisations and Their Members

Gujaratis in Cape Town are primarily of passenger descent with ties to Surat and its surrounding villages. While the nature of indenture made caste impractical, the relative freedom of the passenger Indians allowed them to maintain their caste status. They were able to adhere to an idea of separation; they practiced endogamy and commensality. Interdependence in terms of trade speciality occurred; many castes retained their traditional occupations. The capitalist environment did not necessitate their dependence on each other exclusively, and the multiracial city provided traders and services from a variety of racial and ethnic groups. The *hajaam* and *mochi* castes maintained their respective traditional occupations as barbers and cobblers, while the *patidar* (landowners and agriculturalists) caste utilised their agricultural past to become hawkers and grocers, "they all ended up with their own businesses doing hawking, because we were from a farming background in India" (Personal Interview, 2013). The remaining castes of *dhobis* (launderers), *kolis* (fishing), *suthars* (carpenters), *ghaanchis* (specialists in oil and ghee production) and *dharjees* (tailers) were less inclined to adhere to their traditional occupations and sought commercial success in merchant trade. The *mochis* were the single largest caste; 2012 they constituted an estimated 190 households (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2012:168).

The Cape Town Hindu Seva Samaj[29] is composed of *mochis*, while the Cape Hindu Cultural Society claims to represent the rest of the castes. The latter's members are largely of the *patidar* and *hajaam* castes. The *patidars* consider themselves to be high caste; they view the *mochis* and *hajaams* as low caste and Untouchable. It is this superior attitude that has attributed to the conflict; the *mochis* actions were driven by the need to overcome their perceived inferiority. This has been illustrated by their emphasis on education and professionalism; their higher economic status would enable them to distance themselves from the perception of Untouchability. Some *mochis* however, achieved wealth and status through their traditional occupations; they found a niche market and cater to a specific clientele, most of whom were wealthy and white. Their retail shops were positioned in previously designated white areas such as Wynberg, Kenilworth, the central business district and Sea Point.

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[29] This society will be primarily referred to by their previous name, the Kshatriya Hindu Mitral Mandal. Incidents discussed occurred when the society was known as KHMM and the name was also part of reiterating *mochi* identity.

The Cape Town Hindu Seva Samaj began in 1922 as the Mochi Mandal. It is unclear from interviews and archival research when they changed their name to the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal (KHMM). I suspect this name change was a result of the assertion that they belong to the Kshatriya *varna*. This revision of their history was paralleled in India and is discussed in the following section. KHMM was active from 1922 to 1995/1996 when they changed their name to the Cape Town Hindu Seva Samaj in order to appear casteless. This will be discussed in the following chapter. The KHMM purchased an old brush factory in Mowbray in 1929 for religious and social purposes. The hall was utilised by all castes. Although religious services occurred regularly, it is unclear whether Mitra Hall constituted a temple.

KHMM was not the only caste-based organisation, *patidars* formed the Cape Patidar Society and the *hajaams* formed the Meysuria Mandal[30]. Both caste organisations focused on issues affecting their particular group and maintaining their welfare. Information regarding these societies was rather difficult to find; the Cape Patidar Society's minute book was written in illegible Gujarati. The *patidars* were the second largest caste group, their surname is generally Patel and they are traditionally agriculturalists. Early immigrants transposed their traditional occupations and knowledge into hawking and later opened fruit and vegetable shops (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2012:168,177; Personal Interview, 2013). The *patidars* were commercially successful and one of their wealthier members, Shiba Jeram (SJ) Patel owned 7.9 percent of land in Rylands (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2014:6). The Gujarati community did not only consist of caste organisations, the United Hindu Association (UHA) was a non-caste umbrella organisation, which will be discussed, in the next chapter.

Redefining Identity: From Untouchable to Kshatriya

Lynch (1969) described the renegotiation of caste terminology in India by the *Jatavs*. *Jatavs* in Agra were leather workers and were therefore considered to be Untouchables because their work was perceived to be pollutanting. They belonged to the larger *chamar* caste. Even though their services were believed to have been crucial to warriors during the ancient period, their profession was viewed with disdain. Lynch believed that their origins may have been the result of intercaste relations; however he mentioned that it has been suggested that they were descendants of a race who were conquered by the Aryans (Lynch, 1969:22, 28-29). I mention this speculation because it fits into the *mochi* narrative I heard in one of my interviews. Their traditional occupation consisted of removing animal carcasses, tanning hides and shoe making. Their lowly status stemmed from these occupations as well as their diet; they consumed meat and some ate beef, which is considered to be the most polluting food for caste Hindus (Lynch, 1969:22). The notions of pollution that resulted in

[30] *Meysuria* was described as a softer term for *hajaams* by interviewees, it is similar to the adoption of Kshatriya by the *mochis* and *patidar* by the *kunbis*.

their lowly status correlated to Dumont's notion of impurity. The expulsion of the *chamars* to the periphery of the village and/or even to separate hamlets also correlated to Dumont's notion of separation and the idea that higher castes are vulnerable to pollution from lower castes (Dumont, 1988:131). The *Jatavs* rejected their ascription as *chamars*.

Jatav participation in the shoe industry increased with the expansion of the market in 1955 due to increasing orders from Communist countries. They did not experience much competition as other castes would not engage in this occupation. This granted them economic independence and loosened control by the upper castes. While their economic independence grew, they were not able to empower themselves to successfully transition from labourer to factory owner, their level of education outside of their trade was minimal. Many of the factories came to be owned by Punjabis of merchant castes who had greater business acumen (Lynch, 1969:33-39). Wealth did not necessarily improve the status of the *chamars*; they lacked the knowledge to reference similarities and differences between themselves and the upper class, therefore they could not mimic the lifestyles of the upper castes and escape their Untouchable status (Lynch, 1969:67).

The Hindu reformist organisation, Arya Samaj greatly influenced this situation. The Arya Samaj was a mass organisation which gained popularity through its opposition to Christian conversions. Through *shuddhi*, cleansing through reconversion and removal of pollution, the Arya Samaj reversed Christian conversion. *Shuddhi* was not only used for conversion reversal but was expanded to removing pollution from high caste Hindus (Hardiman, 2007:41,43). After the threat of conversion reduced, the Arya Samaj focused on the Untouchables via social work and education (Hardiman, 2007:44). They educated the *Jatavs* on Sanskritic rites and beliefs and the teachings of Swami Atma Ram. Atma Ram wrote:

> "If according to the Lomash[31] and other Ramayanas the origin of the Jatav race is traced from the gotra [clan] of Shiva, then how can there be any doubt that it [Jatav race] is from among the Kshatriyas" (Yaadvendu, 142:98 cited in Lynch, 1969:68).

Such teachings, coupled with their economic independence and wealth, provided a condition for the *Sanskritization* of the *Jatavs* (Lynch, 1969:68). The *Jatavs* began their claim for Kshatriya status and stopped consuming beef in order to shed their low and polluted status (Lynch, 1969:68). 1924 saw the publication of *Jatav Jiven* by Sagar (1924), which specifically justified the claim of Kshatriya status and the denial of Untouchability. Sagar claimed: "we want to tell other castes that the *Jatav* race is one of the sacred and highest races and not untouchable" (Sagar, 1924 cited in Lynch 1969:69).

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[31] The Lomash Ramayana came to the Swami in Nepal, it can only be found there (Lynch, 1969:68)

Jatav societies were created to aid their education and re-identification. Education ensured the ability to reference the behaviour of the higher castes (Lynch, 1969:68).

The Arya Samaj provided a reference for imitation, the *Jatavs* imitated Vedic practices which involved vegetarianism and the adoption of the sacred thread ceremony. The Arya Samaj maintained that caste was not ascribed, status could be achieved (Lynch, 1969:70). *Jatav* identification as Kshatriyas was a response to their status in the caste system; this claim required legitimation which occurred by linking the *Jatavs*' rituals and dialect to an ancient race of Kshatriyas. An explanation was then required for their *chamar* status; *Jatavs* claimed that they became shoemakers in order to escape persecution by Parasuram, an avatar of Lord Vishnu, who according to Sagar (1924), was jealous of the Kshatriyas (Sargar, 1924 in Lynch, 1969:71-72). The *Jatavs* third task in achieving Kshatriya status was to reiterate these claims until they were accepted. Conflict arose as other castes rejected their claim and continued to see them as Untouchables (Lynch, 1969:74).

While the details were slightly different for South Africa, a similar process occurred with the *mochis*. From my interviews with members of the *mochi* caste I was told that they believed that *mochis* are from Rajasthan and were Kshatriyas: "we are all from Rajasthan, the Kshatriyas are all fighters, they were reckoned to be 'the' people". And "… our blood is known to be far superior than any other group" (Personal interview, 2014). Their royal warrior status made them vulnerable to attacks during the Mughal invasion of India in the 16th century. Fearing that their land and women would be seized, the Kshatriyas left their land and moved south. They could not continue to practice their traditional occupations as warriors and were forced to adapt. They made *mojris* (leather shoes) resulting in the name *mochi* (Personal interview, 2014). This story is repeated in the *Daan Data Granth*, a publication produced in 1995 that acknowledges donations to the South African Kshatriya Mahasabha and the South African Kshatriya Mahasabha Educational Trust. The book is produced by the aforementioned societies; the majority of the book contains a description of families, photographs and the amount they donated. An article called *Kshatriya - Mochi - Kshatriya: How When and Why* reiterates the narrative given in the interview.

> "Over the centuries we have taken to different professions and work and have accordingly persevered to our destiny and motivation to fit into a certain section of the Hindu society… In the thirteenth century A.D. the Muslims invaded India and our ancestors lost the battle… and [they] started to convert Hindus into Muslims. Our ancestors who had the pride and dignity to be true Hindus, fled their land and trekked forward towards the South of India… Our ancestors under no circumstances conceded to convert to the Islamic religion and thus, took refuge with the Harijans [Untouchables] in each village or town, where they finally settled.

> During those days nobody visited the Harijans, due to them being classified as a low caste. As time passed on our ancestors were not further bothered to be converted… and they therefore decided to take up some type of trade, so that they could become self-sufficient… The Harijan community would gather all dead animals in the village and use their skins for various household functions. From these skins our ancestors made the first pair of shoes, known as '*mojadi*'… *Mojadi* making soon developed into a trade and the *mojadi* makers soon became known as '*Mochis*'. This is how we, Kshatriya came to be known as *Mochis*. Even today, we have the traditional Kshatriya surnames of 'Parmer', 'Chavda'… We do not denounce the fact that we are born into a Mochi home and we are extremely proud[32] of this fact" (*Daan Data Granth*, 1995:216)

Through this narrative, the *mochis* justified their Kshatriya lineage, provided a legitimation via common *Kshatriya* surnames, and provided an explanation for their low status and association with the Untouchable caste. What is interesting is their pride in their heritage and emphasis on their adherence to their religion. Their pride was justified by the claim that their caste status was not as significant, success, and implied status, was determined by spiritual, intellectual, financial and academic achievements. This is reiterated in terms of caste:

> "A Brahmin is only a Brahman, if he substantiates all his spiritual and religious values, not because he is born into a Brahmin family. Any non-Brahmin who is capable of attaining such spiritual and religious value, is the true Brahman… We pray to the Lord Almighty to give us the strength to attain such levels in society and be true Kshatriyas to protect our Hindu culture, heritage and community at all times and in all circumstances" (*Daan Data Granth*, 1995)

South African *mochis* have prided themselves on their education levels and professionalism; celebratory publications listed those who had graduated or were pursuing an education from a tertiary institute. In the same publication, it was stated with pride that the South African Kshatriya Mahasabha established an educational trust that awarded bursaries and loans to students pursuing education

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[32] According to Knott (1994:213), this sentiment is replicated within the *mochi* community of Leeds. Many have maintained their caste occupations as they are profitable and they take pride in these artisanal skills. Unlike in South Africa, the *mochis* in Leeds have not progressed as rapidly as other Gujarati communities. Knott (1994) attributes this slow rate of progress to their "occupational heritage as a poor artisan group with little or no earlier experience as traders" (Knott, 1994:223).

(KHMM Diamond Jubilee Publication, 1984). In pleas for donation, emphasis was placed on *gnati*[33] in released statements, "Please help to educate our *gnati* members[34]" and "As *mochis*, we must be proud of our heritage and the worldwide activity of unity. Wake up to reality and take heed of the call for *gnati* unity" (italics added) (Education Fund ~1972). In KHMM's monthly newsletter, the community's progress was described through various categories, once again education was mentioned. Emphasis was placed on the number of professional men and women in South Africa and overseas. The continual entry in tertiary institutes by the youth was also emphasised (KHMM, 1982). The *mochi's* emphasis on education has paralleled movements in India and the influence of the Arya Samaj, who emphasised education as a primary tool for social mobility (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2012; Gupta, 2004).

What is interesting about this entire passage is the Arya Samaj was not involved in this narrative. They played a significant role in caste mobility in India and expanded to other countries such as Fiji and South Africa. Dhupelia-Mesthrie (2012) discusses their influence in South Africa and their involvement in the *mochi* community. Between 1908 and 1911, an Arya Samajist Swami, Swami Shankaranandji visited South Africa and taught the community Vedic teachings and rituals; just as the Samajists had done in India. A sacred thread ceremony was also conducted. Although the Arya Samaj's role was not mentioned in the quoted narrative, the *Daan Data Granth* is dedicated to Swami Shankaranandji for this contribution, "to the well-being of the Kshatriya community in South Africa and our Motherland Bharat" (Daan Data Granth, 1995:6).

Caste mobility and re-identification requires acceptance from other castes in the community; this did not occur in Cape Town. Other castes still viewed *mochis* as Untouchables, "Kshatriya became a softer term" (Personal interview, 2013). The use of 'softer term' seemed to indicate that these castes rebranded themselves but this did not change their perceived status. The following anecdote from a non-*mochi* interview illustrates discrimination against *mochis*:

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[33] *Varna* is a broad category related to the four classes in the caste system (Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra), Untouchables are outside the *varna* system of caste. Varnas are viewed as a social category, while *jati* or *gnati* (in the Kshatriya publications) is an endogenous social group that is referred to as caste. The number of *jatis* is unknown as their classification differs across India. *Jatis* are associated with certain *varnas* and can claim membership to higher *varnas* (Lynch, 1969:70-71).

[34] *Mochi* communities in Gujarat are small and scattered throughout the state as villages do not contain concentrated populations of a single caste. Contrastingly, in the diaspora the *mochi* communities are concentrated in specific areas (which may be due to patterns of chain migration). They create strong alliances within these larger communities and the pattern of internal improvement occurs in diaspora communities. *Mochis* in Leeds established a caste organisation in 1964 to "offer cultural and educational support to its members" (Knott, 1994:220).

> "When we were going to build the Newlands School, when we went for fundraising, 1945 or something, maybe 1946. We went to East London to a *patidar* house, the women saw a *mochi* and they [didn't] know what to do, they call the men in the kitchen, they [didn't] know what to do with the tea, at the end they brought a baker from the shop, they gave us all tea in a cup and gave the *mochi* tea in a milk cup" (Personal Interview, 2013)

A first hand account was provided by a member of the *mochi* community:

> "I used to eat there also [at a *patidar* home], but I wasn't given the same plate. They used to call the maid '*sisi*'. And when I used to eat there, the *nani* [granny] would say: 'Bring *sisi's* plate for [the *mochi*]'. That's how we grew up. It was never an issue. They would send us their leftover food at the end of the day, but if we had to send our food across the road, in front of you they'd give it to the dog" (Personal Interview, 2014).

These stories indicate that notions of purity and impurity travelled with the Gujaratis from their home villages to Cape Town. Both stories illustrate the belief that *mochis* are impure because of their leatherwork. By sharing crockery with the *mochis*, the *patidars* believed that they would be polluted, decreasing their status. Higher castes feared internal pollution i.e. the absorption or ingestion of polluted items. The *mochi's* use of their crockery would pollute those items thereby ensuring the possibility of internal pollution if items were used by a higher caste at a later stage. However, according to Dumont, if a clay vessel was polluted by a lower caste, it must be replaced, however a brass vessel could be washed (Dumont, 1988:132). Perhaps the *patidars* felt that washing the crockery would not purify it. That the domestic had a separate plate indicates that she was also viewed as a pollutant; this probably stems from racism. This issue of the intersection of caste and race attitudes requires further examination but is outside of the scope of this essay. This anecdote contradicts Kuper's (1960) findings in Natal. She states that dietary rules were ignored to a degree as some Brahmins ate vegetarian meals at non-Brahmin homes. Pollution was unavoidable Western utensils replaced traditional ones, restaurants did not adhere to caste notions of purity nor did caterers at social gatherings (Kuper, 1960:35). Thus for the majority, dietary practices were not feasible. Thus in Cape Town, the replacement of traditional caste utensils by Western ones, did not remove the notion of pollution.

Continual Ties with India

Discrimination may have occurred in some households but some maintained social relations with *mochis* and witnessed discrimination against their friends. A non-*mochi* mentioned an incident that took place when he returned to India:

> "My father had a close friend in District Six in those days. They went to India. His friend wanted to come visit and my father knew that the prejudices in India were very strong and now this *mochi* friend of mine are [sic] coming to visit in the village, so he told his granny that his South African friend is coming to visit, so she asked which friend. So because of the caste system they'd ask which caste is he from. So my father said he was a Desai which was higher than us so my granny was happier that the friend was of a higher caste, the friend came, got invited in and had tea, then of course they have a way of asking did you go to your ancestral village and which village or section? From the answer the granny got, she knew which caste he was from. She said, "Now I know who your friend is". Those are the type of prejudices that existed. This was part of the system." (Personal Interview, 2013).

While notions of caste were transcended by the indentured community and prevented their return to India, passenger's adherence to caste did not prevent this; I believe that it enforced caste identities and the resulting hierarchy. The aforementioned anecdote illustrates this: the grandmother reinforces her son's higher status while emphasising his friend's lower status. Unlike indentured labourers, the passenger Indians' wealth allowed them to maintain ties to India; they could afford to visit their native villages and sponsor the migration of their extended family members. Gujaratis shared ties of kinship as they migrated from specific villages and they brought their ideologies with them (Ebr.-Vally, 2001: 124). Interviewees, who confirmed their travel to India on a regular basis, approximately every three years, reiterate this. The return to Cape Town from India explains the continual adherence to caste dynamics, culture and religion, albeit slightly differently to India. Immigration restrictions under apartheid law expanded on the Immigration Act of 1902 and prevented the frequent return to India from 1972 with the Admissions of Persons into the Republic Act, No. 59[35], thus the migrants in Rylands could no longer seek their cultural identity externally. Letters may have continued the link, as well as visiting dignitaries and religious figures. These restrictions forced the community to reflect internally for their identity (Hill, 1980:189-190; Meer, 1971:30; KHMM, 1984).

The Indian Women's Experience

The nature of indenture ensured the oppression of women. Those who came as indentured labourers, were viewed as "unwanted cargo" (Meer, 1972:37), law dictated their entry into South Africa. The law stated that female workers should represent 25 percent of labourers migrating from India. This left them in vulnerable positions, as they were numerically weak. Although 'passenger' women were not exposed to similar threats, they were still confined to their homes, unless economic reasons dictated that they help in the family business (Meer, 1972: 37). For south Asians, the household is a central site

[35] Domcile rights were lost if the person failed to return within three years. Entry was denied to those who could not assimilate according to the state or read and write a European language. Women who were married after 1956 or children born from that union were denied domicile rights (Hill, 1980:189-190).

within which social life is reproduced and maintained (Rege, 2003: 4557). The role of women in their husbands' business did not afford them any more independence or freedom from discrimination: market economics has maintained masculine forms of knowledge thus the woman was seen to be subservient to the man (Rege, 2003: 4557). She did not have flexibility over her own labour and was required to maintain her household and other womanly duties (Rege, 2003:4558). It would seem that perhaps through the protection of culture that women were the agents who enforced caste dynamics. The historical occupation of Indian women suggests that they are gatekeepers of caste (Rege, 1994: 1155).

It is important to note that women were almost invisible in the general committees of both temples, they were mostly assigned membership to the women's committee which acted as a catering enterprise, providing additional income to the temple (Personal interview, 2014). This highlights the assignment of feminine labour, cooking was seen as a household occupation and therefore feminine, they were not integrated into leadership roles (Rege, 1994: 1155).

Indian women in South Africa have been assigned the role of protectors of culture. They are "the guardians of the original, pure culture of the homeland against a terrifying outside force" (Meer, 1972: 33). This has been echoed in the interviews with the Tamil and Gujarati community of Rylands. "It was the women who knew the rituals that had to be observed" (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013:15), they were the ones who maintained the temples and were the main fundraisers. While men served as executives of the temple, the women ensured the temple's survival. Both communities through shows, concerts, sari contests, rummage sales and food sales raised funds. Female leaders in both communities remark at the willingness with which the community women participated (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013:15,19). Women accepted their roles thus fiercely protecting their perception as cultural guardians. Any deviation from the pure culture would lead not only to their disgrace but also that of their family (Meer, 1972: 39).

Jat women (and likewise *mochi* women) maintained tradition and the assertion of Kshatriya lineage constricted them; they were expected to act modestly (Hardiman, 2007:49). Women represented community honour, an honour that was to be maintained at all costs (Chowdhry, 2004:9). Male relatives were responsible for the women's honour (Chowdhry, 2004:18). According to Dumont, a woman was allowed to be of a slightly inferior status to the man she married as she obtained a higher status through marriage not only for herself but for her family and clan, this is known as hypergamy and was practiced in North India. A traditional form of hypergamy theoretically claims that a maiden could be gifted to a Brahmin in exchange for spiritual benefits for her clan and family (Dumont, 1988:117).

According to an interviewee, Gujarati[36] women started arriving in Cape Town in 1914 from India. Initially men were the main immigrants and they sent money to India and returned regularly, staying for three to four years. According to the same interviewee, in 1920, there were 21 Gujarati men and 3 Gujarati women whose husbands had called them to South Africa. While in Natal and Transvaal the Indian women wore saris, in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth where there were mostly Malay and Coloured women, the Indian women felt insecure wearing saris. They dressed according to these established cultures (Personal interview, 2014). The ladies' choice of dresses over traditional Indian apparel relates to their attempts to assimilate at a local level (Hill, 1980:2). Thus for many years, the Indian women in the Cape wore dresses. The Mitra Mandal met and suggested that ladies should wear saris, but because they had been dressing in a non-Indian fashion for sometime, they were not comfortable initiating this change. In 1938, Manilal Gandhi and his wife, Sushila Gandhi arrived in Cape Town for a conference. KHMM took this opportunity to have Sushila Gandhi address the community ladies of all castes in Mitra Hall. Sushila Gandhi's speech focused on the retention of Indian culture and encouraged the women to wear traditional clothing. Using Natal and Transvaal as an example, she stated how attractive the women there looked in saris. She emphasised the art and elegance of the sari. During this speech, she requested that the women vow to wear saris from the following day. As a result of her speech, the women wore saris after they were married. Before marriage the young women still wore Western clothing (Personal interview, 2014). Women in Cape Town sought assimilation with the women in the Malay and Coloured community whereas women in Transvaal and Natal were able to socialise with Indian women and did not feel the need to assimilate because the Indian population was larger.

The *mochi* ladies founded the Cape Town Hindu Mahila Mandal in 1941. In 1947, ladies across castes formed the Mahila Samety. Because the Kshatriya Mahila Mandal had been established for a few years, the *mochi* ladies had organisational experience and occupied important positions in the Samety as the Kshatriyas Mahila Mandal disbanded upon the creation of the Samety. As a result, it was felt that their ideas were favoured over those of women from other castes. This created a tense environment and ladies of other castes stopped coming to smaller meetings. The *mochi* women were not discouraged and re-established the Kshatriya Mahila Mandal. This mandal conducted various activities, including cooking for weddings and socialising. It declined as succeeding generations were not interested in its activities (Personal interview, 2014). The current Mahila Mandal is affiliated with CHCS. They are independent and conduct their own fundraising activities. However, they feel duty bound to support the CHCS and make large financial contributions, according to an interviewee. These fundraising activities include cooking for weddings and functions (Personal interview, 2013).

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[36] It is unclear if these are just Gujaratis but it seems to be implied that they are and the document is written by a prominent Gujarati.

Conclusion

This chapter provides the landscape for the following chapter, which will detail the dispute in Cape Town. The Group Areas Act of 1950 evicted Indian residents and businesses from areas classified as white. Before this eviction, Indians were scattered across the peninsula; religious and social activity took place in Newlands and Mowbray. Indians were able to interact and socialise with their non-Indian customers and neighbours. Their involuntary removal to Rylands forced continual interactions between Indians for reasons of trade and sociality. The confinement and forced interaction emphasised caste distinctions as intercaste interactions were more frequent and escalated into occasional disputes. Women were not participants in public disputes since they were primarily seen as homemakers. Women primarily played a role as the keepers of culture; their honour was of utmost importance.

Mochis were perceived as Untouchables by the other castes and were discriminated against; other castes, predominantly *patidars*, feared pollution and avoided sharing crockery with visiting *mochis*. The *mochis* refused to see themselves as Untouchables; they sought empowerment through education and professional careers. This did not alter their perceived Untouchability; through assistance from the Arya Samaj, they were able to recreate a narrative claiming Kshatriya lineage. This narrative provided a justification for their lineage and why they were classified as *mochis*. It was hoped that this narrative would legitimise their claim, but the *patidars* continued their discrimination. The *mochis*' re-imagination of caste narrative is paralleled by the *Jatav* caste in Agra, India. They were assisted by the Arya Samaj and were considered to belong to the *chamar* caste. *Chamars* are leather works, just as *mochis* were. The two cases illustrate Dumont's notion of purity and the higher castes' fear of pollution by lower castes; this fear results in separation. Within the Cape Gujarati community, this separation was exemplified by higher castes providing the *mochis* with separate crockery; in Agra, the *Jatavs* were physically separated and resided in the periphery of the village or within their own hamlets. This discrimination is highlighted by the dispute discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Four: Tale of Two Temples

This chapter discusses a dispute in Rylands. Although caste discrimination led to practices of separation in the private sphere through endogamy and *patidars* providing *mochis* with separate crockery, religious and large social gatherings were not segregated. The Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal (KHMM) owned a property in Mowbray that was utilised by the entire Gujarati community for social and religious activities. An umbrella non-caste body, the United Hindu Association (UHA), represented all castes in its membership whose executive committee existed alongside caste organisations. This body was responsible for the Gujarati school and later became involved in religious activities. The Gujarati school had been tenants in various areas and community buildings until the UHA purchased a property in Newlands. Under the Group Areas Act of 1950, the area was classified as white and UHA was forced to sell the property. KHMM's Mitra Hall was also in an area that was now classified as white however they negotiated with the government and were granted a property in the Indian area of Rylands in exchange for leaving the white area of Mowbray. It was this action that resulted in the split in the community as the UHA and KHMM struggled over control of the community's religious affairs. The dispute was based on caste discrimination thereby illustrating a unique case of caste discrimination resulting in the establishment of two separate temples; a temple which was constructed and primarily utilised by a single caste and another which forced caste organisations to disband and refused membership to those that overtly belonged to caste organisations.

This dispute highlights issues of caste, identity and social mobility. It illustrates the way in which caste was reproduced in Cape Town thereby allowing us to investigate whether caste travels and how it is altered by migration. Therefore this chapter will begin by discussing Gujaratis in South Africa, based on the research of Vahed (2010). This is followed by a discussion of the main actors and events that led to the dispute, the dispute itself and its ramifications. This section is based on a combination of interviews conducted with members of KHMM and CHCS and their archival records. The records consisted of minutes, annual, monthly and celebratory publications, legal documents, reports and articles. These archival documents were in both Gujarati and English, I have translated or have been assisted with translations, but the majority of the archival documentation I refer to are in English. As mentioned previously, interviews were conducted with a guarantee of anonymity and conducted informally. Anonymity ensured an open discussion and an informal interview prevented the preparation of answers and allowed the conversation to flow naturally. I should note that the interviews ranged from frank and open discussions to careful and guarded discussions. I think this was a result of a

combination of their perception of me and my family[37] and concern with how they portrayed their own involvement.

Gujaratis in South Africa

According to Vahed (2010:615), South Africa hosts the largest Gujarati diaspora in the world. As merchants, Gujaratis arrived in South Africa seeking commercial success. Their existing capital and business acumen ensured commercial success, allowing them to maintain ties with India through travel and sponsorship of their family and kin. Many came from India as single men and returned to India every three years and stayed for a year or two. Once they were able to afford to bring their wives or kinsmen, they established roots and returned less frequently (Personal interview, 2013). Like other South African Indians[38], Gujarati traders are also assumed to be homogenous when, in fact, these traders stemmed from different parts of the state and were of different religious denominations[39], classes and castes. South Africa appealed to Gujarati tradesmen as it had an established Indian market due to the presence of a large indentured labourer population (2010: 616-617). While figures for Cape Town were not established, it was estimated that there were 40,000 Gujaratis in KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng (Vahed, 2010:615).

Secular Quarrels Over Temple Property

In order to fully understand the motivations and the situations that led to the dispute in the community, this section begins by discussing the history of the two organisations involved - the Cape Hindu Cultural Society (CHCS) and the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal (KHMM). I also discuss the impact of such events as the passing of the Group Areas Act of 1950, and its effect on these organisations that split, culminating in the construction of two separate temples. The community was primarily divided into *mochi* and non-*mochi*[40] the split being reflected in the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal and the Cape Hindu Cultural Society respectively. It also illustrates a struggle for control over religious domain. The timeframe stems from 1909 to 1995 but focuses on the decades of the 1960s, 1970s and

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[37] My *mochi* side of the family has been quite involved in the Kshatriya community and organisations, while my *suthar*/non-*mochi* side of the family was actively involved in CHCS during the dispute.

[38] The literature on South African Indians is framed by the narrative of migrants, who were either indentured labourers or passenger travellers. While indentured and passenger Indians are treated as distinctive, the narrative generally assumes that South African Indians are homogenous.

[39] Gujarati is a regional distinction and thus can include a multitude of religious denominations. In Cape Town, Gujaratis are generally Muslim or Hindu

[40] There are divisions within the non-mochi group but these do not play as significant a role

1980s. Once again, the examination of minute books, societal archives and informal interviews provide an understanding of this dispute and either supported or contradicted interviewees. The chapter ends with discussion of the aftermath of the split in the community.

Cape Hindu Cultural Society

The Cape Hindu Cultural Society stems from the United Hindu Association (UHA). The UHA was established in 1901. Its primary function was to unite all sections of the Gujarati community i.e. to unify caste sections. It existed in tandem with caste-based organisations, and catered to the community's interests and welfare through the maintenance of the Hindu religion and rites. In order to ensure the adherence of religion and rites, the UHA's first task was the construction of a crematorium. Hindus are cremated upon death, a lack of public facilities prevented observation of this rite. The UHA became dormant after the completion of the crematorium in 1911. It was revived in 1924 and established a vernacular school (Chavda et al., 1988). Premises were acquired in Chapel Street, District Six for the establishment of a Gujarati school. The school, meetings and musical concerts were held at these premises in the 1940's. The premise was sold on the 15th of August 1947 for reasons that remain unclear. The school was known as the Shree Hindu Vidhya Mandir and became a tenant of a Christian institute in Wynberg (Personal interview, 2013).

The syllabus of the school was not limited to language; it provided religious education and focused on the propagation of religion and culture. The Gujarati school operated in the late afternoon to accommodate attendance at English medium schools in the morning. Students were transported via a dedicated bus, which ran from Wynberg to the Foreshore[41]. Interviewees provided anecdotes illustrating the determination of students to catch the bus in order to attend the vernacular school:

> "So we walked [home from an English medium school], just about had something to eat and then we must leave to go to Leister Road to be picked up by the Gujarati school bus" (Personal interview, 2013).

The teachers consisted of community members who sacrificed their afternoon incomes to teach, they

> "ran a fruit and vegetable business, instead of doing that as a full time thing, [they] would give that up during the latter half of the day to teach" even though they "could've run a full day hawking business and made more money but you see those days you didn't only think about money, money was less important, important enough… " (Personal interview, 2013).

[41] The route indicated the areas that were significantly populated by Indians.

The teacher's sacrifice of personal income and the determined attendance of students illustrates the significance the school played within the community.

> "The school… played a significant role in bringing together the youth who with their families were dispersed through the peninsula. It built a community" (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013: 18).

The school became a vehicle for the continuation of communal Gujarati identity through its emphasis on language and religion.

UHA decided that a more permanent school was required. Donations were given to purchase a property for a permanent school. Land was purchased in Newlands in 1949, and construction ended in 1951. The school was christened the Gandhi Memorial School. The committee decided to lease the premises as an English medium primary school named the Main Street Primary in the morning, and this income supplemented the Gujarati school. The Group Areas Act of 1950 placed the school in turmoil. Newlands was classified as a white area, forcing them to leave. The Main Street Primary School consisted mainly of a Coloured population who were also forcibly removed, obviating the need for the English primary school. The Gujarati school too had to be dissolved and the UHA received notification forcing them to vacate. In 1969, the premises were sold for R75 000 (Personal interview, 2013; Personal interview, 2014; Chavda et al., 1988).

R70 000 was invested into the National Growth Fund (NGF) on the stock exchange on the 11th of December 1968 (Chavda et al., 1988). In addition to the initial investment, a two for one loan[42] was acquired a month later, as the stock prices increased and a return of R200 000 was expected (Chavda et al., 1980: Personal interview, 2014). In May 1969, the society received a profit of R56 000, however by November, the share price dropped. The stock market crashed in 1969 causing the NGF to fail. The UHA lost their entire investment, and owed R 25 332.72 in February of 1971. They were unable to pay interest on the loan, forcing the society to declare bankruptcy in order to avoid personal liability. The investment was a controversial one as some officials were against the investment, it was felt that public money should not be placed in risky investments, the profit in May 1969 had silenced these objections (Chavda et al., 1988; Personal interview, 2013; Personal interview, 2014).

UHA conducted an inquiry; the trustees were exonerated but amendments to a constitution for the new organisation were recommended, limiting the power of the trustees. A new organisation, the Cape Hindu Cultural Society, was established on 10th of June 1973. CHCS contained a new constitution and a multi-caste committee (Chavda et al., 1980). According to those interviewed, certain individuals believed that they had more financial savvy, they preferred high-risk investment and

[42] A loan for R140 000, double the initial investment value, was acquired.

convinced others that this was the correct choice. The high-risk investment was a requirement for these individuals; they had planned a modern, extravagant facility in Rylands. The elaborate plans were appealing to certain committee members and they required larger funding and it was on this basis that the community was convinced to invest in the stock market.

> "There are always a few 'wise' people, who know better than the others, so they would go for the high risk and convince the others to take that risk, some of them had put together these new fabulous plans which included tennis courts, all kinds of advance facilities and in order to make it accessible and affordable, you needed an income, so some people convinced others in the community that this is the route to take which we need in order to be able to afford these advance premises." (Personal interview, 2013)

This elaborate vision was believed to be selfish; while it may have served the needs of individuals, it was not seen as meeting the needs of the community (Personal interview, 2013). This view is contradictory to a separate interview in which it was stated that land was requested in the designated Indian area by the UHA (Personal interview, 2014). Instead, a wealthy businessman promised to donate land resulting in the Newlands property being sold for a low value (Personal interview, 2014). It is unknown whether the risk was taken because donor land was guaranteed. On the 4th of July 1978, CHCS officials received the deeds for the plot of land from SJ Patel on condition that the society accrued no debt (Chavda et al., 1980; Deeds, 1978).

Kshatriya Mitra Mandal

The second society involved in the dispute was the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal, which was previously known as the Mochi Mandal. KHMM removed their caste name to become the Cape Hindu Seva Samaj in either 1995 or 1996 as a result of concern voiced by the youths in the aftermath of the split of the community. The KHMM was established as a caste regulatory body in 1922. When interviewing CHCS members, they stated that the KHMM fell under the umbrella organisation of the UHA (Personal interview, 2013). CHSS members insisted that the KHMM was not part of UHA however, their members maintained dual membership with UHA (Personal interview, 2014). An old brush factory was purchased in 1929 in Mowbray and renovated into a hall - named Mitra Hall - which was used for a variety of purposes. These include regular religious services, spiritual and social gatherings. Although owned by the *mochis*, the hall was available to the entire Hindu community.

Non-Gujarati organisations such as the Divine Life Society[43] and Ananda Kutir[44] had regular gatherings. Religious services included all castes. It is unclear whether the hall was a temple. According to an interviewee, *mandir* (temple) services were held at Mitra Hall. These services were conducted by the Dharmic Samelan, a religious organisation that had no caste affiliations. Officials in the Dharmic Samelan have been of mixed caste backgrounds and it existed purely as a religious organisation. They were responsible for religious services (Personal interview, 2014). However CHCS state that Mitra Hall was purely a hall, social and religious activities occurred but it was not classified as a temple (Personal interview, 2013). Because of the Group Areas laws, it was decided that the hall should be declared a temple and a 'temple' atmosphere was created to avoid or postpone the imposition of the Act, "If they didn't make it a temple they'd be forced to move but because the government policy was, we wont push out occupants of religious institutions like temples." (Personal Interview, 2014). The quote could not be verified, it is unclear what Group Areas policy on religious sites was, but the interviewee's statement cannot be assumed to be entirely inaccurate; during the destruction of District Six, the Muir Street mosque was left untouched and still remains in the area today.

In 1974, Raman Bhana, a member of the South African Indian Council, and B.D. Chavda, president of the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal, met with Mr. Coetzee, a regional representative of the Department of Community Development to discuss the acquisition of the land in Gatesville. Following this meeting, a formal application was made on the basis that first, Mitra Hall had served the community and as a result of Group Areas, they required land in the allocated area. Secondly, that KHMM represented "the largest section of the Hindu Community in the Cape", and third, that Mitra Hall was a place of worship (Letter to Government,1974). Since they were the only society with a place of worship, therefore they should qualify for resettlement. Finally, they acknowledged that the hall was previously known as the Kshatriya Mochi Mandal but it was renamed the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal (Letter to Government, 1974). Bhana is thought to have played a vital role in KHMM's acquisition. As stated earlier, he was a member of the South African Indian Council and therefore was "an influential political figure at that time" (Chavda et al., 1988). This government land in Gatesville is the crux of the dispute.

KHMM received notice to vacate Mitra Hall in 1970. They applied for extensions which were granted till 1975. In 1974, KHMM appealed to the government for continual usage of the hall until alternative

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[43] The organisation is based on Hindu principles, including yoga but encourages its followers to incorporate teachings from other religions (Brand, 1966:138-139).

[44] According to its website, Ananda Kutir Ashrama "has its roots in the vision and philosophy of Swami Sivananda Maharaj, founder of the Divine Life Society in Rishikesh, India" and includes a yoga centre (Ananda Kutir Ashrama, n.d).

land was provided. This appeal was based on the use of the premises by other organisations. In 1983, KHMM received two offers of purchase for Mitra Hall, one for R65 000 and the other for R60 000. It is unclear whether either offer was selected (Offer to Purchase, 1983). Interviewees have strangely not mentioned this nor has proof been found in the society's archives, KHMM maintains that the Gatesville[45] land was a replacement for Mitra Hall and that they struggled to raise funds for the processing fee, "The big thing was to look at the cost factor, because we had simply no money" (Personal interview, 2014). The Department of Community Development (CDC) indicated that alternative land, in Temple Road, Gatesville, would be provided in two years. As a result of the Group Areas Act, Indians were buying property and moving to Rylands, the designated Indian area. Rylands, thus, housed a growing Indian community. It became more pertinent to have temple facilities in the area. Mitra Hall's location became inconvenient. A fee of R7,250 was required in order to receive the government land; KHMM could not pay this amount and was granted an extension for fund raising. The money was raised and paid to the government on the 28th of February 1977. Transfer for the land went through on the 23rd of December 1980 (Personal interview, 2014).

The Split in the Community

As a result of Group Areas Act of 1950, the government allocated a piece of land for the Indian community's religious needs. The KHMM applied for land from the DCD without the knowledge of the rest of the community. Their motivation for secrecy is unclear, they asserted that this land was a replacement of the land they lost in Mowbray. I suspect that the need for secrecy arose because they wanted to maintain ownership of the land. The rest of the community only became aware of the deal once the land officially belonged to the KHMM. The CHCS believed that this land was allocated for all Hindus, not just Gujaratis. This statement is supported in Dhupelia-Mesthrie's article (2013), which states, "The Department of Community Development… earmarked two sites in Gatesville, one for Hindus and one for Muslims" (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013: 14), the category of Hindu includes Tamils, however they bought a church and opened their own temple, Siva Aalayam Temple in 1978[46] (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013:14; Personal interview, 2013). The non-*mochis* in the community felt betrayed by KHMM's application and receipt of the plot, they felt that the government land in Gatesville was taken secretively. The UHA was offered land by a donor to construct a school and a temple during the Newlands sale. SJ Patel donated this land for the construction of a school, community hall and temple. When the donation was indicated, the community was still united. The

[45] Gatesville is adjacent to Rylands (see Appendix)

[46] The segregation between Gujarati and Tamil temples can be attributed to a difference in language and idols worshipped (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013: 17)

mochis were aware of the donation of land, yet they pursued strategies for additional land (Chavda et al., 1980). KHMM felt that:

> "the motive behind [the donation of the land was that], this person who wanted to sell the 6 or 4 plots to build a township and for the township you need certain things, you need a school, a place of worship, you need this and that, recreational areas and all that, so the motive behind the development of a township or community was that he will donate the land but he will build other things." (Personal interview, 2014).

Thus they felt that this donation was only received so that the requirements for development of a township were satisfied (Chavda et al., 1988). CHCS felt that their vision of a single temple was destroyed by KHMM. KHMM maintained that the land was merely a replacement for the loss of Mitra Hall, "We had been chased out of Mowbray and we are just substituting what was in Mowbray" (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013:19). However, many maintain that in order to deceive the DCD, KHMM claimed that it represented all Hindus (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013:18; Personal interview, 2013).

On the 6th of September 1976, CHCS sent a letter to the Regional Representative of the Department of Community Development. CHCS enquired about the available land in Gatesville and concluded their letter informing the CDC that they were "the largest single body representing the Hindu community in Cape Town" (Personal communication, 1976). The CDC acknowledged the letter but did not reply, a second letter was sent in 1978. This letter offered more detail, in it CHCS stated that they represented more than 500 members of the Hindu community and that they were the largest Hindu body in Cape Town. They referenced the letter they had previously sent and noted the lack of response. The letter concludes with the following statement:

> "We have now learnt to our astonishment that without further reference to us the site has been granted to another organisation representing a far smaller group of Hindus of one sect only, which can by no stretch of the imagination be regarded as representative of our Society and Community and we ask that immediate steps be taken to remedy this" (Personal communication, 1978).

The CDC failed to respond to CHCS and a second notification was given after which CHCS received a reply. In the reply, the CDC stated that KHMM had been in communication regarding the land in 1974; a formal application was received in 1976. The Department of Indian Affairs had established that KHMM had the largest membership and that CHCS had already received land from SJ Patel for their temple and hall. They therefore had confirmed the sale of the land to KHMM (Personal communication, 1978).

CHCS wrote to KHMM when they received the Gatesville plot and requested that they utilise both plots of land, building a temple on the government plot and a hall on the donated land or vice versa. CHCS did not want a duplication of facilities,

> "It is necessary to consider seriously whether our small community has the material resources to afford the building of 2 halls, 2 temples and the school. Instead of wasting resources in the duplicating of facilities, our organisation has decided that a number of two organisation's representatives should meet and discuss or exchange views on how to fulfil the needs of the community" (Personal correspondence, 1977 March 19).

KHMM replied, rejecting the offer of cooperation,

> "… and state[d] that our activities are definitely 'nothing new', and we have no intention of entering into a competition… In order to sustain our activities we were obliged to accept the land, which the government gave us in Gatesville as a replacement for the [Mitra] hall… What are the consequences for us if we did not accept the new venue… Where do we maintain our Hindu community's various activities? For 55 years we have stood by and believed in the motto that our activity is the activity of the entire Hindu community!" (Personal correspondence, 1977 April 11).

Emphasis is placed on the significance of Mitra Hall:

> "Can you imagine the state of the Hindu Community in Cape Town if the Mitra Hall were not available. Yes, we would not be what we are to-day if we did not have the Mitra Hall as a place of worship, meeting, play sports etc. Cape Town and KHMM is justifiably thankful for the far sightedness of its founders who have made this lasting investment" (KHMM, 1982).

KHMM apparently did attempt to have the land transferred to CHCS, the CDC rejected this, they stated that the land was awarded as a replacement for Mitra Hall and therefore could only be given to KHMM. The Mandal would therefore have to accept the land or forfeit it (Chavda et al., 1988).

The repetitive reference to the Gatesville land as a replacement for Mitra Hall is maintained across documents and interviews, in a fund raising letter, KHMM maintain that they were building "Our new 'Mitra Hall' and temple… in the Indian Group Area of Gatesville, Athlone" (KHMM, n.d). As a result of rejection, CHCS decided that they no longer wanted caste divisions in the society and that they would discourage it by introducing a clause into their constitution.

"We thought, learning from the situation that we experienced, these divisions shouldn't be there and to look ahead our society should discourage it and with that in mind we introduced that clause… After this experience, or at the time of the experience we thought these divisions are not the way forward, the way forward is that

anyone that belongs to the organisation cannot become a member of this [CHCS] organisations" (Personal interview, 2013)

and

> "If you're enforcing something, you need to put in certain types of rules. You need to think that there is a bigger picture. You don't want to bring your children up in a community where they are still supporting caste." (Personal Interview, 2014).

The clause stated that any person belonging to or promoting caste organisations in any form or shape would not be eligible for CHCS membership. This clause was created as a reaction to KHMM and their acquisition of land. In order to pass this clause, a vote had to be conducted. The vote attracted a large crowd and KHMM alleged that children were brought to the meeting to raise the head count. CHCS felt that KHMM members boycotted the meeting. Some members of CHCS felt that the clause was severe and that there had been a campaign to ensure its passing (Chavda et al., 1988). The clause was passed on the 27th of November 1977 and remains in the constitution till this day. An interviewee stated that those who tried to remove the clause were removed as committee members of the Cultural Society.

The clause did not only affect the *mochis*, there were other caste organisations that existed. Before the referendum, officials from CHCS approached the officials of caste organisations to recommend that they dissolve in order to belong to CHCS, rather than operating as a separate entity. The smaller caste organisations, such as the Cape Patidar Society and the Meysuria Mandal, decided to officially dissolve their organisations (Personal Interview, 2013). Some of them continued underground[47], they did not have official meetings but individuals who were concerned with their caste interests would meet to discuss these interests (Personal Interview, 2014). CHCS states that the willingness of other caste organisations to drop their caste names should indicate to all castes to do so. The clause enabled reform in society. Caste should not be promoted. The *mochi* interviewees stated that they did

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[47] In personal communications between the Cape Patidar Society and CHCS between 2007 and 2011, the Cape Patidar Society claimed to have had their last official meeting 40 years ago. Because of the CHCS clause of 1977, they decided not to revive themselves, however they still had funds. This interaction outlines their wish to donate the funds to CHCS on certain conditions, these conditions were not met and they retracted their donation. This communication was done in the name of the Cape Patidar Society, their letterhead was used and a chairperson, secretary and treasurer signed the letter. These individual names were not consistent in the communication, the leadership positions were held by different individuals indicating that either the individuals terms were complete and an election was held or they retired (Personal communication, 207, 2011). Either activity illustrates a degree of active nature, therefore they have existed in some form till 2011.

not want to follow suit and dissolve their caste-based organisation. They felt that it was forced upon them and they did not feel obliged to do so. They felt unwelcome by CHCS.

> "We Hindus are unnecessarily fighting among ourselves to prove personal superiority… we are creating dis-harmony [sic] and drifting apart. Central organisations have taken it upon themselves to condemn *gnati* organisations which are progressive and promote charitable cultural, religious and educational activities… [the] strength and promotion of Hindu religion, in the absence of central organisations, has been done by small *gnati* organisations… *Gnati* organisations… have survived, have held people together, became respected, powerful and disciplinary bodies, which have done service and are still serving all the Hindu Samaj… There can be no *gnati* organisation, which is not in favour of reform, progress, and upliftment. There can be no *gnati* organisation, which has taken retrogressive steps to degrade Hindu religion… Would it not be suicide for *gnati* organisation members who have at present everything in hand to throw it away with a hope to grasp at something promised in the future?… One would expect the 'Mother' organisation to contribute to the establishment and maintenance of a Hindu Temple… to encourage all activities… for the Hindu Community - no matter though whom it is done" (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal Newsgram[48] 3, n.d.).

Mochis were far more invested in caste[49] than the *patidars*. The *mochis*' Untouchable status and discrimination had made them vulnerable. In order to maintain or reiterate their claim of Kshatriya lineage, they needed to ensure their change in status. This could only occur if *gnati* organisations existed; appeal to *gnati* upliftment resulted in donations for bursaries and loans, ensuring the continual education and entry into professionalism. Maintenance of *gnati* organisations guaranteed religious education and participation in rites that perhaps would be restricted. The *gnati* organisation, KHMM, provided a safety net for the community, they were able to support their members and change their social status as a group.

KHMM felt that their own membership was large, they functioned well as a society and they had established scholarships for their youth. Thus, they were confident they could move forward and complete the structure they had in mind. In the KHMM constitution of 1969, the object of the society is clearly stated to benefit the Kshatriya community and to do service in interest of the Kshatriya community. The entire Gujarati Hindu community is to benefit and mentions of unity and brotherliness

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[48] The Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal's monthly newsletter was called Newsgram.

[49] Even in Leeds this patter of separation occurred among the *mochi* community, even though they were involved in cross-caste events, they maintained their separate organisation. The sense of community is maintained by *mochis* throughout Britain due to established relationships or for potential marital arrangements (Knott, 1994:220, 222).

are also mentioned. However the distinctive use of the term Kshatriya and the Kshatriya being a criterion for membership illustrates their need for a separate identity (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal, 1969). In the 1980 amendment of the constitution, the term Kshatriya community is absent from the aims and objects section of the society, thus indicating an acceptance of the eventual dissolution of *gnati* organisations (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal, 1980).

I think that this removal of the term was superficial; it allowed the *mochis* to maintain the perception that they accepted the eventual dissolution of *gnati* organisations when in fact they have retained their *gnati* organisation with superficial alterations that allow them to maintain their claim of non-casteism. Even though KHMM refused to drop their caste name, instead of naming their facilities the Kshatriya Mandal, it was named the Samaj Centre and they changed their organisation name to Cape Town Hindu Seva Samaj in 1995 or 1996, a number of years later.

The explanation for the turmoil in KHMM's Diwali newsletter in 1983 was as such: UHA decided to sell their property and was paid for it, however "a wealthy philanthropist immediately donated a large area of ground in a proposed township for the purpose of building a Gujarati school". This donation of land led to the decision by the UHA not to pursue the alternative land in Temple Road, Gatesville. In a discussion with Jeram Patel[50], he claimed that land was not taken from DCD as private ownership was favoured over government land (Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013:16). The money was lost but the philanthropist still donated the land. The Temple Road site lay vacant. "KHMM by virtue of having property in the affected area applied for and received the Temple Road site from the Department of Community Development in 1977" (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal Diwali Newsletter, 1983). Following this acquisition, the KHMM and CHCS presented their situation to the South African Gujarati Mahaparishad. The Parishad was a non-caste based organisation and was thought to provide an unbiased opinion. They provided a solution which was accepted by "the Mitra Mandal and rejected by the Cultural Society" (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal Diwali Newsletter, 1983). KHMM further describe the process of fund-raising and the construction of the temple. Following this, KHMM stated that on numerous occasions it had stated that the temple facilities were for all. The leaders of CHCS were accused of going to venues within and outside of Cape Town that were owned by sectional bodies and thereby maintaining a double standard.

> "Some individuals of traditional so called high caste in Cape Town look down upon the '*mochis*' as inferior and as such have barred members of the Mitra Mandal from becoming members of organisations. They claim one cannot belong to two organisations simultaneously."

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[50] He served on the General Committee of the Cape Hindu Cultural Society from 1976 onwards and has been Vice Chairman several times (The Cape Hindu Cultural Society, 1975-1991).

The newsletter ends with a statement calling for a solution and dialogues to end the "problem" and to strive for unity (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal, 1983). The perceived barring of the *mochis* correlates to Dumont's notion of purity and pollution; KHMM believed the high caste Gujaratis perceived the *mochis* to be pollutants and therefore maintained separation.

As a result of the dispute, the role of *gnati* organisations became a topic of conversation in the 1977s among the national Gujarati community. A symposium[51] was held discussing the future of *gnati*, the main speaker's discussion regarded the eventual eradication of *gnati* organisations and that *gnati* organisation should be acknowledged for their contribution to achievements in the Gujarati community. These contributions focused on education. However *gnati* organisations should disappear organically as a result of harmony between the different groups. At the symposium CB Patel, from CHCS, stated that there should rather be a revolution, an active attempt to dissolve these organisations. However, this was felt to be unnecessary and that a gradual process was preferable. The CHCS viewpoint was found to be too radical and extreme (Report of Symposium, 1978).

This dispute led to public meetings and the involvement of a national body. The South African Gujarati Maha Parishad was called to consult on the dispute between the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal and the Cape Hindu Cultural Society. A delegation was sent to Lenasia[52] to appeal to the South African Gujarati Parishad on the 27th of December 1977. The Parishad provided several recommendations: the clause prohibiting those with *gnati* membership becoming members of CHCS should be revoked, KHMM should retain ownership of the land and it should serve the entire community, the premise should be erected by the CHCS, funds should be jointly collected by CHCS and KHMM, the building should contain a plaque acknowledging the donation of the land by KHMM, the deeds should guarantee that the land should not be sold or mortgaged, KHMM was to have a two fifth representation in the governing body and finally that this project should be a joint effort ensuring that the premises are "for use to any Hindu Organisation of the Gujarati Hindu Community" (SA Gujarati Maha Parishad, 1977). A note is made in KHMM's newsletter regarding the consequences of the Gujarati Parishad's decision. KHMM states that they had accepted the recommendations made on the condition that CHCS remove their clause regarding membership.

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[51] It is unclear whether this symposium is in fact the Gujarati Parishad's consultation regarding the Cape Town issue, however it seems likely. The date of the symposium corresponds to the letter from the Gujarati Parishad, the main speaker is a member of the Parishad, and there is mention of CHCS's chair, CB Patel.

[52] There is no evidence discussing why Lenasia was chosen for the appeal, perhaps it was closer than Durban or the Parishad rotated between the Transvaal and Natal or perhaps because the Transvaal consisted primarily of merchants, the Parishad, being a Gujarati organisation was based in a merchant area

> "Though there is a certain amount of envy and jealousy prevalent in our Community to this achievement we are positive that with time this problem will be solved and we can live in harmony as a large family" (KHMM, 1983).

CHCS had not removed their clause thus KHMM believed that they were not at fault for the split in the community (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal Newsgram 11, 1979). This resulted in a tense atmosphere within the community.

The Building of the Samaj Centre

SAMAJ CENTRE AND VISHNU MANDHIR (IMAGE TAKEN BY NEERALI GAJJAR, 2014)

The allocation of the government land in Gatesville required a formal constitution. A Constitution Committee was established which constructed a formal constitution and removed the word *mochi* from its previous constitution and became the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal, reiterating their Kshatriya lineage and distancing themselves from their *mochi* identity. The construction of premises required a vision and funding. Inspiration for the temple design came from other temples in South Africa and the aesthetic of the surrounding area. The design that was decided upon required a large amount of funds. In order to collect funds, the KHMM constitution had to reflect the clauses in the 1978 Fund Raising Act. This act stated that funds for a temple could be collected from anywhere, but funding for a hall had to be done within the community. Funding was raised through various sales, such as cake sales and raffle tickets (Personal interview, 2014).

The significant structures of the premise consist of a temple accommodating 200 people with an expansion option into the hall increasing capacity to 850. This hall was to be multipurpose and to

cater for a variety of sporting, cultural, social and religious activities. Finally, there would be a flat to accommodate a guest and a caretaker. Regarding the aesthetics, the architect raised concern with the integration of a 'traditional' temple and the rest of facility. Thus the exterior consists of face brick and ceramic tiles that match the surrounding buildings (Klein and Klein Architects, 1980).

A ground blessing ceremony was conducted by a leader of the Divine Life[53] in Rishikesh, Swami Venkatesananda in either 1980 or 1981. In a newsletter discussing the ground blessing, mention of a private discussion with Swami Venkatesananda is made. The presentation of this discussion aids KHMM's propaganda. The Swami is said to have seen

> "nothing wrong with any one putting up a temple for the use of all. This is common practice in India where wealthy devotees and organisations build places of worship for the use of all" and that he thanked KHMM for Mitra Hall and called it the "Spiritual Home of all Hindus in Cape Town", this news letter concludes with the Swami encouraging the support of the new temple and wished "that on his next visit to Cape Town we would all be able to assemble in the New Mitra Hall in Rylands Estate"[54] (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal Newsgram 4, 1978).

The official opening of the premises was held on the 6th of March 1983. The aforementioned religious leader had passed away, therefore another Divine Life leader, Swami Chidanandad came from Rishikesh to conduct the official opening. Life size images of the gods Vishnu, Luxmi, Ganapati, Durgadevi, Krishna and Radha were flown in from India and ceremoniously placed in the temple on the 6th of March 1983 (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal Diwali Newsletter, 1983). A large prayer followed the idol placing ceremony. In a note written[55] by a KHMM member, he states that the temple is open to everyone and those who have created the difference will become the culprit. The temple is open to all Hindus and there is one God for everyone. Those who discriminate are at fault (Personal interview, 2013).

In 1984, the Cape Yuvak Sungh (CYS), consisting predominantly of *meysoria* or *hajaam* members, wished to increase their membership however they were opposed to the use of the Samaj Centre. This opposition resulted in the formation of the Cape Hindu Youth Society (CHYS) by the *mochi* youth, however they were independent from KHMM and strived for unity within the Gujarati community. In

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[53] The association with Divine Life leaders is unclear. I know from my personal history that they frequented South Africa and set up a Divine Life Society in Durban.

[54] Underline in original letter

[55] Not was read during an interview, the translation could not be verified as the Gujarati used was rather academic.

1985, CYS, in an attempt towards unity, revoked their opposition towards the Samaj Centre. This led to invitations from both societies, inviting members to attend one another's events. In 1986 a trial merger of the CYS and CHYS was attempted however a permanent merger was prevented by the dispute among the rest of the community. Thus the two youth groups decided to form a Special Committee to investigate the dispute in order to enlighten many of the youth and provide them with an alternative to their parents' bias through a historical view of the situation (Chavda et al., 1988). This tension between the youth and the previous generation is experienced because of the divergent coping mechanisms used. The youth experience a greater degree of alienation from their homeland in comparison to the previous generations resulting in tension between the principles of the two generations. For the youth, the Indian identity occurs in the private realm as relationships between the generations (Hill, 1980:i-ii).

The name change from Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal to Cape Town Hindu Seva Samaj occurred due 'the concerned youth'[56]. A meeting was held in 1993 between the *mochi* youths and the KHMM committee. KHMM officials describe the meeting as "the most shocking and disturbing day in the history of our mandal" (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal Report of Meeting held, 1993 June 4). The youth were apparently insulting and had inaccurate perceptions of the *mandal*. The youth proposed that KHMM cut ties with SAK Mahasabha[57], change KHMM's name and constitution and finally form a new governing body. The youth felt that the *mandal* was not contributing to the community as they felt that the *mandal* was doing nothing and that its committee was stale. They felt that not all Hindus were supported. This was defended by KHMM who claimed that they kept "making every effort to be together in Cape Town, but the Cultural Society refuses to allow us to be members" (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal Report of Meeting, 1993). The tension between the youth and the elders in the community indicates a difference in participation with "the local migrant co-ethnic life".

In 1995, a notice was sent to KHMM members regarding a special general meeting. This meeting was a result of discussions with KHMM and the "concerned youth", the removal of the word Kshatriya from the society name was announced and ending of the affiliation with the South African Kshatriya Mahasabha. Thus they claimed that they were trying to "Create an environment which will be conducive to unity within the broader Gujarati and Hindu Communities" (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal, 1995).

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[56] It is unclear who these 'concerned' youth are, from the documentation it is assumed that they are *mochis* who's parents are members of KHMM.

[57] The South African Kshatriya Mahasabha is an umbrella organisation consisting of *mochi* organisations throughout South Africa. They held an education trust, which was aimed at assisting "progressive Gujarati Mochi Gnyati Students" (SAKM Education Trust Draft Constitution, n.d.)

KHMM was additionally suffering a financial setback, the youth blamed the committee for this. Following these discussions with the youth, the *mandal* sent a questionnaire, which provided options for the name change, the withdrawal from the SAK Mahasabha and financial decisions. In 1996, the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal withdrew from the umbrella organisation claiming that

> "in light of the tremendous change that South Africa as a whole had undergone, that they could not be part of a caste body. The concerned group undertook a survey amongst members of the KHMM to determine their needs and whether they would support a non-caste body in the future. There was overwhelming support from the community to move away from being a caste body and the KHMM, to its credit, heeded the call of the general membership and withdrew its membership from the national SAKM." (Cape Town Hindu Seva Samaj, n.d.)

The new post-apartheid South Africa represented a spirit of non-discrimination; apartheid was over and with it the idea of separate development and the need for categorisation. A new South Africa meant unity between discriminated groups i.e. across race; the CHSS translated this as meaning that an organisation that encouraged membership based on an ascribed category was not in the spirit of unity. However, even with the name change, an interviewee stated, they are still a caste based organisation, their communication is limited to the *mochi* community. The Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal produced a "'Quick Reference' Telephone List of Cape Town Kshatriya Gnati".

The CHCS' Chairman responded to the name change in their newsletter:

> "One recent development which our members should question is the establishment of an apparently 'new' Hindu organisation in Cape Town, which seems to be making a determined effort to lure our members to it. Since it seems to want to serve the interests of the Gujerati [sic] community, our members will seriously have to consider if another Hindu organisation is needed to serve its interests. The second important question we need to ponder is: what are the consequences for us in view of possible duplication of services and activities? I am convinced that none of our members will offer the simplistic solution of the 'having your cake and eating it' variety, i.e. dual membership" (Sukha, 1996).

Following this newsletter, communication was sent to the Secretary of CHCS from the Chairperson of newly named Cape Hindu Seva Samaj (CHSS). This letter requested a meeting between the executives of the two societies, the basis of this request was the newly formed CHSS and a response to the CHCS' Chairmen's statement in the newsletter. CHSS called for a "good working relationship between our respective organisations" in an attempt at reconciliation (Personal communication, 1996 November 15).

CHCS alleged that the KHMM's fundraising was based on misrepresentation. CHCS felt that the KHMM were advertising nationally, that that they were raising funds for the entire Gujarati community, when they were raising funds for just the *mochis*. KHMM's donation appeals were made with mention of Mitra Hall. These letters illustrate the significance of Mitra Hall and its service to the "the citizens of Cape Town" (Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal Donation Letter, n.d.). Through this emphasis, a new hall and temple was justified and the idea that the new facility would be a replacement for Mitra Hall was perpetuated (Letter for Donation, n.d.). CHCS believed that KHMM incentivised their members to fundraise, stating that the more money members raise, the less they themselves would have to donate (Personal interview, 2013). Chavda et al. notes that KHMM "created unity amongst their members by introducing the system of area groups which introduced some competition between the areas as to who could raise the most money" (Chavda et al.,1988).

The Building of Radha Krishna

RADHA KRISHNA TEMPLE (IMAGE TAKEN BY NEERALI GAJJAR, 2013)

After the sale of the Newlands premises by UHA, the school once again became a tenant. Various venues were hired but they were not deemed suitable due to vandalism, some venues lacked separate rooms and the teachers were not able to create a school environment, which hindered the learning process. The school was prioritised by UHA as the lack of a permanent home was disruptive. A conventional non-denominational preschool was additionally viewed as a priority in child education.

Thus, a preschool, Wonderland, was established which additionally served as a source of income as Main Street Primary had done in Newlands. The attendees of the preschool were of mixed ethnicities. The vernacular and secular schools were established in 1985 (Personal Interview, 2013; Dhupelia-Mesthrie, 2013:19).

Because the school was the primary concern, fundraising focused on the school. Once the school was established on the donated land, fundraising by CHCS began for the temple. Progress was slow and only occurred at the rate at which donations were given (Personal interview, 2013). The Radha Krishna Temple was completed and inaugurated in 1992 (Personal interview, 2013; Temple Invitation, 1992). In order to maintain a functioning temple at Radha Krishna, a priest was required. The *mandhir* was consecrated in 1992 and the first priest arrived from India in 1993 or 1994. Priests were offered a five-year contract. During the periods between priests, community members or Guru Krishna, a Tamil priest, conducted religious services or important rituals. Before the temple was constructed, a hall in the school premises was used for religious services. Larger celebrations required the hiring of various premises (Personal interview, 2013).

Aftermath of the Split

The split resulted in division within the community. Religious services for significant festivals were held in both *mandhirs*. Members of the local community predominantly attended services and celebrations at the *mandhir* of which they were members i.e. *mochis* attended the Vishnu Mandhir, while the *patidars* attended Radha Krishna Mandhir. This was not strictly adhered to but the community predominantly attended separate festivities in the separate venues. This division complicated issues of identity and belonging, especially when one was of a mixed caste or did not quite identify with either temple. The situation is best described by an interviewer:

> "The tragedy of it, in spite of what is mentioned, there are intercaste marriages etc, in the majority of these case, that those who [had] been affected by intercaste marriage are choosing to be neither here nor there, they feel alienated by the whole process, and like you [referring to me] say, your generation that doesn't understand the history and has no knowledge of it has no concept of where and what's the logic and what the reason behind it and what we've effectively managed to do is for decades, we've managed to alienate entire generations of people who have no understandings of where this has come from, which is not to suggest that there isn't a problem and that it has historical origins etc but that the way forward is not to go back" (Personal Interview, 2013).

Conclusion: Understanding the Dispute in Terms of Caste

The question remains, how does this dispute answer the question of how caste travels and whether Dumont's notion of caste is applicable to the dispute within the Gujarati community of Rylands. The notion of purity was altered, the community was not dominated by Brahmins; in fact when interviewees were asked about castes in Cape Town, Brahmins were not mentioned. However, the absence of the Brahmin did not eliminate notions of purity that they resemble. Vegetarianism is considered to be a sign of high class, this was illustrated by Lynch's discussion on the *patidars*; *patidars* in Rylands are strictly vegetarian. In passing, an interviewee mentioned that he does not mind his children marrying outside of their religion or ethnicity but they must remain vegetarian. This was also a cause for discrimination against the *mochis*, they were meat eaters and they worked with leather, both of these factors render them impure.

With regards to hierarchy, as noted earlier there is no mention of Brahmins in Cape Town but Untouchables still remain at the bottom of the hierarchy. The *patidars* view themselves as high caste within the Rylands context as a result of their relative purity, and the situation here seems to follow the dominant caste model that Srinivas proposed (Srinivas, 1966:8). The *mochis*, who are perceived to be Untouchables, do not view themselves as such and therefore do not consider themselves to be polluting. The *mochis* have re-imagined their history and created a narrative that allowed them to justify a claim of Kshatriya heritage. In their eyes, this claim disassociates them from Untouchability. While they claim that they were forced to do leather work, they have not distinguished themselves from their *mochi* identity, in fact they have claimed it with pride. Therefore the *mochis* do not view their status in terms of purity, they define status in terms of spiritual, financial, educational and professional success. They determine status by socio-economic indicators.

Dumont's notion of separation does occur. Castes maintain endogamy and separation occurs during commensality, this has been illustrated by the two anecdotes in which the *mochis* were given separate crockery and food prepared by them was consumed. Their effect on the food and crockery was considered to be polluting, the dish was not considered to be purified by washing it, separate dishes had to be used. Finally interdependence, interdependence is based on a patron-client relationship. The *mochis* in Cape Town were not dependent on this relationship; they were economically independent, their customers consisted of a variety of ethnicities that occurred in the Cape. *Patidars* were also not dependent on the *mochi* for their services. The *patidars*, in an open market system, were able to purchase non-leather and/or shoes from other ethnicities. However, trade specialisation has been a factor in Cape Town. Dhupelia-Mesthrie (2012) discusses three

families that have maintained their traditional *mochi* occupation of shoe making and repair. They have created a monopoly as a result of the skills developed in their traditional occupation.

The dispute in Rylands illustrates the use of caste as a basis of discrimination in the struggle of control over the Gujarati community. Mitra Hall allowed the *mochis* to control the space within which religious and social activities of the entire Gujarati community occurred. This role was removed with the forced exit of Mowbray under the Group Areas Act of 1950. The fear of the removal of this role resulted in them partaking in underhanded activities that ensured allocation of land in Rylands. The CHCS also sought control of the space within which community activities would occur, they felt undermined when the *mochis* received the land as they believed they represented the entire community thus entitling their control over that space. The mistrust felt by the CHCS motivated them to pass a clause stating that members cannot belong or promote caste organisations. They hoped that this clause would prevent further betrayal and allow the community to develop without prejudice. The *mochis* viewed this clause as discriminatory as they were the biggest caste with significant membership in their caste organisation. Thus in summation, caste does travel and in Cape Town, it was recreated rather similarly to its manifestation in India. The dispute between the *mochis* and *patidars* illustrates the usage of caste as a discriminatory factor resulting in the division of the community.

Conclusion

This study addressed the issues of caste that have shaped Indian identity, with reference to the Indian community in Rylands, Cape Town. The dissertation explores a dispute in Rylands that led to a split in the community and the construction of two separate temples. The split occurred as a result of caste discrimination and its implications. The *mochis* were perceived to be Untouchables and were discriminated against, they therefore feared losing control over the space in which social and religious activities by the Gujarati community took place. The *patidars* feared caste pollution resulting in their discriminatory actions against the *mochis*. Whether this situation can be correlated to Dumont's theorising and notions of the caste system is the crux of this study. What is clear from the onset is the divergent experience of the other Indian communities in South Africa and the diaspora; as indentured labourers were subject to harsh living and working conditions. These conditions made adherence to caste rather impractical, therefore providing an explanation of the dilution or abandonment of caste in the indentured communities. From this explanation it can be inferred that the migrants' mercantile experiences provided them with the freedom and ability to reconstruct notions of caste. The way in which caste has been recreated is interesting; lower castes attempted to improve their hierarchical standing by reimagining their history. This recreation of caste and its consequences have shaped the direction of this study

Dumont and Caste

Dumont's notion of caste has been applicable in Cape Town, however the recreation of caste has not correlated with all of his ideas and concepts. Dumont's understanding of caste rests on the idea of purity; symbols of purity occupy a higher status within the hierarchy, while symbols of impure occupy the lower status. Dumont's definition of purity relies on Brahminical notions of purity; the habits and behaviour of the Brahmins are considered to resemble purity. The Brahmin, therefore plays a significant role in the caste system; Brahmins represent a reference point for status and their interaction with other castes determines the latter's position in the hierarchy. In Cape Town, Brahminical notions of purity occur: vegetarian diets are considered to resemble purity, working with hides or eating meat is considered to be impure. However, Cape Town does not have a Brahmin community, instead the *patidars* have defined themselves as high caste and have attempted to become the reference point for status within the caste hierarchy. This has not been accepted by the *mochis*. *Mochis* are considered by the *patidars* to be impure and untouchable according to Brahminical notions of purity; they traditionally work with hide and are not vegetarians.

Mochis have not adhered to these Brahminical definitions and have instead used socio-economic achievements to indicate status. The influence of the Arya Samaj has allowed them to empower

themselves and to distance themselves from untouchability. The Arya Samaj have taught *mochis* rituals and religious teachings that would not normally be taught to untouchables; some have even experienced the sacred thread ceremony which is reserved for high caste Hindus. Arya Samajists emphasised education as a means of empowerment; education allows lower castes to reference high caste behaviour and create a narrative which allows them to reimagine their lineage as high caste. The *mochis* asserted Kshatriya heritage by claiming that they were Kshatriyas who were forced into hiding when the moguls arrived in order to avoid conversion. They resided with the Untouchables who removed animal carcasses, the *mochis* used the hide from the animals to construct shoes that were known as *mojida*, *mochi* was derived from this term. This narrative allowed the *mochis* to assert their Kshatriya heritage and provide an explanation for their impure traditional occupation.

This narrative was not accepted by the *patidars*, who maintained their perception of *mochis* being impure. This was indicated by the anecdotal evidence in which the *patidars* provided *mochi* neighbours or visitors with separate crockery to avoid caste pollution. While Dumont states that crockery can be washed to remove impurity, the *patidars* believed that they would be polluted if they shared the same crockery. The anecdotes indicate another aspect of Dumont's theorising: the role of power and status. Dumont asserts that power and status are separate, this is indicated by the Brahmin's status above the king or Kshatriya caste. This notion has been criticised by Madan, Pocock and Berreman. Madan states that dominant castes and wealth indicate that power is equated to status (Madan, 1971:6), while Pocock notes that the dominant caste becomes the secular benchmark for status (Pocock, 1955:71). Berreman states that power is synonymous with status as the higher caste's acceptance of a lower caste's claim for higher castes illustrates the power dynamic (Berreman, 1971:18).

These three notions are applicable in Cape Town: the lack of acceptance of the *mochis'* claim to higher status by the *patidar* illustrates a power dynamic between the two castes. Secondly, the *mochi*s emphasis on education and professionalism indicates the use of socio-economic indicators becoming a benchmark for success. In South Africa, most Indians proudly discusses their children's professional careers, these careers are synonymous with prestige, wealth and status. Brahminical notions of purity are not predominant indicators for status; they remain indicators for discrimination but professionalism, education and wealth have become indicators for status in a social hierarchy that resembles class rather than caste. This is in contrast to India where caste has become a rallying point for political identities and a tool for preferential treatment such as affirmative action.

Experience of Caste in South Africa

I think one cannot underestimate the context within which caste was recreated, as stated earlier certain aspects of Dumont's notions of caste were reimagined in South Africa but why were they not

in Fiji and Trinidad? The experience of indenture made caste highly impractical: different castes lived together, ate together and there were not enough females to practice endogamy. The second reason, I believe, is that higher castes generally did not travel as indentured labourers. Recruiters preferred lower caste workers because they were believed to be accustomed to hard work and unlikely to cause any problems. Labourers that came to various countries as a result of indenture were unlikely to perpetuate a system in which they were regarded with discrimination or indifference. Some claimed higher status either at their point of departure or during their maritime journey but soon any notions of caste were considered impractical and therefore fell along the wayside. Notions of status remained, a middle class of *sidars* created a division of high and low class, creating a hierarchy based on professional achievement. Attendance and commitment to social and religious functions became a secondary indicator of status in the diaspora in Trinidad. Among the indentured labourers, caste was not recreated in any resemblance to caste in India.

The passengers were able to maintain and recreate these notions of caste because they were not restricted by experiences of indenture. They were able to practice separation in terms of endogamy and commensality. Their commercial success also allowed them to return home and stay in India for two-year periods. Unlike indentured labourers, passengers were able to return home and were accepted because of their wealth and their adherence to traditional caste notions of separation. This return and continual link with India due to visiting dignitaries and travel allowed them to perpetuate their native understanding of caste. In Cape Town, the situation was perpetuated by the apartheid government. Before the apartheid government's enforcement of the Group Areas Act, Indians were dispersed across the Cape peninsula and only interacted at weekly religious or social functions. Friendships occurred beyond caste groupings but these were limited by practices of endogamy and commensality.

Discriminatory practices became pronounced when the Indian community was forced into the confines of Rylands and Cravenby. The *mochis* did not want to lose their control over the religious and social space in which the Gujarati community interacted. They had controlled and owned Mitra Hall, which before Group Areas had been the communal space for religious services and social activities that were attended by all the Gujaratis. I believe that this was what motivated them to underhandedly receive land from the Department of Community Development. The non-*mochi* Gujarati Cape Hindu Cultural Society members were shocked and upset and rather drastically voted in a clause that stated that a member could not promote or belong to a group based on caste identities. This reaction resulted from feelings of betrayal and discrimination. Both parties' reactions caused a split in the community that resulted in the construction of two separate temples in which parallel religious activities and festivals took place. Brand (1966:174-175), concurs with this view arguing that, immigrant communities who possess a "well developed, integrated and relatively autonomous culture

which is firmly institutionalised and internalised, [are] also more likely to be able to maintain [their] distinctive value and behaviour patterns in a situation of cultural contact".

The caste system is relevant to these communities; caste identities have resulted in discriminatory practices. Therefore in South Africa, descendants of indentured communities have not adhered to caste because it was not practical for their forefathers, while descendants of passenger Indians have been able to adhere to caste and recreate notions of status and hierarchy. The Gujarati community showed that certain caste structures could survive if they maintained their exclusiveness; held privileged economic positions, retained ties with India and isolated themselves from intimate cross-caste contact (Kuper, 1960:31). These notions have resulted in the split of the Gujarati community in Cape Town; this split is still a sensitive subject.

Future Studies

This study was limited to past findings; the continuing negotiations between the CHCS and CHSS to reunite the community will provide an interesting caste study for the future. Negotiations between the two parties have allowed the past to emerge as the older generations have very strong feelings regarding past actions. The younger generations seem to be moving away from caste as even notions of Gujarati or Indian identities are fading. Instead of fearing intercaste marriages, parents fear interracial and ethnic marriages, further alienating the younger generations from their religious and cultural backgrounds. When I spoke to many of my cousins or peers, they were not aware of this history or even their own caste identities. Future studies could provide interesting insight into new notions of Indianness and status as well as the loss of traditional occupations. Whether this occurs in Durban where the Gujarati population is larger and has a greater history would be interesting for future studies.

Final Thoughts

I think that I have successfully shown that caste has been recreated in South Africa among the Gujarati community, organisations based on caste were established in the Cape, Transvaal and Natal with similar patterns; interests of the particular castes were protected and their established schools, community halls and temples to ensure religion and culture were not eradicated. The caste 'system' in Cape Town has not been recreated exactly as it occurs in India but it shares many similarities with caste in Gujarat and the rest of South Africa. The Arya Samaj, encouraging their empowerment and claim of a higher status, has influenced both communities. Status is not confined to Brahminical notions of purity; instead status is indicated by socio-economic factors such as wealth and education. The Arya Samaj provided religious education and emphasised secular education to ensure empowerment and the ability to reference high castes' behaviour. The emphasis on secular education

allowed the lower castes to engage in professional careers and create distance between their traditional occupations' association with impurity. It is interesting to note that in Cape Town, not all the *mochis* have distanced themselves from their traditional occupation. Instead they have created a monopoly and cater to an elite clientele with their shoe and repair shops. The *Jatavs* tried to create distance between themselves and the *chamars*, whereas the *mochis* have embraced this association.

I am not certain why this has been the case, perhaps it is because *mochis* did not choose to emulate Brahmin values i.e. *sanskritise*, they instead chose to redefine themselves as upper caste even though they still maintain habits that would be considered impure under a Brahminical understanding of caste: they eat meat and work with hides. These values were not altered. They empowered themselves with their claim to a new heritage but without adapting Brahminical values. *Mochi* pride aggravated the situation in Cape Town, their insistence on building a temple resulted in a split within the community but they are still proud of their temple and its services. The actions of the *mochis* and the *patidars* is supported by the idea that, "individuals or groups who occupied a position of high status in their community or society of origin are more likely to be strongly committed to the core values or their group" (Brand, 1966:175). Thus both the *mochis* and *patidars* were stubbornly committed to their caste values and to an extent the conflict encouraged their internal solidarity (Brand, 1966:180). Towards the end of one of my interviews I was asked if I was a *mochi* or if I am a practicing *mochi* or even if I like being a *mochi*. Clearly these identities have been ingrained and induce feelings of pride. I am half a *mochi* and am not certain what was meant by the question of practicing *mochi.* I identify myself as a South African Gujarati, caste has not entered into my identity.

I believe that this dissertation illustrates the presence of caste in South Africa and the manner in which it manifests itself. The Indian experience in South Africa was binary to some extent, indenture and passenger. These two experiences were quite diverse and allowed the passenger class to recreate notions of caste, which have been addressed in this dissertation. A rather unique recreation has occurred where socio-economic indicators that translate into societal status have replaced Brahminical notions of purity. Caste currently represents an identity of the older generation and it is within this generation that discrimination is either practiced or remembered. The younger generation in many cases does identify with caste. This may indicate that the role of caste will soon become obsolete as assimilation into South Africa creates a transition to valuing socio-economic achievements.

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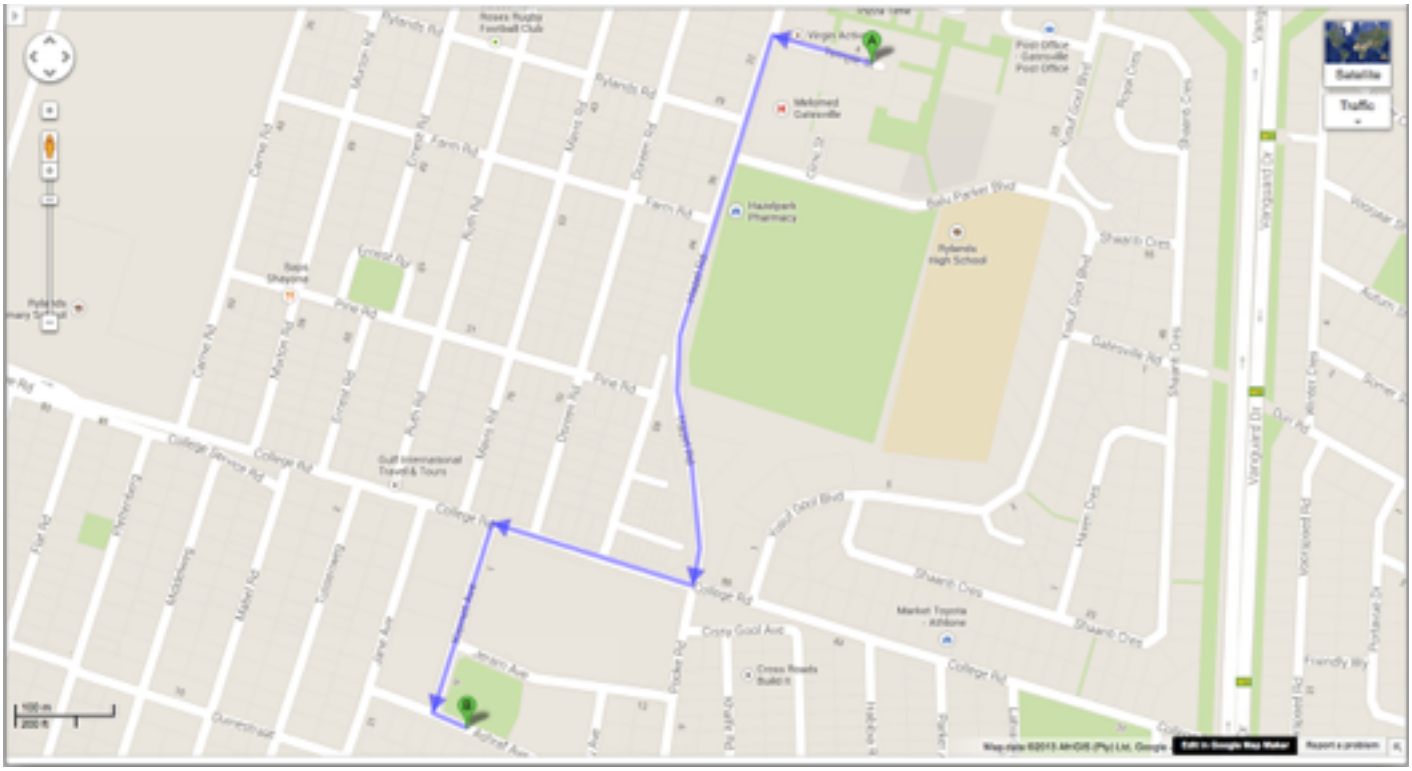
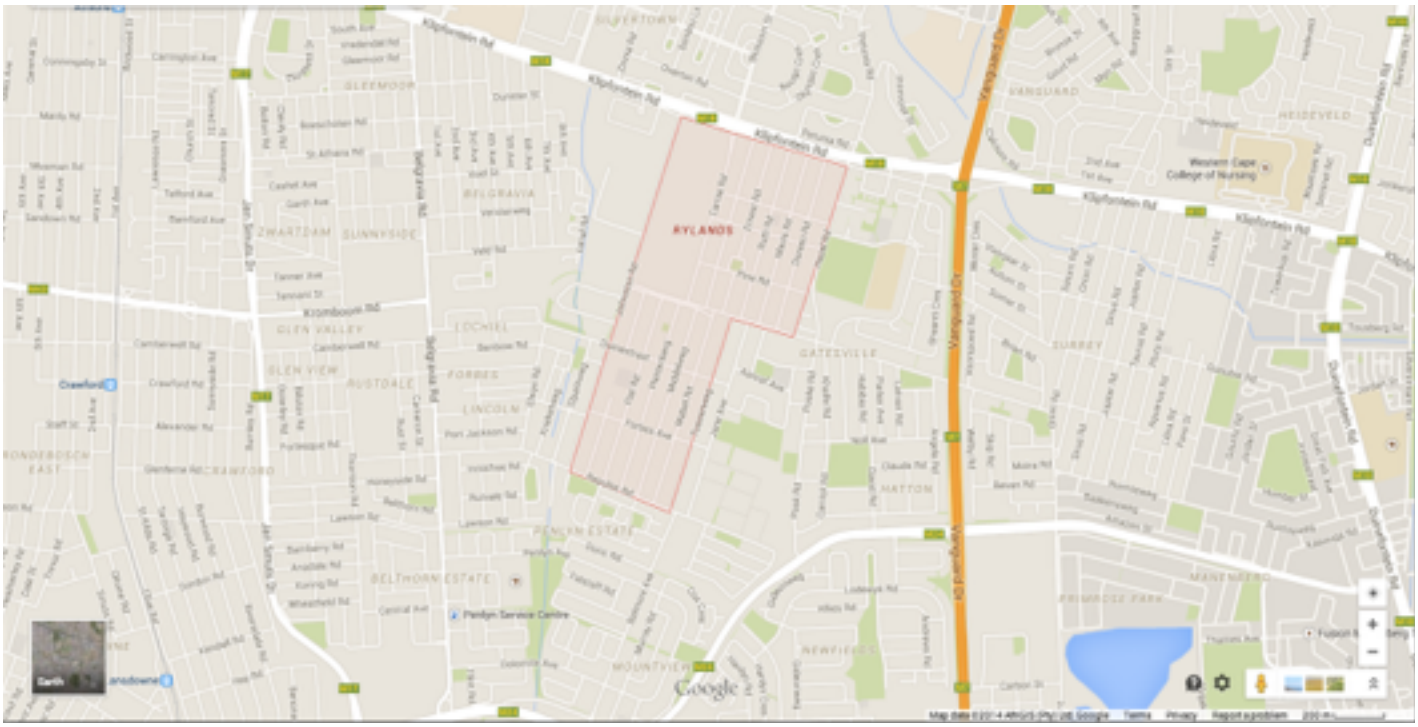
Cover Image: http://devdutt.com/articles/indian-mythology/caste-again.html
Maps: http://maps.google.com

Appendix

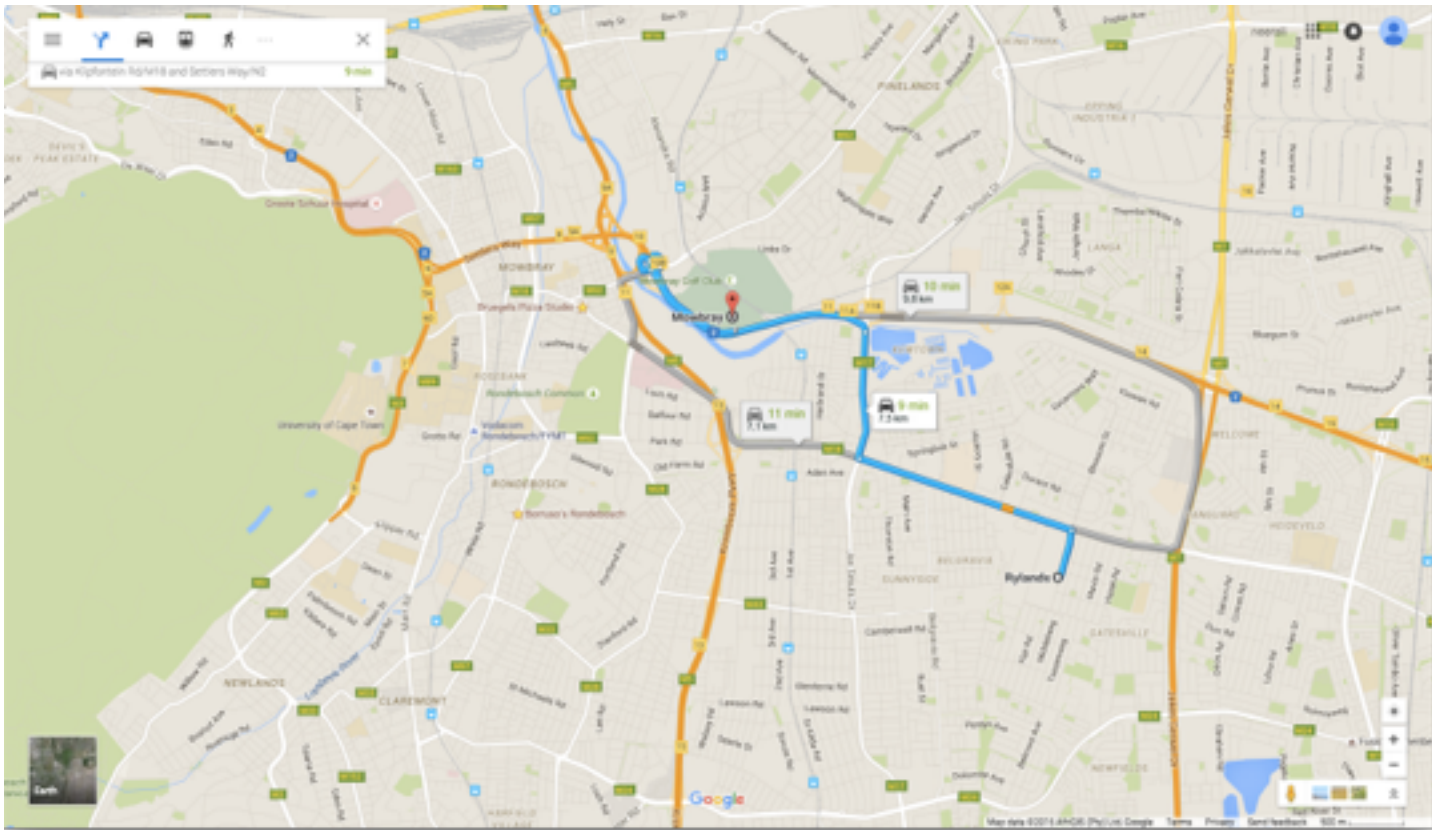
Maps



MAP SHOWING THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE SAMAJ CENTRE (A) AND RADHA KRISHNA TEMPLE (B)



MAP SHOWING THE AREA OF RYLANDS WITH GATESVILLE ADJACENT



DISTANCE BETWEEN MOWBRAY AND RYLANDS

MAP OF CAPE TOWN

Ethics Clearance Certificate

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Gajjar

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER H14/08/10**
PROJECT TITLE	*A Tale of two temples – An exploration of caste in Cape Town*
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Ms. N Gajjar
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	School Of Social Sciences
DATE CONSIDERED	22 August 2014
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved Unconditionally
EXPIRY DATE	12/09/2016
DATE 13/09/2014	**CHAIRPERSON** E.M. Tab PP (Professor TM Milani)

cc: Supervisor: Prof D Menon

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Secretary at Room 10000, 10th Floor, Senate House.
I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a yearly progress report.**

Signature _____ **Date** _____/_____/_____

Participant Information Sheet

Dear Participant

My name is Neerali Gajjar. I grew up within the Gujarati community. I am currently at the University of the Witwatersrand completing my masters degree. I am interested in events within the community and my research focus is the Gujarati community in Cape Town. Currently I am looking specifically at the construction of the two temples in Rylands and events surrounding the rift within the community.

As a prominent member of the community, I would like to invite you to participate in this study. You have been chosen because I believe that as a member of a temple committee you have an insight into the events that I am interested in. This participation will include an informal interview discussing events leading up to the construction of the two temples and general questions about the nature of the community. The time and duration of the interview will be at your convenience. Participation in this study is completely voluntary, confidential and anonymous. Your personal details will appear not appear in the research. As participation is voluntary, you are allowed at any point to refuse participation in the study. There will be no adverse consequences to your refusal.

This research will form the bases of my masters dissertation. This dissertation will be available in the Wits Library and online. If you would like a copy, I am more than happy to provide one to you.

Your participation will be most appreciated. I look forward to meeting with you.

Please contact me if you have any questions: 082 646 8947 / neerali.gajjar@gmail.com
My supervisor is Dilip Menon (email: dilip.menon@wits.ac.za)

Consent Form

I, the participant, consent to participation in this research conducted by Neerali Gajjar for her masters dissertation.

I have read the consent form and have had an opportunity to ask questions regarding the information it contains.

As a participant, the research has been explained to me and I have understood the nature of the research.

I have been a voluntary participant, there is no obligation for me to participate. The nature of my participation includes an informal interview/discussion. I am free at any point to refuse to participate.

I agree / disagree to have the audio of this discussion recorded (please underline).

I have been guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. If interviews are conducted in a group environment, I am comfortable and approve of the other members in the group. If I am not comfortable conducting group interviews I may refuse at any time to participate.

I understand that this research will be published in a masters dissertation which will be available at the University of the Witwatersrand in printed and electronic forms. I have been promised access to the final report if I so wish.

_____ _____

Participant's Signature Date

Please contact me if you have any questions: 082 646 8947 / neerali.gajjar@gmail.com
My supervisor is Dilip Menon (email: dilip.menon@wits.ac.za)

Consent Form for Audio Recording

I, the participant, consent to participation in this research conducted by Neerali Gajjar for her masters dissertation.

As a participant, the research has been explained to me and I have understood the nature of the research (Please refer to Participant Information Sheet).

I have been a voluntary participant, there is no obligation for me to participate. The nature of my participation includes an informal interview/discussion. I am free at any point to refuse to participate or to be recorded.

I agree to have the audio of this discussion recorded. This audio recording is for the researcher, Neerali Gajjar's, own personal use and will not be part of the dissertation. However, the audio recording will be transcribed, with code names used to ensure anonymity, and added as an addendum to the masters dissertation.

I have been guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. If interviews are conducted in a group environment, I am comfortable and approve of the other members in the group. If I am not comfortable conducting group interviews I may refuse at any time to participate and/or to be recorded.

I understand that this research will be published in a masters dissertation which will be available at the University of the Witwatersrand in printed and electronic forms. I have been promised access to the final report if I so wish.

I have read the consent form and have had an opportunity to ask questions regarding the information it contains.

Your assistance and promptness will be greatly appreciated.

_____ _____

Participant's Signature Date

Please contact me if you have any questions: 082 646 8947 / neerali.gajjar@gmail.com
or my supervisor, Dilip Menon (email: dilip.menon@wits.ac.za

Research Instrument

Questions will be asked within a historical framework initially, this is so that when we finality discuss caste the answers are not prejudiced or prepared. Initially I will begin by providing a participation sheet and explaining specifics such as the anonymity and voluntary nature of this study, if they consent, I will ask them to sign the consent form.

I will ask leading questions by asking participants to explain the history of Indians in Cape Town. In doing so I shall receive a narrative framed by their caste background, this will occur due to the inevitable discussion of the division within the community that resulted in the construction of two caste based temples. I believe that because I belong to this closed community, participants will be comfortable enough to discuss their prejudices with me and provide anecdotes. In preliminary interviews some were quite forth coming with anecdotal evidence of caste prejudice.

Because I am conducting interviews with both societies, I may ask pointed questions regarding the clarification regarding certain events that cannot be told unbiasedly. This shall take the form of questions regarding a referendum meeting in which a controversial clause was added to a societies constitution. If participants are aware, I shall finally ask them for clarification regarding the historical documentation I have obtained from the societies. These documents include minute books, community newsletters and official correspondence. Individual and group interviews will both be constructed in this manner.

By not asking specific questions initially I believe that the conversation will flow organically and allow the participants to be comfortable enough to discuss the manifestations of caste and provide anecdotes that they may not provide otherwise.

Interviews will be recorded, this will be limited to audio for transcribing purposes but will not appear as part of my research.

Leading questions are as follows:

1. Could you tell me about the history of Indians in Cape Town? Specifically, to your knowledge did they have a temple to worship or vernacular schools?
2. Where did the Indians in Cape Town live before Group Areas? Did Rylands exist?
3. How did Group Areas affect the Indians?
4. Did location determine where the community met, e.g. the hall in Mowbray?
5. The hall in Wynberg is owned by the Kshatriya Hindu Mitra Mandal, what sort of activities were conducted in this hall and did the entire community go to this hall or only certain castes?

6. In my research I saw that the United Hindu Association declared bankruptcy after they closed the Gandhi Memorial School, how did this affect the community?
7. Can you tell me about the formation of the temples?
8. What would you say is the origin of the split?

The pointed questions are as follows:

1. What castes were in Cape Town? Which caste is the biggest?
2. How did these castes organisations operate, what was their function?
3. How did caste matter? Was it limited to social issues or religious issues? How were social interactions affected by caste?
4. Could you please explain how the clause added into the Cape Hindu Cultural Society came about? (This clause stated that no member of the Society could belong to a caste based organisation)
5. Did this mean that caste disappeared?
6. In your view, what is the situation currently?

Discussing the formation of the two temples will begin a discussion on caste, if the participants seem comfortable and open to discussion I will then ask the pointed questions which relate specifically to caste. The discussion is structured in this fashion so that participants do not prepare their answers and hopefully this allows them to have a frank discussion, coupled with anecdotes that illustrate how caste manifests itself in the community.