

https://dspace.org/

Negotiating spaces: The role of media in perceptions of identity among Ethiopian migrants in Johannesburg: a focus on consumption patterns

Steeneveldt, Jacqueline Melanie

2007-02-14T11:25:23Z
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/1979

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Negotiating spaces: The role of media in perceptions of identity among Ethiopian migrants in Johannesburg: a focus on consumption patterns

Jacqueline Steeneveldt

Masters student (part-time)

Supervisors:
Dr. Loren Landau
Prof. Anton Harber

School of Journalism and Media Studies
University of Witwatersrand

Table of contents

A. Introduction……3

1. Setting the context

Migration in Johannesburg

B. Literature review…….7

Overview

1.Understanding identity 8

- Identity as discourse
- Identity as negotiation
- Identity as diasporic and transnational

2. Investigation media consumption 11

3. Evaluating media consumption and identity construction 12

4. Media and diasporas 14

C. Methodology……...15

Significant demographics

D. Discussion and Analysis…….19

1. Limited diversity in South African media
2. Media Consumption – beyond ethnicity
3. Imagined selves and South African media
4. Differentiated consumption in everyday life - 'ordinary consumption'
5. Media as catalyst for negotiated belonging
   - traditional or modern
   - permanent residents or eternal exiles

E. Conclusion …….32

F. Reference List ……...34

G. Appendices …… …39

A. Introduction

At the base of central Johannesburg's Jeppe Street the cacophonous hooting of taxi drivers seem to set the frenzied tone for traders selling their wares on pavements either side of the busy street. The 'neighbourhood' is a collection of high-rise buildings, connected through a maze of informal traders selling various items of clothing, fabrics and curtains. Within the buildings these mazes appear denser with seemingly identical floors where a variety of restaurants serve traditional Ethiopian dishes and coffee - here patrons chat and watch satellite television; there is a tiny, concealed record and book store, numerous fabric stores; on the rickety stairwells, notices are written in Amharic and radios play music not readily heard on South African radio stations.

The above setting is one of many which bear testimony to a vibrant and seemingly established Ethiopian community in Johannesburg. It also provides the backdrop of this paper, based on interviews and participant observation, among Ethiopian migrants living in Johannesburg. It asks how media is consumed in their daily lives and what relationship this has with their affiliations and perception of belonging, particularly in a country which is forging its own nationalist narratives.

Ethiopian migrants – as a group of individuals characterised by instability of 'place' within Johannesburg, and influenced by modernising technologies of media - illustrate as Giddens (1990) argues, how place relations are being restructured, where: 'place becomes increasingly 'phantasmogoric': that is to say the respondents' immediate locale is thoroughly penetrated by social influences quite distant from them' (Giddens 1990:19). One chief consideration in this re-evaluation of 'place' particularly is its impact on identity, as new conditions of mobility make local attachment to Johannesburg not a matter of ascribed and determined identity, but increasingly a question of choice, decision and variability (Robins & Morley 2000:347).

Unlike minority groups in metropolitan cities in other parts of the world, there is no formal manifestation of "Ethiopian" media present in Johannesburg[1], which results in a limited number, or no individuals, who refer to diasporic media to recreate or sustain a positive 'ethnic' belonging. Instead, many respondents in this study rely primarily on South African media for entertainment and information. The paper explores how in this respect consumption of local media provides narrative and visual scripts to which alternative models of personhood and lifestyles of the everyday are imagined.

The central argument shows firstly, the manner in which media is consumed amongst the respondents of this study (i.e. what media is available to them and their (in)ability to access it), that the media's integration in their lives constitutes a complex phenomenon, which is not

[1] Meaning neither any print publication nor broadcast media produced in Johannesburg, specifically targeted at the Ethiopian community.

solely influenced by ethnicity. Instead a number of individual, social and material factors also need consideration. Secondly, despite the pervasiveness of mass media in everyday life, the relationship between media and audiences is dynamic and coterminous. In this study it became evident that media does not so much mould affiliations and sense of belonging, but rather provides the social cues around which the 'imagined' can be articulated. This paper challenges the fixity which arises from essentialism[2] and argues that the respondent's affiliations and perceptions of belonging are subjective positions which are simultaneously entangled with the environment they find themselves as well as separated from it (Grossberg 2005:101). Existing tensions or ambivalences of belonging, particularly around whether the respondents can make claims to being permanent residents (regardless of de jure status) to Johannesburg, or whether they remain permanent exiles; whether they draw allegiances towards their 'traditional' backgrounds or make new claims to 'modernity' are highlighted.

As South African media (in form of television, newspapers, radio and internet) is the main source of entertainment and information, on one hand it contributes in assisting Ethiopian migrants to integrate into Johannesburg society. On the other hand, South African media may play an active part in enforcing the respondents' social exclusion and marginalization – as studies indicate negative representations of foreigners in South African media reinforce and establish xenophobic discourses[3].

The paper is divided into three main parts: literature review, methodology and discussion and analysis sections. The literature review outlines key theoretical assumptions informing migration and media studies and how these feed into identifications of belonging. The methodology aspect expounds on the method adopted to generate data for the research, mainly through in-depth interviews and observation. As a final aspect, the discussion expands on the data assembled and analyses how it relates to the theories of media, identity and migration discussed in the literature review, in order to answer the research question.

[2] Non-essentialism assumes that no identity is based on ethnicity, race or national origin. At least none which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common, or which can stabilise, fix or guarantee personal identity as one unchanging cultural belonging (Hall 2005:4). Yet there is not a total dismissal of culturally-determined difference: "distrust about essentialism in social theory should not blur our awareness of its equally pervasive presence in social life' (Herzfeld 1996:26).

[3] Reitzes and Dolan 1996; Peberty and Crush 1998, and Danson and McDonald 2000.

Setting the context

Migration in Johannesburg

In the wake of South Africa's transition from an apartheid regime to a liberal democracy, Johannesburg has seen a significant increase in its foreign born population. This mirrors global patterns where cities are the primary destinations of international migrants. The 1996 census showed that 4.8% of the Gauteng population was not born in South Africa. In 2001, this had grown to 5.4%, representing a jump from 66,205 to 102,326 people.[4] At the centre of South Africa's regional trading and cultural networks, population movements are now one of Johannesburg's most prominent demographic characteristic (Gotz and Landau 2004:13).

Far from being a homogenous mass, there are different categories of migrants and each has their own set of rights and entitlements. Landau (2003) has used the broad category 'forced migrants' to define people from refugee-producing countries regardless of their legal status as refugees or asylum seekers (Landau 2003: 10).

In addition, Legget's (2003) study found that foreigners are not the only ones moving into the cities. 68% of Johannesburg's inner city residents born in South Africa reported moving to their current household in the past five years (Landau 2004:13). This indicates that Johannesburg does not have the luxury of dealing with an already well-settled and integrated local population. Instead it is evident that much of the regional migration is circular in nature, with migrants expressing little wish to remain permanently. Apart from the challenge this poses to urban municipalities - in that migrants are still committed to lives in rural areas and use cities as temporary bases to accumulated resources for re-investment 'back home'– it has produced growing demonisation of the foreigners amongst South Africans (Crush 1997:20).

Despite the fact that South Africa re-invented itself as a new non-racial and democratic "rainbow nation", the rise in xenophobia has concurrently emerged despite numerous strides made in cultivating a constitutional and human rights culture in South Africa. Peberdy (2002: 37) argues that xenophobia (evidenced in the Aliens Control Act of 1995[5]) must be seen in the context of a nation-building project in an attempt to construct a new national identity based on citizenship and national territorial integrity. The strict control of movement of people into and out of the national territory is integral to the exercise and maintenance of state power. In addition the question of access to resources is acute, because new nation-building emphasizes development as a means to building a unified nation from a stratified society. By focusing on state resources to entitlements, further impetus is given to keeping out those who do not belong and have the 'wrong citizenship' (Peberdy 2002: 38).

[4] Stats SA in Landau, L and Gotz, G 2004. "Introduction" to Forced Migrants in the New Johannesburg: Towards a Local Government Response. Johannesburg: Forced Migration Studies Programme.

[5] Act no 76 and amended 1996 (Act No 32)

For many South Africans and residents of Johannesburg, boundaries are still very relevant, not only in a geographical sense but in Barth's conception of perceptions of social interaction. Subjectively, the boundary of South African citizenship is defined by exclusion and comparison to strangers. These characteristics are similar to nationalist mythology, where the nation is a bounded and finite entity (Conversi 1999: 574). The concerns raised by these factors are the potential for ethnic or nationalist conflict, as Conversi argues that the rise of violence has often been associated with a sense of threat and lack of security concerning the future and self-preservation of the group (Conversi 1999:574). In the South African context, 48% of the South African population at Wits' University's Forced Migration Programme felt that foreigners were a criminal threat (Landau 2004:10). However there are reverse sides to this coin, where Crush's study shows correlations between views and contact, that those with more contact with migrants are statistically more likely to have tolerant opinions (Crush 2000:128).

Recent studies by Landau (2005) reflect that unity claims articulated over Johannesburg's inner city, generate conflicts between the empirical manifestations of modernity and post-modernity[6] (Landau 2005:13). On the one hand, there are national efforts made towards nation-building and unifying its diverse populations, which is seen as a distinctly modern phenomena; whilst conversely from the migrant perspective, there are formations of 'nowhereville's', spaces which are 'in' but not 'of' South Africa, which are marked by cosmopolitanism and lives in constant transit (Landau 2005:13).

[6].Amongst its numerous interpretations, the term post-modernism suggests that facts are interpretations, constructs of individuals and groups mediated by language and culture. Post-modernism suggests positions of fragmentation, flux, no fixed identities and 'the disintegration of the notion of the coherent individual subject' (Doy 200:1).

B. Literature Review

This study is framed by the overlap between the interdisciplinary concerns of media and migration studies. As Appadurai argues, these jointly allow for an exploration of 'the *work of the imagination* as a constitutive feature of modern[7] subjectivity' (Appadurai 1996:3).

On the one hand, electronic media, as a result of new technologies, has a greater ability to transmit imagined worlds and selves (in the form of cinema, television, the internet, telephones) in the everyday social development of individuals who live in the modern world. Similarly, migrations (forced or voluntary) create instabilities of modern subjectivities because their interactions are not restricted to the confines of one bounded territory which they inhabit physically (i.e. one geographic country). Instead, there is a multiplicity of interactions across borders and as a result their identities are constructed around more than one locality. This inherent fluidity of identities can in turn challenge the traditional fixity of a particular bounded territory (Appadurai 1996:4).

Considering the influence of both migration and media on the imagination as Appadurai suggests, the proposed study assumes that the Ethiopian migrants who have moved from their home country - those who wish to return and those who chose to stay within Johannesburg - rarely formulate their plans outside of the sphere of television, radio, newsprint and the internet. The manner in which these migrants adapt to living in Johannesburg is deeply affected by the 'imagined', generated by the mass media and this often transcends the geographic space which they inhabit.

Although Appadurai's framework provides an overarching theoretical context for understanding these nascent 'imagined selves' - a representation of the local peculiarities and competing tensions that supplement how this process occurs empirically, in a city such as Johannesburg, with respondents from the Ethiopian community as audience, is needed.

Media-culture theories have oscillated between two constraints: on the one hand, there are theories which assume the powerful role of media on identities and cultures[8]; whilst others contend that it is national, ethnic or local cultures that shape media and their consumption[9].

---

[7] Modernism is understood as a concept which offers grand, finite narratives of the self; one which is framed in a coherent, fixed and absolute manner. Amongst its numerous interpretations, the term post-modernism suggests that facts are interpretations, constructs of individuals and groups mediated by language and culture. Post-modernism suggests positions of fragmentation, flux, no fixed identities and 'the disintegration of the notion of the coherent individual subject' (Doy 200:1).

[8] Media-centred theories see media as determining rather than a mediating cultural experience (Tomlison 1991:58). As a response to modernization theory's functionalist grounding, it is firmly rooted in critical political economy, questioning the structural issues of media ownership and distribution (Garnham 1990; McCheshney 1998 ; Schiller 1996).

[9] With a large emphasis on the power of audiences, Liebes and Katz (1993) study was influential in challenging the media imperialism thesis by showing differences in interpretations of the Television programme Dallas. The findings are grounded in ethnicity and culture, yet drew little attention to how ethnicity and culture themselves are shaped by other factors.

This oscillation echoes approaches in media studies: from theories that prefer powerful media effects, to theories that privilege powerful audiences.

Studies which have combined theories of media and migration - which highlight the importance of cultural influences of migration and emphasise the manner in which electronic media allow individuals to construct 'imagined worlds' in their everyday lives - have been done in other parts of the world. For example Mai (2001) delineates the process whereby young Albanians had been exposed to Italian satellite television and migrated to Italy in search of a 'modern life'. Similarly Sabry (2003) found that consumption of Western popular culture has influenced both the 'physical' and 'mental' emigration of young Moroccans to Western countries. The intended study will draw on this tradition, but it argues for, as Madianou (2005) does, a middle ground which precludes neither a powerful media nor localised cultures, but rather one which stresses the dialectical relationship between both. It is an approach which does not essentialise identities, culture or the media itself; as argued by Schlesinger: in many media studies 'identity' functions as a 'residual category' (Schlesinger in Madianou 2005:522).

In order to allow the dynamism of identity and media consumption to emerge, anthropological theories of identity and ethnicity (as discursive entities) are used, so that these can be conceptualised without being reified. In addition it draws on global media studies research, which argues for 'investigative flexibility' in the study of media audiences, in order to establish a more contextually grounded theoretical orientation, to address the unique dilemmas of localised research in relation to global issues raised by transnational media processes (Murphy and Kraidy 2003:7).

1. Understanding identity

The underlying understanding of identity in this paper is grounded in Stuart Hall's recognition of identity as relational and as process. According to Hall: 'identities are never unified, and in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular, but multiply, constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic discourses, practices and positions' (Hall 2005:4). In this instance, identity, as it relates to multiple aspects of respondents in this study will be discussed.

Identity as discourse

It is commonly assumed that identity is a unified essence made of a set of clear and stable characteristics. Yet Giddens (1991) argues "self-identity is not a distinctive trait or even a collection of traits possessed by the individual. It is the subjective self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of his or biography" (Giddens 1991:53). In this sense, identity is seen as discursive constructions made by individuals about themselves since 'there

can be no identity experience or social practice which is not discursively constructed' (Barker 1999:23). It is through a process of articulation, either linguistic or visual, that meaning is produced and identities constructed (Hall 1997:3). This is particularly noteworthy when considering how identity construction can be assessed empirically - by investigating the discourse or narratives which the respondents in this study produce about themselves; centred on the media they consume.

Identity as negotiation

While viewing identity as constantly changing, it is also built around and within the understanding of ongoing negotiations of difference and similarity. i.e. identities incorporate discourses of inclusion and exclusion. Hall (1997) argues if the notion of difference has a positive function that allows for the production of culture and identity, it can also be a 'site of danger, of negative feelings, of splitting, hostility and aggression towards the 'Other' (Hall 1997:238). This concurs with Barth's conception of 'perceptions of social interaction'. What matters here is the subjective quality of this perception rather than its objective fact (Conversi 1999: 568). Barth (1969) argues that ethnicity is a form of social organisation that results from the interaction between group and environment. As a result: 'the critical focus for investigation [becomes] the ethnic boundary that defines the group rather than the cultural stuff that encloses it' (Barth in Hutchinson 1996:79). Barth argued that ethnic group membership depended on recognition and self – acknowledgment, rather than on possessing a certain cultural inventory. In this context identities are understood as relations to others and negotiations of boundaries drawn.

The relevance of the above to the study is acknowledging that there is no given understanding of an 'Ethiopian' identity. There is a recognition that ethnicity is a social construct, but one which nevertheless has relevance. Eagleton (1990) argues: the fact that a social category is 'ontologically empty' does not mean it cannot exert an implacable political force' (Eagleton 1990:24).

Respondents in this study, construct their identities in a context in which they may feel rejected; as the boundary of South African citizenship is defined by comparison of 'South African culture' and 'Ethiopian culture' and renders the country exclusive to citizens. The naming logic in the form of '*kwerekwere'* and *'illegal alien'* reinforced the 'us-them' distinction. An investigation into media consumption, seeks to understand what relationship media has in establishing boundaries or creating new ones. Through studying media consumption, it will also become evident that this negotiation is not only an 'either/or' scenario, but that respondents are capable of assuming hybrid positions (Hall 1993), where they are obliged to 'inhabit at least two identities, to speak at least two cultural languages, and translate between them' (Hall 1993:362).

Identity as diasporic and transnational

There has been much debate about the understanding of the term diaspora, yet its origins have consistently been associated with displacement, dispersal and migrancy. In the last decade it was used to supplement minority discourse (Clifford 1997:255) and recently diasporic discourse has made a decisive shift from 'mobility' to 'connectivity', recognising its centrality to the process of communication and exchange (Tomlinson 1999:55).

Much of contemporary writing on diaspora, points to diaspora being understood as 'a whole range of phenomena that encourage multi-focal attachments, dwelling and travelling. Such identifications or affiliations - rather than identities - are ways of belonging (Hall 2005:101). Thus diasporas are not a given, but instead describe subjective points of attachment – based on belonging - to 'imagined communities' which define how individuals relate to others spatially, as entangled and separated.

In addition, Cohen (1997) has extended the 'definitional' features of diaspora to incorporate 'groups that scatter voluntarily as a result of fleeing aggression, persecution or extreme hardship' (Cohen 1997 in Tsagarousiaou 2004:55). In so doing, he emphasised the significance of 'transnationality'. The study will therefore accept this understanding of diaspora also implies 'transnational' and refers to:

> complex multidirectional flows of human beings, ideas, products – cultural and physical and to forms of interaction, negotiation and exchange, process of accumulation and cultural creativity, webs of exclusion and struggles to overcome it (Tsagarousiaou 2004:64).

The implications which this has, is that on an identity level, Ethiopian respondents occupy an interstitial space, where their identities are constructed around more than one locality. This fluidity of affiliation calls for a re-evaluation of identity based not "solely by reference to what is taken to be their 'place' but rather by the ways in which they define themselves between and across such places" (Mandaville 1999:664).

From the above discussion on identity, the study focuses on how the respondents describe and re-describe who they are. It is a focus on identity not in the singular sense, but more on how they come to identify with certain aspects of belonging in relation to those immediately around them as well as in their country of origin. In this context identities and perceptions of belonging are not seen as complete wholes, but have a relational, discursive aspect which undergoes constant negotiation, as Butler (1993) argues:

> …identifications belong to the imaginary; they are phantasmatic efforts of alignment, loyalty, ambiguous and cross-corporeal cohabitations, they unsettle the I; they are the sedimentation of the 'we' in the constitution of any I, the structuring present of alterity in the very formulation of the I. Identifications are never fully and finally made; they are incessantly reconstituted, constantly marshalled, consolidated, retrenched, contested and, on occasion compelled to give way (Butler in Hall 2005:16).

The conceptualisation of identity in the terms described above, emphasises how identities are continuously challenged by people's mobility beyond established boundaries and by the strategic and continuous re-articulation of difference across contradictory social, economic and cultural contexts. It illustrates how identities are increasingly sites of contestation and struggle between different understandings and experiences of belonging within, between and across societies.

2. Investigating media consumption

Much of the central theoretical foundations concerning the active media consumer, stem from two seminal texts: Stuart Hall's encoding-decoding model, describing the act of media reception as an active process (Hall 1973) and David Morley's *Nationwide Audience* (1980). Hall (1973) attempts to outline active consumption of media sounds and images and how these operate within the conventions of professional practices of media producers and the daily routines of consumers. Hall's study is significant in that it highlights how multiple meanings can be constructed around texts (i.e. texts are polysemic and they are open to varying degrees of interpretation) and how a particular meaning has a relationship to the social context of the consumer. Perception thus is rarely seen as purely personalised; instead audience research locates 'significant clusters' of meaning, in so doing, the various boundaries of interpretative communities can be delineated (Moores 1993: 18).

In Morley's (1980) study of viewer's decodings of a TV current affairs text, he conducted interviews with viewing groups from different levels of the educational system and from various occupational backgrounds, to draw a kind of 'cultural map' of the audience that could flesh out Hall's preliminary notes on decoding. Morley confirmed Hall's position that consumers are not passive recipients of encoded meanings and identities, and he further warned against a 'crude sociological reductionism which would take these factors to determine decoding practices in a mechanistic way (e.g. working class people, as a direct result of their class position, will decode messages in manner x)' (Morley 1981 in Moores 1993:22).

The relevance which these studies bring to the current study of Ethiopian respondents in Johannesburg is firstly, the recognition of the active media consumer and the possibilities of alternative readings of mass mediated texts, or the negotiations which occur as a result of them. Secondly, the active media consumer is not limited to the relationship between the reader and the text, but also includes 'the relationship between textual and extra-textual resources' (Livingstone 1998:189). This suggests media consumption cannot be separated from the wider social and cultural context in which it takes place.

The study will take cognisance of Tomlinson's (1991) caution against the 'media-centeredness' of media theory, which refers to 'the tendency of people working in this area to assume the cultural and ideological processes they study are at the centre of social reality' (Tomlinson 1991:58). The result sees media as determining rather than mediating cultural experience. Tomlinson warns that media messages are themselves mediated by other modes of cultural experience and urges viewing their relationship as a 'subtle interplay of mediations' (Tomlinson 1991:61). On the one hand there is media as the dominant representational aspect of modern culture, and on the other the 'lived experience' of everyday culture (Wade 1996 in Strelitz 2003:250).

Silverstone (2001) argues for the subtlety in which this process of mediation occurs:

> The notion of mediation provides a route into a concern with the delicate, but always historically and sociologically specific, ways in which public (and inevitably private) meanings emerge and merge in the socially and culturally contested spaces of everyday life (Silverstone 2001:11).

Media consumption for this study is therefore seen as an active process, which includes a degree of agency on the part of the consumer (Ethiopian respondent) and it recognises that he/she is situated within a specific cultural context of Johannesburg (i.e. socio-economic status, education, gender contexts etc).

3. Evaluating Media Consumption and Identity Construction

This study situates itself amongst studies globally where media consumption research has provided an excellent focus for grasping changing dynamics of identity formation within transnational communities – particularly in stressing the dialectical relationship between local (cultures) and the global (media), without privileging either of the two and emphasising the changing and dynamic nature of identities.

For example Gillespie's (1995) study analysed the unique use of mass media contents among Indian youth in London in order to enhance their cultural identity, finding that exposure to both British and Indian contents ensured a degree of preservation of traditional norms and values of their parents and to develop a new identity, thereby enabling them to function in the framework of British society (Adoni et al 2002: 217).

Studies such as Hargreaves and Mahjoub (1997) and Sreberny (2000) have argued against the notion of monolithic media consumption amongst immigrant communities. Similarly, Robins and Akosy (2001) have argued against a fictive unity amongst immigrant groups when consuming media. Based on a study of Turkish-speaking groups in London, they stressed that media consumption was not determined ethnically, but was determined by social circumstances.

This study draws on the conceptual and analytical framework of the above studies, which have largely been based on ethnographic studies in the communities concerned. Thus, by exploring which media Ethiopian migrants choose to engage with and the reasons they find resonance with particular texts and their contents, may confirm or refute the above studies in a South African context. Interrogating the relative importance of 'locality', Thompson (1995) argues that 'the process of self-formation is increasingly nourished by mediated symbolic materials…loosening the connection between self-formation and a shared locale' (Thompson 1995:207). When this is understood in conjunction with Hall's (1999) analysis of identity construction as choice and achieved by 'using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being' (Hall 1999:4), then an empirical investigation of the mediated materials which the respondents in Johannesburg engage with, may provide a clearer critical awareness of the factors that contribute to how they perceive themselves.

According to Storey and Turner (1999:210) identities are made through a particular context, history and routines of everyday life, thus they envisage the self thus:

> The self is a symbolic project that the individual actively constructs…out of the symbolic materials available to him/her, materials which the individual weaves into a coherent account of who he/she is , a narrative of self identity (Storey and Turner 1999:210).

In addition, an examination of the specificities of media that Ethiopian respondents are engaged with, will allow a mapping of their media environment in the inner-city of Johannesburg (i.e. what media is available to them and their (in)ability to access it); and the degree to which these 'symbolic' materials contribute to maintaining existent narratives they have concerning themselves.

By drawing on these widely accepted views of identity construction (as discourse and perceptions of difference) and media consumption (as active process and contextual) , the intricate identity negotiation between 'freedom' of a mediated choice, and the structural constraints of the socio-political environment in which Ethiopian respondents find themselves, will be demonstrated in this study. By investigating the way these individuals bring their daily life experiences to bear on acts of consuming various media texts can provide valuable insight into the way burgeoning communities draw upon media texts to re-invent their identities. It can also reveal how consumption of various and related media texts is far from being an interaction between readers and isolated media texts. As audiences, the respondents are constantly consuming texts that are cross-referring to, negating, or enhancing one another.

4. Media and diasporas

The study draws on the literature concerning media and diasporas. Tsagarousianou (2004) argues that the processes of cultural reinvention and reconstruction which the diasporic condition sets in motion 'effectively renders media technologies and diasporic media crucial factors in the reproduction and transformation of diasporic identities' (Tsagarousianou 2004:62). She argues regardless of its diversity, the media, information and communication technologies utilised by diasporas and the media they support, play an important part in the articulation of diasporic identities. In addition, they provide a binding role, providing narratives and reconfiguring networks. Mandaville says:

> Diasporic media can and should be understood as much more than simply a means by which information of interest to a given community can be exchanged, or a means for communicating images of that community to the wider society. [Indeed]…we need to understand these media as spaces of communication in which the identity, meaning and boundaries of diasporic community are continually constructed, debated and re-imagined. (2001, 169)

The existence of circulating media among refugees and migrants came to public attention in April 1999, with a magazine, *Simota* produced for Ethiopian exiles based in Johannesburg. In 1999 and 2000, refugee groups working with SABC radio producers finished a series of radio documentaries entitled *Voices of Refuge*, which was broadcast on SAfm in early 2000. In Johannesburg refugees and immigrants produce a newsletter *Botshabelo* (published by the Lawyers for Human Rights); whilst a publication called *Fugees* (produced by the Cape Town refugee centre) is circulated in Cape Town (Kabeya-Mwepu and Jacobs 2003:226). Recently a publication called *The African Diaspora* has been launched (published by the Co-ordinating Body of Refugee Communities in Johannesburg). Dayan (1998:181) proposes that even these 'smaller' media are useful in focusing on the various practices, institutions and organisations […] that link the different segments of diasporic ensembles to each other (ibid).

Mass media and these 'small' publications, though operating on different levels, interact dynamically with the experience of migrants and contribute to shaping the way they perceive themselves daily. There is also recognition that the mere existence of diasporic media does not mean that all of the groups' members have access to them, but the study seeks to investigate if the theoretical arguments above can be applied in the context of Johannesburg and its Ethiopian migrants. And if the media the respondents support will reveal any broader clues to the relationship between media and the perceptions of belonging to their home country or South Africa.

C. Methodology

The research framework adopted in this study, combines a mixed-method approach of qualitative and quantitative data collection. The quantitative aspect draws extensively on existing substantive information based on a survey administered in February 2003 by the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and Forced Migration Department and Tufts University, which included 737 respondents, where 47% were non-nationals in Johannesburg. In addition the CASE[10] survey provides a generalised overview of the foreign population in Johannesburg.

Significant demographics

There are disputes as to the numbers of migrants and refugees in South Africa, where official estimates on the number of undocumented immigrants living illegally in South Africa vary widely, ranging from a few million, to a 'phantasmogoric' 12 million. Experts regard these discrepant figures as hardly more than guesswork, reflecting the lack of tangible information from officials and state agencies (Kabeya-Mwepu and Jacobs 2003:233). On several enquiries to the Department of Home Affairs, they were unable to provide concrete information of how many Ethiopian migrants are currently living in Johannesburg.

Although, the small size of the respondents in this study is in no manner representative of the larger picture of Ethiopian migrants living in Johannesburg, nevertheless there are key parallels between in the significant demographic findings of Wits Forced Migration Programme and the sample.

All the respondents in this study all had equivalent to matric level education, yet they were either self-employed or engaged in semi-skilled occupations. This concurs with findings from the Wits Forced Migrations Programme which reveal that many forced migrants are well educated, highly skilled and ready to work. Over 22% had completed tertiary education or earned a post-graduate degree, compared to only 14% of South Africans.[11] This also concurs with studies done by CASE[12], which found that 15% of their respondents were skilled professionals, and 30% were business owners prior to their arrival in South Africa. 37% of the CASE respondents indicated that they were students prior to arrival in South Africa and almost one third worked in semi-skilled occupations. Only 3% indicated and they were unemployed prior to arrival in South Africa. In contrast to their current occupation, the number of applicants who indicated they were unemployed increased eight-fold. 52% are

[10] Belvedere, F et al 2003. National Refugee Baseline Survey: Final Report. Johannesburg: Community Agency of for Social Enquiry (CASE), Japan International Cooperation (JICS) & UNHCR

[11] Ibid

[12] Belvedere, F et al 2003. National Refugee Baseline Survey: Final Report. Johannesburg: Community Agency of for Social Enquiry (CASE), Japan International Cooperation (JICS) & UNHCR

currently engaged in unskilled occupations such as selling goods on the street, engaged in part-time jobs such as car washes or watching.[13]

As with the respondents in the CASE study, respondents in this study indicated that employment opportunities (56%) and documentation (53%), were their main area of needs, as access to documentation is directly linked to the ability to find employment and have a source of income.[14]

With regards to community involvement, the majority of respondents (who had been living in Johannesburg for more than 4 years) indicated a mixture (50%) of interaction between South Africans in their local communities. The Ethiopian Orthodox church (of which six of the respondents are active members) provided much of the interaction and contact with people from their home country. Interestingly, Ethiopian applicants in the CASE study, found that they are the least likely to interact with people from their home country. This could be due to the fact Ethiopian applicants tended to be young - usually less than 30 years old - and most of them were single (the majority came to South Africa alone). The researcher suggested that since they tend to be single and alone, it might be difficult to establish a support network.

Qualitative aspect

Based on Morley's (1992) argument that the 'ethnographic approach for studying communication rests on an ability to understand how social actors themselves define and understand their own communication practices' (1992:183), the qualitative aspect of this study involved gathering information through a series of interviews with ten Ethiopian respondents living in Johannesburg as well as observation data of how they interact with media on a daily basis in their homes and places of work.

In an initial effort to target the population of interest, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Berea, and the primary area for trading amongst Ethiopian migrants - at the base of Jeppe Street in Johannesburg - were chosen as chief sites for acquiring respondents. The method of selection was based on the willingness of the individuals to participate in the study.

The sample consists of six male and four female respondents, who have been living in Johannesburg for periods between 1 and 10 years; their ages vary between 25- 37 years.

Though the interviews covered the same issues, they were structured in an open-ended manner, giving respondents the freedom to engage conversationally and provide in-depth responses. The structure of the interviews was guided by the theoretical concerns raised in the literature review, where firstly identity construction can be assessed empirically through intermittent visits to the respondents' homes also provided observational insights into media consumption routines and interaction with media. The interviews were tape-recorded and

[13] Ibid
[14] Ibid

conducted in diverse locations throughout Johannesburg. Fieldwork started late December 2005 and continued intermittently until late January 2006.

The content of the interviews was guided by areas highlighted in the literature review, around identity (as discourse, negotiation, diasporic), media consumption (as active and contextual processes) and media consumption and identity construction. This information was used to ascertain empirically what narratives the respondents have about themselves and how they consume media (whether it be watching television, listening to the radio, reading newspapers, internet usage and their various preferences and intensity of interaction in these mediums). However this was done with the awareness of Ang (1996) who argues, media consumption in everyday life cannot be equated with distinct and insulated activities such as 'watching television'; 'reading a book'; 'listening to a record' etc. since individuals are living in an ever-present and ever-evolving media environment, by choice or by force (Ang 1996:127).

The interviews were also aimed at investigating the manner in which respondents bring their daily life experiences to bear on acts of consuming various media texts, in order to provide valuable insight into the way this burgeoning community draws upon media texts to re-invent their identities. The questions in the interviews were also designed to reveal how consumption of various and related media texts is far from being an interaction between readers and isolated media texts and show that as audiences, the respondents are constantly consuming texts that are cross-referring to, negating, or enhancing one another. (see appendix for sample interview).

There were a number of methodological and ethical issues which demand attention when conducting this sort of ethnographic exploration, though it is not in the scope of this paper to address them all here. With regards to the responses, I believe many were influenced by the presence of other family members or friends who were present at the interviews. In addition, although most the respondents spoke English, for none was it their first language; and I relied on the kindness of the respondents' own translations for some of the interviews.

It is noteworthy that one of the biggest obstacles encountered in conducting the research was the reluctance and fear on the part of many potential participants. This could be attributed to two factors, firstly that it is well documented that migrants in Johannesburg fall prey to victimisation and abuse (Landau 2004); secondly despite the length of stay Johannesburg, many do not have the required documentation to be in South Africa legally.

Locating myself

If respondents are being scrutinised through the 'academic gaze', then researchers have a methodological obligation to make themselves visible during the research process and within the 'completed' academic text (Minh-ha 1993:105). The authorial voice in this study is

framed by subjective and objective considerations i.e. as a media student, woman, living in a society undergoing democratic transformation and where 'race' (and 'ethnicity') are still being negotiated. I recognise the continued persistence of memory of the South African past, and the deliberate quest to essentialise race, ethnicity and identity:

> South Africans have been raised on identity politics; we were divided into groups with Berlin-like walls dividing us. Each group was said to have its own identity or culture…which was deemed inherent, God-given biological…essential (Steeneveld 1998:4)

My background as someone from a historically mixed race group has highlighted the complexities involved in not fitting into prescribed labels of identity. I always had the sense of trying to translate experiences straddled between allegiances of language, environments and cultures. This awareness became a narrative for highlighting how fluid these seemingly 'Berlin-like' structures are. In addition I forged identifications through the media from an early age, which provided alternatives and possibilities of being - whether it was in the form of the music of Nina Simone, images from magazines or art exhibitions or a film. This mass mediated culture provided a semblance of 'symbolic distance' (Thompson 1995:175) to the constraining conditions of my everyday life. Similarly, when observing the changing demographics of Johannesburg [15], I am curious to explore how new residents of Johannesburg, in the form of Ethiopian migrants, understand their sense of belonging (or not), and what manner if any, they draw on imaginings beyond the finite distinctions of a 'foreigner'/ 'non-foreigner' discourse.

[15] The 1996 census showed that population movements are now one of Johannesburg's most prominent demographic characteristic.

D. Discussion and Analysis

Limited diversity in South African media

Based on empirical and theoretical findings in major cities of trade and technology in other parts of the world[16], there was an expectation that Ethiopian respondents in Johannesburg in this study would reveal similar trends of consuming media, which specifically refer back home or to diasporic media, to recreate or sustain an 'ethnic' belonging. Instead, Johannesburg, considered South Africa's media hub, with an array of media possibilities to choose from, it was found that all of the respondents in this study indicated South African media provided the core reference point for information and entertainment. All ten respondents revealed access to mainstream South African media[17] - whereas only three of the respondents had regular access to satellite television. There is no local Ethiopian language media produced in Johannesburg, yet on a weekly basis a newspaper publication from Addis Abba[18], written in Amharic is available. Three of the respondents make an effort to obtain a copy regularly at a store or one of the coffee houses in Jeppe Street. These are either bought or read briefly for further circulation to the rest of the community. At this particular store there is an array of music videos, tapes, magazines and books in Amharic also available. During the fieldwork, this was the only store of its kind I encountered. Music made and produced by Ethiopian artists did prove to be the one significant medium consumed by the respondents, either in the form of DVD's or CDs. Five of the respondents had regular access to the internet, this was never in their homes and they made use of internet café facilities around the city. They used the internet mainly as a tool to maintain contact with friends and family overseas and keep abreast of news from Ethiopia. None of the respondents seemed aware of the circulating publications (*Botshabelo* and *The African Diaspora*) targeted at migrant readers.

The possible reasons for the dearth of available diasporic media can be answered around two aspects – firstly, through the conceptual issues around the restructuring of the South African post-apartheid media landscape and secondly through the socio-economic conditions in which the respondents are situated.

[16] Robins' (1996) study of Turkish diaspora in Europe; Georgiou's (2001) study of Cypriot media consumption and community identity in North London; Cunningham and Sinclair (2000) on media use by Asian diasporas in Australia; Gillespie (1995) on South Asians in Britain and Naficy (1993) on Iranian exiles; Hargreaves and Mahjoub (1997) on minorities in France.

[17] In Johannesburg, considered the country's financial hub, there are 6 daily newspapers, 6 weekly newspapers; 7 commercial radio stations; 21 Community Radio stations; 4 television national stations, approximately 70 magazine titles(excluding Afrikaans titles) Dstv (108 local and international channels).

[18] Addis Daily

Post-apartheid 'nation-building' and global commercial pressures

Emerging from a history of racial segregation and policies of forced separation, South Africa is relatively late in modern narratives of deploying culture as medium for the cultivation of an inclusive national citizenship. Cultural policy in the 'new' South Africa is shaped by the overarching goal of 'nation-building'. This goal involves a dual process with the official effort to de-politicize ethnic forms of cultural identity on the one hand, and on the other to neutralise political mobilization around ethnicity, promoting the equal respect of cultural diversity in the public sphere (Barnett 2000:53).

Barnett (2000) argues the media, particularly broadcasting, offers an example in post-apartheid South Africa as an attempt to 'shape collective stability, political order and national identity through the use of public communication systems' (Barnett 2000:234). Such attempts assumed congruence between the scales at which polity, economy and culture are organised, as a result - with the progression of technological changes, shifts in policy changes, corporate restructuring and globalisation - this congruence was placed under increasing strain. For example, increased costs for expanding African language services on radio and television were not matched by increased advertising revenues, as a result of declining listeners and viewing among high-income groups. During 1996-1997, South Africa's public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), became increasingly dependent on advertising revenue as its transformation away from the state proceeded. The result was the inability to sustain the commitments made to the multi-lingual language policy, and more market-driven policies were implemented (Barnett 2000:60). Similar patterns have emerged in the transformation of print media, where despite the limited transfer of ownership to a group of empowerment investors, ownership largely remains under the control of property-owning private individuals whose autonomy is rooted in the sphere of commodity exchange (Tomaselli 2002:144).

In a South African context where markets for media products and services are characterised by highly uneven distribution of income and unequal social relations of ownership established by dispossession under apartheid (Tomaselli 2002:137); arguments which assume that there would be a natural emergence of ethnic, regional and language-based identities to define new market bases seem farcical. In this context, although the good intentions of greater media-diversity and 'nation-building' exist, commercially-based solutions within the media continue to facilitate the production of patterns of inequality in access to media services. The relationship between advertisers and media owners ensure that media content and access will continue to be structured around the tastes and interests of social groups who constitute a commercially attractive demographic for advertisers (Barnett 2000:60).

The absence of any locally produced media targeted specifically at Ethiopian migrants not only bears testimony to the fiercely commercially driven media markets, it also highlights the

skewed representation of preferences, tastes and interests in South African media. In addition due to the cultural differences which remain bound up in inequalities, efforts to redress past imbalances proved futile, lacking inclusive measures to redistribute material resources among groups. As a result continued polarisation of issues of culture and identity remained during the 1990's (Nixon 1994:208). Nowhere is this more evident in xenophobia studies done in the media.

Xenophobia and the media

Given the growing interest in mediated public debates in South Africa since democratisation, there has been growing research into the role and impact of mass media on popular sentiment toward refugees and immigrants. The best known research produced include Reitzes and Dolan (1996), Peberty and Crush (1998) and Danso and McDonald (2000). Their findings indicate the role of the media in establishing and reinforcing a xenophobic discourse. Danso and McDonald draw on a collection of over 1200 English language newspaper clippings on migration between 1994 and 1998, and argue that the articles uncritically reproduce problematic statistics, stereotyping anti-foreigner sentiment (Mozambicans as car thieves, Nigerians as drug-smugglers), and concluded that:

> …at best the press have been presenting a very limited perspective of cross-border migration dynamics, and in the process leaving the South African public in the dark as to the real complexities at play. At worst, the press have been contributing to xenophobic sentiments in the general public by weaving myths and fabrications around foreigners and immigration (SAMP 2000: No 17)

The findings of these studies have contributed to including the media as a crucial component in 'rolling back' xenophobia. The multi-faceted initiative, The Roll Back Xenophobia campaign (RBX), was established in 1998 (organised by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), the National Consortium on Refugee Affairs (NCRA) and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), in order to combat discrimination and human rights abuses directed at foreigners. The media was challenged to influence public perception in a more nuanced manner and report more objectively and non-sensationally with regard to foreigners. However this has had little effect and pays no heed to Nixon's (1994) argument above, that reporting should ideally occur in conjunction with redistributing material resources among groups.

So apart from the absence of diasporic Ethiopian media in Johannesburg, the above research also indicates how negatively immigrants have been positioned within existing media.

Positioning respondents in South African media landscape –beyond ethnicity

The South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) divides the South African population into ten different Living Standards Measures (LSM's) as a guide for how a particular segment of the population would interact with media (SAARF:2005). The fact that this is used as the primary segmentation tool for recognising media audiences provides further evidence of embedded commercial media interests. In this scale 10 represents the most highly educated group, made up of professionals or self-employed individuals, whereas at the other end of the continuum, LSM 1, approximately two-thirds of this group have no more than 'some' primary school education, literacy levels are below average and an estimated 41 % of this group is unemployed.

If the respondents from this study were to be incorporated into this measure[19], they would reflect a rather knotty LSM positioning. As a result of poor employment opportunities afforded migrants, even though all respondents have secondary education levels and three have tertiary education, they are not able to sustain a lifestyle afforded to many South Africans with the same level of education. Only seven of the respondents are employed and at a semi-skilled level i.e. as hairdressers, waiters, low-level traders.

The implication of this for media consumption is that as a result of a higher education levels and a high degree of urbanisation, most of the respondents showed an engagement with media in a manner that reflects that of many middle class South Africans (literacy levels, degree of urbanisation, etc) at approximately the LSM level of 7, yet their economic realities are more aligned with South Africans with lower LSM levels.

This disjuncture is further complicated when referring to Staubhaar's (1991) study of media consumption practices in Latin America. In his study he coined the term 'cultural proximity' to describe the desire of lower classes to consume nationally or locally produced media that are more reinforcing of traditional identities. He further observed that this desire for 'cultural proximity' may not be as strong for elites, who seem much more internationalised (Straubhaar 1991:51). Strelitz (2003) in his study of consumption amongst South African youth in Grahamstown, argues that Straubhaar does not clarify what constitutes 'cultural proximity' and suggests that it could rather be used as is a descriptive term; referring to language use, the narrative construction, thematic concerns of the text. Strelitz showed how for rural, black relatively poor, and ill-educated South Africans, local music had a strong resonance, while for white, urban, well educated and relatively affluent South Africans, the opposite was true (Strelitz 2003:239). Ascertaining areas of 'cultural proximity' in media consumption amongst the respondents proved ambiguous as a result of their irresolute

[19] No formal LSM measure has been established specifically for any 'minority or ethnic group' – telephonic SAARF enquiry February 2005.

material status in Johannesburg but also as a result of the degree of differentiation in preferences between the respondents themselves.

Imagined selves and South African media

On the one hand interviews with the respondents confirmed preferences for locally produced television shows, particularly soap operas such as *Isidingo (*a local African drama set on a goldmine)*, Backstage (*youth drama set around events at a local drama school) and *Generations* (local drama set in a South African advertising agency) - as opposed to international options of *Days of Our Lives*, the *Young & The Restless* and so forth):

> Kassahun: I like the school life (of *Backstage*), it's the sweetest life for me. It will teach you a lot of things like how to rule certain behaviour. Like when you come downtown to the shop… someone will say *makhetu*, (traditional Ethiopian coffee) soon after another will say *makhetu,* before I realise I have so many orders on the table… So how will I be able to manage that? I have to be quick, keep calm and polite. Then I think back to *Backstage* and I remember how to administer, how to communicate with people… it teaches one many things. I also like Kekhetso – she can be like two different people. I have clients, some will say such rubbish to you! So how do react? You just have to keep a straight face! Like in *Backstage* is teaches me a lot of things.
>
> Gettachew: I try never to miss an episode (of *Generations).* I like watching the glamorous lifestyles –my favourite characters are Queenie and Karabo – they always look so smart and professional. Since I've been watching, I've noticed how my English has improved – it also teaches me things about love and relationships.

However, this resonance with locally produced material does not necessarily concur with Straubhaars' original definition of 'cultural proximity'- suggesting that the respondents are drawn to the material in the soap operas because they "reflect or reinforce traditional identities" (Straubhaar 1991:51). Rather, the interviews show respondents rely on an 'empiricist' understanding of realism (Ang 1982:36)[20], where they seek a literal resemblance between the fictive world of the text and of the world as they experience it.

The images and characters seen in the soap operas, tie in well with their original imagining of South African society and act as confirmation that 'it is the most developed country in Africa'.

> Abel: I remember seeing South African students at our college in Zimbabwe. They gave the impression that they came from wealth - even as students they all were driving their own cars. From time to time, whatever you see that's quality, you hear nice music and you ask where it's from and then you hear - it is from South Africa.
>
> Betty: People living in Addis gave me the impression that overseas life is very glamorous and they encouraged me to want to experience that for myself. When these people left and came back to the country I saw how their lives changed, the way they dress, the way they do things was better. I didn't see Ethiopia as a developed country –

[20] Ang argues judgements are made about the text, in which 'an 'unrealistic' rendering of social reality (however that is defined is 'bad' ' (Ang 1983:36).

> but South Africa, I imagined that it was more developed than any other African country, when I saw the pictures of the buildings and highways.

These comments concur with research done by Mai (2005) arguing, that Italian television played an important role in the emergence of new individualised and 'migratory' Albanian identities (Mai 2005: 545). On the one hand, through the consumption of South African soap-operas, South Africa is associated with a utopian understanding of 'development' in terms of freedom and easy-to-obtain material plenty. On the other hand, South African television watching establishes itself as a key cultural formation within the Ethiopian socio-cultural landscape.

The resonance with local media could also reflect the desire to incorporate South African middle-class values, where the ritual enjoyment of the soap operas, as with that of evening national news bulletins, serve to confirm, even momentarily, a sense of belonging to a shared South African culture. In addition, as seen in Kassahun and Gettachew's responses, these soaps represent patterns for future behaviour in life in an urban environment and they use the programmes to negotiate their own personal situations and interactions with others. The soap operas provide the narrative and visual scripts to which alternative models of personhood, lifestyles and regimes of everyday life are imagined; even if the respondents' economic barriers inhibit that attainment.

The 'imagined' selves which have been articulated around South African media draws further attention to a number of interesting points, firstly that there is a degree of agency which exists in migrant communities, as opposed to the victimisation thesis portrayed in the xenophobia studies. This demonstrates as Appadurai (1996:7) argues that 'the consumption of mass media throughout the world often provokes resistance, irony, selectivity and in general *agency'*. Not that there is no awareness of the xenophobia present in the media for respondents; as indicated by their responses when probed about the portrayal of foreigners in the media:

> Natinel: It does not make one happy. People think we (immigrants) come here to take their jobs. In one way they are right, but most of the time we bring something good, service to the economy.

> Frewenny: They [the media] always think the wrong thing - they never think that you [as an immigrant] can do something good.

There was an immediate reaction on the part of respondents to the blatant depiction of foreigners in these terms. They referred to the same 'us/them' markers as those used in the media. However the respondents also displayed a degree of selectivity and choice in not allowing these views to be the overriding determinant of their own experience or sense of belonging to Johannesburg or the broader South African society.

Secondly, through the respondents' consumption of South Africa media and interaction with xenophobic discourse, they help highlight a noteworthy theoretical aspect of identity, which Hall refers to as 'suturing'. To this effect Hall argues:

> Identities are, as it were, the positions which the subject is obliged to take up while always 'knowing' that they are representations, that representation is always constructed across a 'lack', from the place of the Other, and thus can never be adequate – identical to the subject processes which are invested in them. The notion that an effective suturing of the subject to subject-position requires not only that the subject is 'hailed' but that the subject invests in the position, means that suturing has to be thought of as an articulation, rather than a one-sided process (Hall 2005:6).

In this instance, on the one hand, the foreigner/citizen discourse is hailed by the xenophobic media as not only relevant, but as the primary and perhaps even exclusive mode of interaction between citizen and foreigner. However on the other, this dynamic is not afforded equal significance in the personal experience of migrants themselves with the media. Instead, other aspects which create subjectivities (i.e. of identification with a particular soap-opera character) are hailed as more significant in their interaction with media.
The consumption of South African media then does not play an active part in enforcing the respondents' social exclusion and marginalization as initially anticipated it would, but rather shows the multiple ways media can be interpreted.

Differentiated consumption within everyday 'ordinary consumption'

Ang (1996) argues, media consumption in everyday life cannot be equated with distinct and insulated activities such as 'watching television'; 'reading a book'; 'listening to a record' etc. since individuals are living in an ever-present and ever-evolving media environment, by choice or by force (Ang 1996:127). Thus media consumption should be conceptualised as an ever proliferating set of heterogeneous and dispersed, intersecting and contradicting cultural practices, involving an indefinite number of multi-positioned subjects: 'everyone is constantly exposed to a variety of media and forms and participates in a range of events and activities' (Grossberg 1988:20). All respondents in this study confirmed this argument that media forms an integral part of the routines and rituals of everyday life, and constantly interrelated with other activities such as talking, working, driving, or even doing housework. For example,

> Betty: The first thing I do in the morning, I switch on the television to watch SABC 2's morning live – before I even go to pray. Once out of bed, I listen to the news as I get dressed and prepare for work. I love news, I think it's important, what if I miss something? What if someone announces: tomorrow don't go into the city, and you get yourself into deep trouble. (laughs)

Similarly:

> Abel: My radio is always on, listening to 702 (local talk radio station). Sometimes when I can't sleep at night, I just plug in my earphones not to disturb my wife and listen…until I fall asleep.

So the term 'media consumption' is multifarious and includes differentiated, conglomerate activities and experiences (Ang 1991:323). Since media consumption takes place in the 'complex and contradictory terrain, within which people live out their everyday lives' (Grossberg 1988:25) – no two men or women (even if they are both within the same Ethiopian community), will have exactly the same experiences in the 'ever-shifting kaleidoscope of cultural circulation and consumption' (Radway 1998:361). A number of factors that run across gender, marital status, length of stay in South Africa, etc underpin their experience of media texts and illustrate that despite the shared common traits, the respondents do not constitute a homogenous group. Two scenarios during fieldwork highlight this point:

* Frewenny is the only respondent living in a gated suburb with her South African husband and their eighteen month old son. She has lived in Johannesburg for the past eight years, where her living room provides a communal space for regular visits from other Ethiopian friends. During one such visit, Ejigahu and Natinel were roasting coffee beans they had recently obtained from Addis Abba over a portable coal oven. Throughout this visit, the television remained on mute (tuned on the Sky channel) with the women only occasionally glancing at its changing images. Greater interest was bestowed on humming along to the music on the radio in the background, guarding the toddler from toppling the tiny coffee cups on the in the middle of the room. At one point, the conversation centres on Natinel's plans for future travel to Canada:

> Frewenny: Most of the time we talk about how to emigrate somewhere and get a better life (laughs). It's true, I have lots of friends who came from Kenya, they came here, went to London and finally the USA. We always want to go, go, place, place, we can never be happy.
>
> Ejigahu: Maybe it's because we really want to stay in Ethiopia. Ester[21] sings - she's also worried about travelling because there's fighting at home. She loves Ethiopia can you hear she says, '*I'm eating the food, but I'm still hungry, I'm wearing the clothes, but I'm still cold, I'm playing with the people, but I'm still alone*.

The interaction which these women share, is ritualized in their everyday lives: where activities such as watching television and listening to music, provides a backdrop for other activities which tie their sense of being Ethiopian – such as nostalgically longing for Ethiopia and discussing possible travel. Their shared attachment to their country of origin appears sacred during these visits, which preserve their 'imagined belonging' and are a possible salve to the challenges they face elsewhere. Yet it should be highlighted that it is only an aspect of their experience with media.

[21] Ester Awoke is a renowned singer from Ethiopia.

* Conversely, in the inner city of Johannesburg another form of ritualised media consumption takes place. In a small makeshift coffee shop the clientele are predominantly male, drifting in and out, drinking coffee, eating traditional Ethiopian dishes and playing pool in the pervasive presence of a big screen television in the corner. The television is usually a focal point of debate, based on the preferences the clients have for a particular channel. On one particular afternoon it was tuned into the History channel, depicting a documentary about the terrorist bombings in New York.

> Ash: Do you know why so few Ethiopians died in that event? If you get an old calendar, you'll see it was because the Ethiopians were celebrating their New Year - most were at home. It was divine intervention man!
>
> Kassahun: You're right, it was the first day I arrived in South Africa, I remember watching it at the airport in Addis and forgot about it when I got to Johannesburg.

Media consumption in this particular setting has diverse dimensions, yet what characterises this scenario is the highly ritualised nature of media use as public activity. Repeated patterns, planned viewing (i.e. of a sports event) and interpersonal talk characterise media consumption here. The men freely comment on news stories, offering opinions, yet there are also often symbolic references to Ethiopia. It is the place where they were born and where some relatives and friends live, so even in their viewing, they renew these ties with their past.

It could be argued, as a result of unavailability, or no formal manifestation of 'Ethiopian media' in Johannesburg which overtly seeks to 'reinforce a sense of belonging in a community' (Georgiou 2004:54), that more subtle clues in the way respondents consume media in their everyday lives, nevertheless provide spaces for articulating and strengthening their imagined 'Ethiopian' belonging as the two scenarios have illustrated.

These subtleties of consumption also highlight the heterogeneous ways media is consumed within a particular community. It concurs with findings in the work of Robins and Aksoy (2001), who have argued against the fictive unity with which immigrant groups are often understood. Their fieldwork among Turkish-speaking groups in London for instance, stressed media consumption is not determined ethnically, but rather socially (2001:287). Echoing the work of Scannell (1996), who stressed the pleasure Turkish audiences take out of the consumption of television, the respondents in this study, associated media consumption with its ordinariness, familiarity and dailiness (2001:292).

In such a context, one has to accept contingency as posing the ultimate limit for one's understanding – where historical specificity is the only ground on which continuities and discontinuities in the ongoing but unpredictable articulation of a specific Ethiopian identity in media consumption can be traced. Thus the uses of media and their integration in the

respondents' daily lives constitute a complex process involving a number of parameters – material, social and individual - these extend beyond ethnicity.

Media revealing areas of ambivalences of belonging

This aspect of the discussion seeks to highlight tensions or ambivalences of belonging, which arose from the respondents' media consumption during the fieldwork, firstly around areas of modernity and tradition; and secondly, whether respondents are living as permanent residents in Johannesburg or 'eternal' exiles.

Hybrid intersection of modern and traditional

When responding to questions as to how the respondents saw themselves - as either 'modern' or 'traditional' – as reflected by their consumption preferences – the majority occupied an ambivalent hybrid space, articulating their identities at a juncture between these two competing discourses. Kraidy (1999) describes a similar phenomenon in his research into the ways in which cultural identities are constructed by Christian Maronite youth in Lebanon: "an overriding concern among my interlocutors was their inability and unwillingness to exclusively belong to one or the other of what they saw as two irreconcilable worldviews" (1999: 464). The consumption of American television in the local cultural space of Christian Maronite youth both reflected and helped these young people to construct hybrid identities – caught in between the 'West' and the "Arabs', modernity and tradition.

The process of simultaneous identification with two very different cultural traditions was evidenced in my interviews with several respondents. Those who attended the traditional Ethiopian Orthodox church and come from conservative family values, felt the continuous oscillation between different sets of cultural expectations. For example, Gettachew feels incredibly proud of his traditional Ethiopian culture, as it serves a protection from the temptations of the 'modern', yet he recognises there are the influences of the media which seem to be saying the opposite of what is required:

> It (his culture) keeps us from many things, like sex without marriage, if I bring a baby home, without marriage, my mother will kick me out. You cannot compare it, is totally different. When we see TV-Africa, the changes in the young generation changes - they wear open things, short skirts….all the Ethiopians complained and the government decided that the channel should close. I heard, I did not see, that immediately after one year the channel closed. The people said: "Look what our children, what they are learning from this media." They [the younger generation] don't want the culture to catch or follow them. I see my younger brother and sister I see how they've changed, it's the media. My mom shouts at my brother because he braids his hair. She says only women do that, not men. They want to be different from the culture. Even the words that they speak, the language is better because they watch and they listen to the radio, Y-fm and start to talk like that.

In contrast with the high esteem he regards his traditional, conservative family values; he does not deprive himself of experiences associated with the 'big city' such as regularly visiting nightclubs with his South African friends on the weekends – where he consumes alcohol and smokes (which are traditionally forbidden). As a consequence, there are affiliations which are simultaneously entangled with the environment he find himself, as well as separated from it. This experience is a reminder of Fiske's idea that subjectivities are nomadic and that individuals realign their 'social allegiances into different formations…according to the necessity of the moment' (Fiske 1989: 24). Gettachew offers an example of this ambivalence particularly related to the spirit of generosity among the Ethiopian community when offering to share meals, paying for transport; he prefers the South African customs of paying for oneself:

> I like that kind of way. For Ethiopians it is too difficult. If you are Ethiopian, you are always part of a group, one must always consider the needs of a whole lot of other people. It can be difficult.

Similarly, media consumption is used as a boundary to compare, contrast, judge and evaluate cultural differences of 'modern' and 'traditional' which exist between members of a particular group. Abel highlights a term used to refer to the modern generation – *findata* - or the 'explosive ones' he has seen in a music video a family member from Ethiopia sent to him:

> Abel: These are the rappers, hip-hop guys who have been influenced by Western media. They have little respect for women and elders. The Amharic they speak, I can't understand it because it's full of this vulgar language. I think it also comes from the political climate – where to be contentious is seen as part of democracy. Being disrespectful is "hip". Even the music in the shebeens are changing, they use traditional guitar as an accompaniment to vulgar lyrics.

As much as Abel describes these 'undesirables', he nevertheless has provided cues of his own relational negotiation of the present with that of his memories of how the shebeens used to be, growing up in Addis Abba. In the same way Betty shares how a new generation of Ethiopian women she meets in the hair salons have more abrasive, forthright manners, in their styles of dressing and speech, yet lacking in ambition:

> Betty: Everyone's watching television, the radio – they want to copy everything they see. I've seen these younger ladies, who don't want to work hard, they just want to be pretty. When I arrived, we were concerned about direction and taking responsibility for our lives. I remember I didn't even care about my hair and fancy hairstyles. I just tied it up and covered it under a scarf. But these new girls, they came into the country at a better time – all they want is to migrate further through a boyfriend - to go to Canada or Mexico. They don't seem to have a plan – they only care about seducing men and getting money.

Permanent residents of Johannesburg or eternal exiles

When respondents were asked about their sense of belonging to their home country, it was Kassahan who particularly outlined a fertile affiliation through his consumption of music by Ethiopian musicians he had collected over the years. His favourite singer Teddy Afro, 'plays music that most Ethiopian people can relate to' and he relates the narrative of one of his favourite songs:

> Kassahun: He sings about a guy whose girlfriend was asked to leave the country [Ethiopia] by the government. She is forced to stay in Eritrea, although she knows no-one there. The best part of the song is when he sings about the time those two will be re-united. Most of his music is symbolic, talking to the rulers and government of both sides. They are fighting each other, but people are starving and dying. I love that.

For Kassahun, this song has unique resonance because of his personal experience of being forced out of Ethiopia. His interaction with and enjoyment of this music seems to fuel a permanent state of 'homesickness', where the longing to return is tinged with the recognition that this may never materialise because of the political border disputes between the two countries:

> Imagine I'm here now in South Africa, I can move around freely, stay as long as they will have me in the country. But think of the people there. I'm a half-caste, my father is Eritrean, my mother is Ethiopian. How can they expect me to take sides? How can you fight your own motherland? These people, I ate with them, I danced with them, I had fun with them…..I have to keep running away from there.

His experience also outlines the jealous condition that Edward Said (2000) suggests, that there is no fixed homeland to which one can attach loyalty, so where citizens of nation-states have this assurance, the exile's experience is one of insecurity. This insecurity of place allows Kassahun's conversation to be peppered with lyrical references, which not only indicates a continual working through of his attachments which music helps to create, but he displays a subjectivity that transcends the confines of the geographical space in which he finds himself, and into the realm of the imagination where he can identify with others who have similar experiences (Appadurai 1990:194):

> '*I'm thirsty, for love, I'm thirsty for twurge (it's a traditional drink mixture of barley and honey), I'm thirsty for pure water, I'm hungry for my food.'* – That is Gigi, I listen to her late at night before bed. Most of the time it makes me cry because I don't want to go out of my country, somebody pushed me.

Conversely, when relaying experiences of Johannesburg, these are neither negative nor indicative that there has been a resistance to acculturation with the community around him:

> I'm feeling at home. I'm comfortable here. I can stay as long as I want to stay. I'm working hard, trying to make something, so it's home. Where I'm staying now, there is a White guy living in no.3, an Indian man and Coloured lady are staying in no.5 and down in no. 1 are other Ethiopians. I celebrated three holidays over the Christmas season, those people inviting me over to share their celebrations.

Kassahun's experience echoes that of other respondents, showing that on an identity level, respondents occupy an interstitial space, where their identities are constructed around more than one locality. Displaced from their homelands, they become de-territorialised and through consumption of music from their homeland, a new way of 're-territorialising' and 're-imbedding' their identities in other imaginings of space occurs (Lull 1995:159). Hall sees this as operating 'in the terrain of the post-modern', which is an extremely contradictory place (1997:184).

Several of the respondents also articulated attachments and loyalties to Johannesburg which were quite positive, seeing it as place where they have achieved a degree of personal maturity and growth:

> Gettachew: I like Johannesburg, it feels like home, when I came from Ethiopia when I was 16, most of my adult life up to now, I've experienced here. When I go away, I miss Johannesburg. My life is here, I did not learn anything about life in Ethiopia, but I here I learnt responsibility, finding a job, many things…independence.

Likewise, Betty articulates her understanding of 'home' to imply Johannesburg, where she describes her former life in Addis Abba as being 'spoon-fed' and sheltered because of her protective family environment:

> Betty: I was like a baby. When I came here, you are responsible for yourself, everything! I learnt more because I'm alone. That side is a family place but it's not a place to grow. I feel that I'm from here.

Her Ethiopian heritage is not a point of embarrassment or shame and she admits that many South Africans have 'mistaken' her for being South Africa:

> Betty: I tell people this is my home, they tease me and tell me I think I've become too civilized here. It's not about that, it's more about the kind of lifestyle you choose. They say Betty you are not even really black.

Betty demonstrates how her sense of being incorporated into South African society is based on factors which are chosen - 'the kind of lifestyle'- rather than an essentialist ethnic category of being 'Ethiopian'. Her adaptation and exposure to her environment, informed by the media, demonstrates the mixture of agency and self-discovery which challenges locals to interact with her on another level.

E. Conclusion

The individual narratives emerging from Ethiopian respondents around media in this study, differed considerably from the expectations raised in the theoretical literature, on a number of levels. Firstly, the absence of overt consumption of an 'ethnic' media allowed tangentially for an indirect assessment of the extent to which local South Africa media is skewed to limited tastes and preferences. In addition it highlighted the paradox of deploying cultural policies (through the media institutions) as instruments of nation-building in post-apartheid South Africa, at the same time that state agencies are relinquishing effective control over cultural production, distribution and consumption, as a result of commercial pressures. It argued that despite the aspirations of the nation-states' apparatus of participatory citizenship and diversity, the majority of South African citizens - as well as Ethiopian migrants' tastes and interests - will continue to be excluded in an environment governed by market-based imperatives (Barnett 2000:64). The nation-building project is thus rendered futile, as cultural differences remain bound up in inequalities particularly when measures aimed at redistributing material resources among groups are not addressed (Nixon:1994:208). As a result continued polarisation of issues of culture and identity remain. This also shed light on the reasons for the xenophobic discourses found in the media.

In addition, (in)accessibility and consumption of this restricted media palette, reflect the structural location within the socio-political landscape in which respondents find themselves - particularly as South African media follows the global trend of creating a stronger commercial ethos and conceptualising their audiences as consumers first, rather than as citizens. In this instance media consumption is not primarily shaped by ethnicity alone.

The study also contributes to a growing body of research which explores the cultural aspects of migration and media. More specifically, it assists in showing how a minority culture, such as the Ethiopian migrant community, is evolving around a consumption of South African media in Johannesburg; which rather than enforcing the respondents' social exclusion and marginalization, aids in establishing new boundaries of belonging and assisting respondents to imagine new ways of interacting in their day to day. This confirms that the use of mass media is considered a form of social action, which has implications for one's identity (Adoni, et al 2002: 417).

The study's findings also confirm Tsagarousianou's (2004) argument that diasporic media effectively provides the raw material for and facilitates the construction of common experiential frames among their audiences thus being in a position to play a crucial role in processes of social group integration and identification as well as of legitimation or deligitimation of relations of power and social hierarchies (Tsagarousianou (2004:63).

Identities – sense of belonging - as seen in the arguments above are located in multiple and situated sites and contexts. What is significant, is in the context of Johannesburg, Landau (2005) argues that non-nationals depict fragmentary lives, which are in constant transit (2005:13). This superfluity and dissolving of boundaries stimulated by globalisation (Mbembe 2004, Conversi 1999) is in direct contrast with the new found attachment which the city's new, black population has to the soil and their sense of nationalism. This instability has implications which are articulated by Malkki:

> [Forced] migrants are the leftovers – an anomaly – in an attempt to create nations. The (migrant) threatens the 'national order of things' by being a 'matter out of place'. By belonging neither here nor there, (migrants) become the residue that threatens to topple the established symbolic order (Malkki in Turner 2004: 229).

With their potential to cross borders and unique ways of interacting with media, Ethiopian respondents demonstrate how boundaries can be undermined, territories subverted on a daily basis, creating new spaces of belonging.

What this study has shown is that the juncture between media and migration, which are both empirically grounded fields, also allows for fertile theoretical analysis, as they both recognise the work of the *imagination*. This is useful for conceptualising creative ways to adjusting a changing urban landscape for policy makers. Appadurai has argued that mass mediation and trans-national mobilization have broken the monopoly of autonomous nation states. It is the imagination, in its collective forms that creates ideas of neighbourhood and nationhood (Appadurai 1996:7). By mapping how media is consumed and trans-national identities of these Ethiopian respondents, more articulate understandings are obtained of peoples who are essentially 'a matter out of place'.

Reference list

Adoni, H & Mane, S. 1984. "Media and the social construction of reality" in *Communication Research* 11, 323-340.

Adoni, H, Cohen, A and Caspi, D. 2002. The Consumer's choice: Language, media consumption and hybrid identities of minorities. *Communications* (27) 411-436.

Ang,I.1982. *Watching Dallas and the melodramatic imagination*. London. Routledge.

Ang, I.1991. *Desperately seeking the Audience*. London. Routledge.

Ang, I. 1990. Culture and communication: towards an ethnographic critique of media consumption in the transnational media system. *European Journal of Communication*. 5 (2-3), 239-260.

Ang, I. 1996*: Living Room Wars*. London and New York. Routledge.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation*. London Public Worlds.

Barnett. C. 2000. 'Governing cultural diversity in South African Media Policy'. *Journal of Media and Cultural Studies.* 14 (1): 51-66

Barker, C. 1999. *Television, Globalisation and cultural identities*. Buckingham and Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Bhatia, S & Ram, A. 2001. Rethinking 'acculturation' in relation to diasporic cultures and postcolonial identities. *Human Development*. 44 (1) 1-18.

Belvedere, F et al 2003. National Refugee Baseline Survey: Final Report. Johannesburg: Community Agency of for Social Enquiry (CASE), Japan International Cooperation (JICS) & UNHCR

Conversi, D.1999. "Nationalism, Boundaries, and Violence." *Millennium* 28:553-584

Chambers, R.1993. "Hidden Losers: The impact of Rural Refugees and Refugee Programs on Poorer Hosts" in *Refugee Aid and Development Theory and Practice*. Westport. Greenwood Press.

Clifford, J 1997. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cohen, R.1997. *Global diasporas*: An introduction. Seattle. University of Washington Press.

Collins, R. 1990. *Culture, communication and national identity.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Crush 1997. "Covert Operations: Clandestine Migration, Temporary Work and Immigration Policy in South Africa' *SAMP policy series* no.1 March 1997.

Crush, J 2000. "The dark side of democracy: Migration, Xenophobia and Human Rights in South Africa." *International Migration*. 38:103-131

Cunningham, S & Sinclair, J.2000. *Floating Lives: The Media and Asian Diasporas*. St Lucia, Australia: University of Queensland Press.

Danso, R and McDonald, D.A. 2000. "Writing Xenophobia: Immigration and the Press in Post-Apartheid South Africa." Cape Town *SAMP*, Series No 17.

Dolan, C and Reitzes, M.1996. "The insider story: Press Coverage of Illegal Immigrants and Refugees, April 1994-September 1995". Centre for Policy Studies, Research Report. No 48, April.

Doy, G. 2000. *Black Visual Culture. Modernity and Post-modernity*. I.B. Taurus. New York.

Eagleton, T. 1990. "Irony and commitment' in Nationalism*, Colonialism and Literature*. (Eds) Said, E and Jamerson, F. Minneapolis. Minnesota Press.

Fiske, J. 1989. *Understanding popular culture*. Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Garnham, Nicholas. 1990. *Capitalism and Communication: Global Culture and the Economics of Information*. (ed) Fred Inglis. London. Sage.

Georgiou, M. 2000. 'Beyond the domestic: constructing ethnic identities and media consumption in the public ethnic space: the case of the Cypriot Community Centre in London. *Gazette* 63 (4).

Geertz, C. 1973. *The interpretation of culture*. New York: Basic Books.

Giddens, A. 1990. *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge. Polity Press.

Giddens, A. 1991. *Modernity and Self-identity: Self and society in the Late Modern Age*. Cambridge. Polity Press.

Gillespie, M. 1995. *Television, Ethnicity and Cultural Change*. London/New York. Routledge.

Grossberg, L. 2005. 'Identity and Cultural Studies: Is that all there is?' in Hall, S. *Questions of Cultural Identity.* Sage. London.

Hall, S. 1993. Culture, Community, nation. *Cultural Studies*, 7 (3), 349-363.

Hall, S. 1997. Encoding/decoding. Reprinted in Gray, A et al. *Studying culture: An introductory reader.* London. Arnold

Hall, S. 1997. 'The Local and the Global: Globalisation and Ethnicity'. In *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation and Postcolonial Perspective*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.

Hall, S. 1997. *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. London. Sage.

Hall, S. and Du Gay, P. 2005. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London. Sage.

Hargreaves, A & Mahjoub, D. 1997. 'Satellite television viewing among ethnic minorities in France'. *European Journal of Communication*. 459-77.

Herzfeld, M. 1996. *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State*. London. Routledge.

Hutchinson, J. 1996. 'Ethnic groups and boundaries', Barth, F in *Ethnicity.* Oxford. Oxford University Press

Hobson, D. 1982. *Crossroads: The drama of soap opera*. London. Methuen.

Kabeya-Mwepu, P and Jacobs, S. 2003. 'Fugees: African Immigrants, Media and the New South Africa' *in Shifting Selves: post-Apartheid Essays on Mass Media, Culture and Identity*. Cape Town. Kwela Books

Landau, L and Jacobsen, K .2003. 'Forced Migrants in the New Johannesburg' in Forced Migration Working Paper Series #6

Landau, L 2004. . 'The Laws of (In) hospitality: Black Africans in South Africa'. FMSP Working Paper #7. http://migration.wits.ac.za/landauwp2004.pdf

Landau, L. 2005. 'Transplants and transients: Nativism, Nationalism and Migration in Inner-city Johannesburg'. FSMP Working Paper # 19. http://migration.wits.ac.za

Livingstone, S. 1996. 'Audience reception' in *Mass Media and Society*. Curran, J and Gurevitch, M (eds). London. Arnold.

Lull, James. 1995. *Media, Communication, Culture*: A Global Approach. New York: Columbia.

Madianou, M. 2005. 'Contested communicative spaces: rethinking identities, boundaries and the role of the media among Turkish speakers in Greece. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies. 31* (3). p251 (21).

Mai, N. 2001. 'Italy is Beautiful': the role of Italian television in the Albanian migratory flow to Italy. in *Media and Migration: Constructions of Mobility and Difference*. King, R and Wood, N (eds.) 95-109. London: Routledge.

Mai, N. 2005. "The Albanian diaspora-in-making: Media, migration and social exclusion." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.31.3. pg 543 (19).

Mandaville, P. 1999. 'Territory and Translocality: Discrepant Idioms of Political Identity'. *Millennium* 28: 653-673.

Malkki, L, 2004. "Under the gaze of big nations: Refugees, Rumours and the International Community in Tanzania" in Turner, S. *African Affairs*. Vol. 103.pg 227-247.

Minh-ha, T. 1993. 'The totalizing quest of Meaning' in *Theorizing Documentary ,* Renov, M. New York. Routledge.

Mbembe, A & Nuttal, S. 2004. "Writing the world from an African Metropolis" in Public Culture. Vol. 16 (3): 347-372.

McChesney, R and Herman. 1998. 'The Political Economy of Global Communications' from McChesney, R et al: *Capitalism and the Information Age. The political economy of the global communication revolution*. New York. Monthly Review Press.

Morley, D & Robins, D. 1995. *Spaces of Identity: Global media, electronic landscapes and cultural boundaries*. London and New York. Routledge.

Moores, S. 1993. *Interpreting Audiences: The Ethnography of Media Consumption*. London. Sage.

Murphy, P & Kraidy, M. 2003. *Global Media Studies: Ethnographic perspectives*. London. Routledge.

Naficy, H. 1993. *Home, exile, homeland: film, media and the politics of place*. New York, London. Routledge.

Nixon, R. 1994. *Homelands, Harlem and Hollywood: South African culture and the world beyond.* London. Routledge.

Peberdy, S et al. 2004. Migrants in the City of Johannesburg. *SAMP* report for City of Johannesburg.

Peberdy, S. 2002. 'Imagining Immigration: Inclusive Identities and Exclusive Policies in Post 1994 South Africa' *Africa Today*. Vol. 48:15- 34.

Radway, J. 1988. 'Reception Study: Ethnography and the problems of dispersed audiences and nomadic subjects' *Cultural Studies* 2 (3) 259-276

Robins, K. 1996. 'Interrupting identities: Turkey/Europe' in Hall, S & du Gay, P in *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London. Sage.

Robins, K and Morley, D. 2000. "Reimagined communities? New media, new possibilities" in *The Media Reader: Continuity and transformation.* Mackay, H and O' Sullivan, Tim (Eds). London. Sage.

Robins, K and Aksoy, A. 2001. 'From spaces of identity to mental spaces: lessons from Turkish-Cypriot cultural experience in Britain'. *Journal of Ethnic Migration Studies*. 27 (4):685-711.

SAARF (South African Advertising Foundation) 2005. AMPS 2005: Technical report. (July-Dec). Johannesburg: SAARF

Said, E. 2000. *Reflections on exile and other literary and cultural essays.* London. Sage.

Safran, W.1991. 'Diaspora's in Modern Societies: myths of Homeland return' *Diaspora* 1(1): 8-99.

Sabry, T. 2003. *Exploring Symbolic Dimensions of Emigration, Communication, Mental and Physical Emigration.* London: University of Westminster.

Schiller, H. 1996. *Information inequality*. London and New York: Routledge

Scannell, P. 1996. *Radio, Television and Modern Life*. Oxford. Blackwell.

Silverstone, Roger. 1994. *Television and Everyday Life*. London. Routledge.

Sreberny, A. 2000. 'Media and diasporic consciousness: an exploration in among Iranians in London' in Cottle, S (ed.) *Ethnic Minorities and the media*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Storey, J & Turner, G. 1999. *Cultural Consumption and Everyday Life*: a reader. London. University of Sunderland.

Straubhaar, J.D. 1999. Beyond media imperialism: Asymmetrical interdependence and cultural proximity. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*. 8. 39-59.

Strelitz, L.2003. 'Where global meets the local: South African youth and their experience of global media' In Murphy, P & Kraidy, M. 2003 in *Global Media Studies: Ethnographic perspectives.* London. Routledge.

Steeneveld, Lynette. 1998. 'The transformation of the media'. *Rhodes Journalism Review*. P4

Tomaselli. K. 2002. 'Media Ownership and Democratization' in *.Media and Democracy in Africa.* Hyden, G et.al New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.

Tomlinson, J. 1999. *Globalisation and Culture*. Cambridge. Polity Press.

Thompson, J. 1995. *The media and modernity: A social theory of media*. Cambridge. Polity.

Tsangarousianou, R. 2004. 'Rethinking the concept of diaspora: mobility, connectivity and communication in a globalised world.' *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*. Vol. 1(1): 52-66. ISSN174-6708 (Print); 1744-6716 (online).

Appendices

List of Respondents:

1. **Getachew:** 25 years old, single, has equivalent to matric education, owns an Ethiopian restaurant at Bruma-lake and is self-employed. He has been living in Johannesburg for 9 years.
2. **Getu:** 28 years old; single, has equivalent to matric education, owns his own informal barbershop in Mayfair. He has been living in Johannesburg for 4 years.
3. **Abel:** 37 years old; married, his wife expecting their first child; did not complete his tertiary education (accounting), used to work as floor-manager for Shoprite-Checkers now conducts his own business. Has been living in Johannesburg 10 years.
4. **Teddy**: 27 years old; single; has a bachelors degree in the humanities, is currently unemployed, would like to work as a journalist. He has been living in Johannesburg for one year.
5. **Ash**: 30 years old; single; has equivalent of matric education, works part-time as trader and cuts hair in a barbershop. He has been living in Johannesburg for 3 years.
6. **Kassahun**: 25 years old; single; did not complete his tertiary education, works as waiter in coffee-shop in Jeppe Street. He has been living in Johannesburg for 5 years.
7. **Frewenny**: 31 years old; married has one child; has matric education, currently a full time mother, has been living in Johannesburg for 8 years.
8. **Betty**: 30 years old, single; did not complete her university degree in international languages, currently is employed as manager in franchise restaurant, has been living in Johannesburg for 6 years.
9. **Ejigahu:** 29 years old; single; has the equivalent of a matric education, currently works as trader selling curtains at various markets; has been living in Johannesburg for 3 years.
10. **Natinel:** 28 years old, married with one child, currently unemployed, has been living in Johannesburg for 6 years.

Interview Sample

The following provides a summary of one interview conducted:

Betty (30): Currently works as a waitress, attended a community college, doing accounting, then did three years of university international languages, didn't finish her degree. Enjoys speaking English, seems to have singled herself apart from the community. Arrived in the country in 1999, when she mentions that things were far more difficult to integrate into the South African community. She felt forced to become a hawker, selling goods on the side of the road. People encouraged her to get a job as a waitress because her English is better than most. She lives in a garden cottage, a few blocks from where she works. There is a television,

CD/radio player in her on-suite bedroom, lounge. A DVD player with scattered discs lying around.

I'm interested in your life prior to Johannesburg and why did you ultimately decide to leave your country of origin? What motivated you to come to South Africa?

I lived in Addis, the capital city in the northern part. The first reason for coming to South Africa was that I really wanted to migrate. Many of my friends were living overseas and they were telling me that it's really nice. They gave me the impression that being overseas is very glamorous. I see Ethiopian not as a developed country, when these people left and came back to the country is saw how their lives changed, the way they dress, the way they do things was better. Another reason was that my cousins are living in Canada and they suggested that the processing for a visa would be easier from South Africa. I had no immediate family members living here. My visa application to Canada was denied and I decided to stay in the country for a while. I've accepted my life here, it's a beautiful country, I'm happy, but it's difficult to get a job, another thing is the crime, which can be sorted out.

What did you imagine Johannesburg to be like before you came to the city?

My first idea of South Africa was about the legislation of apartheid, doing an African history course, seeing people dying and those pictures of associated with violence. I did not imagine good things. I knew about Mandela and I only ever heard about Johannesburg and Pretoria. Generally I only thought about the country negatively because of the violence, but on the 'development' side I remember seeing nice pictures of high buildings and fancy highways. I imagined that South Africa is more developed than any other African country. I just took a chance to come.

If you had to describe your life here Johannesburg, how would you describe it? Good as well as bad. The good, I'm happy with the people, you can live with the people, I don't have any problem, but sometimes the community, our community in Johannesburg – I don't know they are not good to you. You say something and they'll see it in a negative way. They don't like to say things out straight. Take this glass, I'll say I see water, some of them will say it is a rock. I live with the South Africans now. It's more difficult for me to sympathise with the old perspectives of the community. I see things differently.

What difficulties have you encountered with your life here in Johannesburg? I have experienced xenophobia, but I don't concentrate on it. When people see me, they think I am from here. When I was working in Sandton, the people thought I'm a Coloured, you can see my hair, they think that I am from Cape Town. They talk to me in Afrikaans. So I don't have such a problem with xenophobia. The only thing is, I was stabbed last year. It was just a small cut, but I was very scared, that's the only thing.

When you consider the word home, what does that mean for you? My understanding of the home is here. I led a fairly sheltered life in Addis, being 'spoon-fed'. My family was very protective of me. I was like a baby. When I came here, you are responsible for yourself, for everything! I learnt more because I'm alone. That side is a family place but it's not a place to grow. I feel that I'm from here. At home I did not even fry an egg.

Do you think it is better for a society that migrants maintain their customs from where they are? I don't think it's necessary. It's Africa. I don't see that you should keep your culture for yourself. People must mix, it's good.

Are the majority of your friends from South Africa or Ethiopia? It's a mixture, I would say 50/50. With my Ethiopian friends I go to church and celebrate festivals. Sometimes we a visit the sick or arrange to have meals together. I'm '50/50' half South African and half Ethiopian. I do not feel ashamed of being Ethiopian, talking about the country, yet many South Africans have 'mistaken' me for being from here. I tell people this is my home, they tease me and tell me I think I've become too civilized here. It's not about that, it's more about the kind of lifestyle you choose. They say Betty you are not really black.

If you had children one day, what are the kind of things you would like to teach them? I would like to learn Amharic and also teach them about the church values. I'm not very fussy, I want my children to be integrated as much as possible. But not like these younger generation of Ethiopian girls I see in the salons. Everyone's watching television, the radio – they want to copy everything they see. I've seen these younger ladies, who don't want to work hard, they just want to be pretty. When I arrived, we were concerned about direction and taking responsibility for our lives. I remember I didn't even care about my hair and fancy hairstyles. I just tied it up and covered it under a scarf. But these new girls, they came into the country at a better time – all they want is to migrate further through a boyfriend - to go to Canada or Mexico. They don't seem to have a plan - only care about seducing men and getting money.

Can you describe a typical day for you, from the time you wake up, what is your routine? The first thing I do, I switch on the television to watch SABC 2's morning live – before I even go to pray. Once out of bed, I get dressed and prepare for work with the TV on in the background. I love news, I think it's important, what if I miss something? What if someone announces: tomorrow don't go into the city, and you get yourself into deep trouble. At work, they play music constantly, I like jazz and quite pop music – the kind they play on Highveld and Jacaranda. I have traditional music I like, but that I only listen to at home, it's like church music when I feel sad. I also loves listening to wedding songs I have a CD collection of them because they so happy and funny, not that I've imagined myself in a white wedding dress. I usually play it just to laugh – they sing silly things about the groom and bride's family. When I come from work, I like watching Isidingo, my favourite character used

to by Tanya, the girl who committed suicide and Leigh Barker because she's very strong, such a hard worker, she always looks so professional, dress smart. The only the thing is that she doesn't have luck in her love life, which is a bit tragic.

Do you obtain news about Ethiopia, if so how? I don't care about getting the Ethiopian magazines, I know where to they get those Addis papers. I usually check the internet, only to contact my boyfriend and occasionally I search out political developments in the country. My boyfriend and I call each other on a regular basis, because we are planning to get married in the near future. I want to get married –maybe in Ethiopia and come back and get permanent citizenship in South Africa.

Media

Known print publications circulating among Ethiopian migrants:

Botshabelo

The African Diaspora - 3rd Floor, West Wing
Auckland House
185 Smith Str, cnr Biccard
Braamfontein
011 403-4229

Known Ethiopian websites:

Addis Zena: www.addiszena.com

Ethiopian review: www.ethiopianreview.com

Cyber Ethiopian: www.cyberethiopia.net

Ethnioindex: www.ethnoindex.com

Ethiox: www.ethiox.com