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SPACE, AGENCY AND INFORMALITY: A CASE STUDY OF MUSINA'S FOOD VENDORS AND FOREIGN CURRENCY DEALERS

Official Masters Research Report

For submission to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg for the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Masters of Arts (Development Studies)

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MARCH 2019

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report titled ***Space, Agency and Informality: A case study of Musina's Food Vendors and Foreign Currency Dealers*** has been written solely by me and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Furthermore, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material written by another person except where due reference has been made in text of the report. It is submitted for the degree of Masters in Development Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination in any other university.

_____ _____

Chido Muzanenhamo Date

ABSTRACT

As a more useful alternative to urban theories that originate from the North, the idea of African urbanism has been found to be more instrumental in investigating the day to day experiences of those who inhabit the African continent's urban areas. While it has been well established that Africa's metropoles are dominated by the presence of both an economics and a politics of the subaltern, very little is currently known about these processes in an African border town. This research report seeks to examine the role of the economics of urban marginality - by focusing on the informal economic practices of foreign currency traders and food vendors – in the production and transformation of urban place and space in Musina, a border town in South Africa. In addition, the research explores the spatial politics of Musina's informal economic trade by emphasizing how the state, practices of governmentality and cultural politics intersect. Drawing on data from twelve semi-structured interviews and participant observation, this research report argues that there is a mutually beneficial relationship between the state and those marginalised by Musina's urban economy, as reflected in the manner in which private and publicly owned space is produced and transformed. The urban physical space is closely associated with the generation of informal income, and this is expressed in Musina's political economy in ways that enable individuals to embody space prior to its production. The report also argues that subaltern economics provide an opportunity to reimagine the spatial beyond the local. Finally, this study considers how identity is associated with specific spaces and the impact this has on how the spatial is conceived, used and claimed by street traders.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: Locating the African Border town in Urban Theory

There is a growing body of literature that emphasizes the significance of relating critical urban theory within the framework of African cities. A key aspect of urban theory has been how its primary theoretical components conceptualise the urban based on western standards (Robinson, 2013). A lot of mainstream development economics, for instance, focuses on the principled link between urbanisation and economic growth; emphasizing the connection between urban infrastructures, production and 'effective mediating institutions' in order to guarantee the success of market-based solutions (Pieterse, 2011). In addition, urban theory has been responsible for framing urbanity as a social process associated with modernity and innovation, which is then used heuristically to depict what is considered urban or not urban (Robinson, 2013). An analysis of African cities through this approach has led to the perception that the continent's cities are homogenous, and go through the same patterns and processes of urban development (Myers, 2011). The Neo-Marxist approach and other perspectives of urban political economy from the North, "assume a well-developed welfare state as an inheritance of Keynesian policies over a number of decades" (Pieterse, 2011:14). This allows for a study of Western cities that presents both an identification of the problem together with policy solutions (Myers, 2011).

What then is urbanism in an African context? The answer to this question is significant since the study of urbanity that interlinks the urban with modernity creates a developmental pecking order amongst urban areas, resulting in an analytical understanding of the purported 'non-urban' cities that need to catch up through innovation and modernisation (Robinson, 2013). In any case, urban areas in Africa do not resemble the modernist preconceived notion about the physical character of cities (Pieterse, 2011). To begin with, whilst some struggles such as underdevelopment; socio-spatial inequality and colonial legacies of poverty are commonly shared by most African urban communities, there is no prototypical African city as they all differ from one another (Myers, 2011). Africa barely has any of the Keynesian legacies that apply in the Northern context, and it becomes more apparent that with these basic contrasts, the former requires alternative forms of theorising urbanism that take into account the socio-political and economic systems relevant to its context (Pieterse, 2011).

What stands out the most regarding the distinctive characteristics of the growing new urban scholarship in Africa, is its comprehensive connection between urban planning practice and urban theory (Myers, 2011). This is a result of the unrestrained urban growth and widespread informalisation of African urban areas that seems on the surface to be the overt evidence of ineffective local governance (Lindell, 2008). Questions emerge on how to comprehend the unlawfulness and criminal transactions that are at the root of urban growth (Menon, 2013). In addition, what does it imply for the role of urban economic systems when differences between informal and formal economic activity appear no longer useful, and the idea of long-term wage labour becomes permanently replaced (Pieterse, 2011).

Taken from this perspective where; the informal city is understood to be the origins of the real African city, there is a need for an analysis of African urbanism from the viewpoint of ordinary people who reside in these environments (Pieterse, 2011). A more global study of urbanisation possibly recrafts the connection between urban outcomes and ideas formed about the urban, by highlighting the variety of explanations of the urban, to the strongly interconnected nature of urban communities with regards to global urban processes (Robinson, 2013). One such form of theorisation is subaltern urbanism. It has two focal topics; "the self-organizing economies of entrepreneurialism" as well as, the degree of political agency that an informal worker enjoys (Roy, 2011:227). Cities have become sites for commodifying virtually everything, as a result, the exploitation of poor people as well as their transformation into objects in need of continuous remedy and spatial control, tends to hide the incapacity of urban governments to deal with an extensive range of either formal or informal economic activities, practices, spaces and networks (Simone, 2010). Although a theoretical focus on the informal, ordinary, ostracised or invisible inhabitants of African urban areas is important, the praxis of such processes of urbanisation are just as significant in that they may add to efforts to improve the standards of living of these individuals (Myers, 2011).

It is now well established that theories on the subaltern are a more useful approach in the analysis of African urbanism in the continents urban areas. What is less clear is how the processes of African urbanism occur in African border towns. According to Suau (2013) border settings are linked to the creation of socio-economic pressures that regulate the construction and use of everyday spaces in cities. While international borders are not simply dividing lines that separate people, "the combination of globalisation and counterhegemonic practices is a lens that offers insight into the late capitalist global economy" (Staudt,1998:9). The environment at the border is determined by formality against informality; visibility

against invisibility; and hard against soft (Suau, 2013). Scholars of urban geography have drawn awareness to institutions such as international borders, that 'shape place' as they are ideally located to contrast the ways in which neighbouring urban spaces with mutually dependent economies but separate institutions transform behaviour (Staudt, 1998:17). The 'heterotopia' found at borders is administered by "cultural, economic and political pressures in unlabelled places" (Suau, 2013:70). Therefore, the counter hegemony that occurs at borders leads to questions of how space gets its opportunists, as the spatial can both discriminate against and privilege people (Staudt,1998). Furthermore, it is important to interrogate how informality influences space in border settings because of the character of the urban economy at the border (Suau, 2013).

In this research report, I attempt to examine the processes of African urbanism in the South African border town of Musina by considering the implications of informal economic practice in the production of space, and the role of identity, the state and governmentality in shaping relations between those involved in these activities.

1.1 Background and Rationale

Musina is the South African border town that offers a gateway into the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for the transit of goods and people across the region and the rest of the continent. The copper mining industry in the region led to the establishment of the town, and today the local economy is mainly based on agriculture, diamond mining, tourism and cross-border trading. Together with the Makhado local municipality, Musina local municipality has been recently identified and designated to be a special economic zone

named Musina-Makhado SEZ in order to bring more formal employment over six years through the creation of a cement production plant, a coal-fired power plant and factories (Mokone, 2018). Rural settlements, townships and farms are features of the Musina municipality, which is a Category B municipality and has an estimated population of 132 000 people. The border town is a region that experiences various types of informalisation, including those regulated by the local municipality such as street trading or hawking, as well as illicit activities such as illegal currency trading. Although some research has been carried out on the role of the subaltern in African urbanism, there has been very little discussion on urban informality in African border towns. Individuals get the most out of informal economic activities as a survivalist strategy at the border, because border porosity together with the dominance of neoliberal capitalism allows for the cunning and skilful generation of income in ways that go unnoticed by modern surveillance (Staudt, 1998). Unlike the other South African border posts, the Beitbridge border post is open 24 hours. The reported number of people who cross the Beitbridge border post daily as suggested by the South African National Road Agency (SANRAL) is an average of five hundred trucks and fifteen thousand people (Jordaan, 2018). Although not all of these travellers trade in Musina, this research report will show that some of the trade and mobility contributes to how the informal traders conceptualise space not only to the confines of the local, but also beyond the border. This study set out to investigate the role of those in the informal economy, in particular, food vendors and foreign currency traders, in the spatial economics and politics of Musina. There are two primary aims of this research; 1) to investigate the ways in which these specific economic agents in Musina's informal economy produced and transformed public space and influenced the spatial dynamics in the town, and; 2) to ascertain the ways in which these economic agents understand their political subjectivity in relation to the spatial politics within the border town.

This research is in two parts; firstly, the spatial economics of informal trade which contribute to a deeper understanding of the perceptions of how two groups - food vendors and foreign currency traders, appropriate and occupy both privately and publicly owned spaces within a border town. This research report examines the relationship between informal economic practice and space; arguing that social actors do not perceive space as a vacuum but as an entity closely interlinked with income generation. Lastly, the importance and originality of this study is explored in the spatial politics of informal trading where the use of space for informal economic practices creates a historical legacy that then determines social relations between informal traders, as well as with the state. This research report seeks to explain how the political economy of Musina's border town articulates in ways that allows individuals to embody space before they actually produce it. As a result, this has various consequences on how identity is linked to spaces, the spatial is conceived and the way it is used. This research further argues that there is a symbiotic relationship between the formal – that is, the state, and those involved in informal economic activities. The reader should bear in mind that a full discussion on the impact of urban informality on Musina's socio-spatial framework is beyond the scope of this study. This research will focus on the case study of foreign currency dealers and food vendors and their agency in the urbanism of the border town.

The approach to empirical research adopted for this study is drawn from the qualitative methods of semi-structured interviews as well as participant observation. Twelve interviews were conducted with food vendors, foreign currency dealers, an informal cross-border courier as well as small micro enterprise holder. It is my experience of researching in Musina for my honours research paper that has driven this project. As the in-depth interviews I conducted for that study suggest, the decision by the Musina municipality to grant hawkers permits to trade

as a group of clothing vendors contributed to the emergence of a strong occupational identity and collective solidarity amongst these economic agents. From that point, a personal relationship developed between the street traders and a contact within the Musina municipality, allowing them direct access to voice their opinions on local government policies. Data from this study suggests that current spaces of trading had been previously contested over, and that the Musina municipality has managed to resolve some of these disputes. At the time of the current study, there were still tensions amongst clothing street hawkers and those who ran formally built small micro enterprises on the use of public space such as, pavements.

The overall structure of the research report takes the form of six chapters. Chapter two deals with the theoretical dimensions and literature review of the research, and looks at the debates on the production and representation of everyday spaces, informality, space and identity within the politics of space, as well as, the different perspectives on agency. The methodology used in the research is outlined in chapter three. The fourth and fifth chapters present the results of the study, detailing the spatial economics and social aspects of informal trading in Musina. The final chapter seeks to address several questions such as, whether the interactions between informal traders and state authority result in both parties producing spaces for informal economic activities. In addition, does the type of informal urban economy found in the border town restrict the conceptions of the spatial for the economic agents only to Musina, or is space reimagined beyond the local? Are informal traders more open to sharing spaces throughout their social interactions within a transnational space, or is the border an extraneous variable that reinforces group identities?

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL REVIEW: Centering the African Border Town

2.1 Introduction

There has been research carried out on the agency of informal traders, as well as; their role in the production of insurgent African urbanisms and transforming public spaces in African metropoles. These include studies by Zack (2015) and later by, Matsipa (2017) who both focus on Johannesburg's inner city. In addition, extensive literature on borderlands focuses on themes such as migratory flows, the twin city phenomenon and inter-regional trade, especially cross-border trading. This chapter reflects on literature that pays attention to the processes of urbanism in global border towns. In the review of this literature, it will be argued that there is still uncertainty surrounding the processes of African urbanism in African border towns. Later on, this chapter will outline the theoretical framework of the research by focusing on the conceptualisations of space, informality, identity and agency in attempts to address the economics and politics of informal trade in Musina.

2.2 Border towns in literature: subaltern urbanism and informality

2.2.1 Subaltern urbanism in the African border town

To date, there are few studies that have investigated the association between space, agency and informality in border towns. Cruz's (2008) work is one study that focuses on the processes of urbanism in global border towns, and attempts to explain how, in spite of the rise of surveillance infrastructure along the San Diego-Tijuana border in the post 9/11 era, the increasing tension between the different communities along the frontier have inspired a large number of insurgent reactions including, new methods of encounter, conversation and brokering, sharing assets and developing practices of infringement into the increasingly privatised and controlled public areas. Cruz (2008) goes on to suggest that urban areas at the global border gradually become the arena where tactics of transgression and strategies of control, formal and informal economic activities, as well as, where lawful and unlawful occupations converge. The bidirectional illicit flows of goods and services across the border are physically demonstrated by the informal arrangements in land use and economic activities, as well as, the insurrectionary cross-border urbanism that emerges from "infrastructural waste" (ibid). For Roy (2011), Cruz's (2008) work on border localities is a form of subaltern urbanism at the global border, as he reveals the inhabitation of space past the 'property line' in the form of unorthodox spatial and commercial practices by what he describes as the informal – 'a migrant, small scale activism'. However, there is exceptionalism in Cruz's (2008) work as it presents specific social conditions such as, urban areas at the global border with existing underutilised infrastructure and, intensified border surveillance where this radical cross-border urbanism takes place. What is still not yet clear

are the ways in which subaltern urbanism takes place within the microcosm of a peri-urban border town in Africa, which differs from the San Diego-Tijuana border in terms of its border porosity, infrastructural development and socio-economic conditions. Nevertheless, this literature is of particular relevance to the current study as it allows us to consider the extent of subaltern urbanism in Musina.

2.2.2 Informality and the politics of existence in border towns

Researchers have also attempted to evaluate what the urban means in grey spaces or zones of exception, such as border towns, where people experience various degrees of political control and subjectivity from the state, as well as social control by non-state actors (Roy, 2011). This is a result of the urgency found in the daily realities of urban settlements in border towns, as they illustrate the pressures and logical inconsistencies of a place where people frequently avert the agendas set by the state (Nugent, 2012). One study by Chen & Stone (2018), considers the emergence of urbanism in border regions and its impact on local governance and daily life by focusing on the China-Laos (Mohan-Boten) and China-Myanmar (Ruili-Muse) borders. In their interesting analysis, the authors argue that the governance capability and demographic structure of border cities have been influenced by three fundamental actors, the citizen, city and nation state (ibid). According to Chen & Stone (2018), a new form of in-between spaces emerges in border cities from this distinctive mixture of top-down and bottom up pressures, as the triangular relations of the trio of actors mutually reproduces spaces, increases cross-border trade and new forms of mobility, extending the influence beyond the borderland itself. This argument is useful in the analysis of the role of Musina's food vendors in particular, and how their informal trading has an impact across the formal borders. In addition, the study will illustrate how the role of participants as residents of

Musina convey their influence on the use of space in the town, and this shapes their interactions with the state, as well as their cultural politics with other informal traders.

2.2.3 The lived experiences of informal traders in border towns

In a study on the trading and health service provision at the Kenya-Uganda border of Busia, Allen (2013) considers how current perspectives on space miss the mark by not questioning what the border exactly means for its residents and considering how cross border trading, locally-held views and geographic positioning act together in generating multiple accounts. He therefore suggests multiple perspectives on borders that use theories of space to rather augment than subordinate borderlands, whilst reinforcing the connections between observable activities, views, sites and emotions (ibid). In addition, Allen (2013) argues that making use of place amplifies orthodox social and economic studies of borders, and how individuals act on their views and expectations, while helping with their understanding of their own political subjectivity, gender and ethnic identities. This literature is of importance to this study as it proposes moving away from a heavy reliance on theories of space as it is difficult to put into context the complexity of borderlands. A balance is required between theory and every day lived experiences. In doing so, the study also highlights the significance of research methods such as observation, and takes into account what lies behind the motivations and aspirations of the social actors who reside at the border in their contributions to the processes of spatial transformation and organisation of border communities.

2.3 Final notes on literature towards a theoretical framework

All of the studies reviewed here seem to suggest that there remain several aspects that are relatively unknown specifically about how spatial configuration by informal traders is affected by the geo-political and social context of the border town, and the ways in which informal traders understand their positions as political agents. By using Musina as a case study, this research report aims to contribute to this broader literature in its account of subaltern urbanism in an African border town through the analysis of the economic and political actions of informal traders. The next section details why theories on space, informality and identity are important to the study.

2.4 Theoretical Framework: Space, agency and informality

As previously mentioned, borderlands are environments that are dominated by contradictory processes. The literature reviewed has illustrated how these contradictions at the border may influence diverse economic and political experiences, ideas of identity and uses of space. This section explores the theoretical conceptualisations of space, informality, identity and agency in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the role of Musina's informal traders in the spatial configuration of the border town.

2.4.2 Space

To reiterate, the two primary aims of this research are; 1) to investigate the ways in which particular economic agents in Musina's informal economy produced and transformed public space and influenced the spatial dynamics in the town, and; 2) to determine the ways in which these economic agents understand their political subjectivity in relation to the spatial politics within the border town. Current discussions on the spatiality of the city are greatly

indebted to the pioneering work of Henri Lefebvre who created a sophisticated proposal of how urban spaces are constantly developed at the junction of 'representations of space' by designers, organizers and architects; 'spaces of representation', meaning the immense emblematic affiliations we link with specific sorts of spaces; and finally, 'spatial practice' which demonstrates the genuine, solid components of social actions and interaction (Pieterse, 2011). Introducing his idea of 'social space', which are, spaces that are associated by particular social activities, beliefs and norms, Lefebvre (1991) begins by considering the history of philosophy and at how an understanding of 'absolute space' appears to be opposed and a-priori to a sort of a mentalist space. Absolute space here refers to our common sense ideas of physical or natural spaces, for example, Table Mountain and its unique attributes from which its name is derived. An epistemologico-philosophical conception of space only arrives at mental space, rather than a social science of space conditioned with practice and history that not only permits the interpretation of space, but its construction as well (ibid). This is significant in his attempts to clarify the role of capitalism as a mode of production that creates abstract space through commodification, yet presumptions should not be made that capitalist hegemony creates a clearly defined world market or capitalist space (Lefebvre, 1991). The global capitalist economy has both formal and informal economic processes which hardly ever comprise exclusively one or the other, but to some degree, involve a flexible combination of both, where the initial production may occur in the formal sector and the final goods are traded in the informal sector, or the other way round (Laguerre, 2016). As previously mentioned, African urban areas are characterised by conditions of both formal and informal economies, and border towns like Musina are no exception.

Lefebvre (1991) asks how we might start to comprehend the 'production' of space given the separation of mental, physical and social space, and this drives him to set apart 'spatial

practices' from 'spatial codes', making the argument that the 'production of space' does not mean decoding spatial practice. Therefore, he defines 'social space as a social product', adding that the act of producing space is a process; a social practice that uses the sensory and imagination (Lefebvre, 1991). The analysis of space proposes an answer to the question of the spatiality of social relations, indicated by how much social relationships are projected into, become engraved within and, the time spent producing the space itself (ibid). As a result of capitalism, in addition to being a political and economic tool of the bourgeoisie, space itself will now be perceived to symbolize its own contradictions (Lefebvre, 1991). Social space is not an object among other objects rather it incorporates things produced and includes their reciprocal relationships in their coexistence and concurrence (ibid). Thus, differences between the complexities of space and spatial practice have to be drawn, as the former can only be articulated by theory, though the latter is empirically discernible (Lefebvre, 1991).

To better understand space, Lefebvre (1991) presents the argument of the triad analytic which comprises the triad of *perceived space* in society's spatial practices, *lived space* in imaginative representational spaces and, *conceived spaces* in representations of space. This framework illustrates the reproduction of space working together and colliding at various moments, and afterwards getting filtered very subjectively into how we all live, envision and observe 'space at every moment of every day' (Pieterse, 2011). The representation or conception of space at local, provincial and international level at border towns makes this theory important in relating economic practices with agency. It becomes imperative to understand the symbolic meanings *(lived space)* of transnational spaces as well as, the everyday living realities *(perceived space)* of informal traders in Musina.

2.4.3 Informality

The conceptualisation of informality involves both informal economic activities and informal spaces. According to Hart (1973; 68), informality is understood to be "this world of economic activities outside the organised labour force". He differentiates formal and informal wage opportunities by referring the former, as income earned through stable and regular employment in both the public and private sectors, as well as through unemployment benefits or pensions (ibid). Informal economic activities include an extensive scale of both legitimate and illegitimate services, enterprises and levels of productivity (Hart, 1973). This theorisation of informality in reference to economic practices is relevant to the study as both food vending and foreign currency trading are activities that lead to informal income opportunities. Informal foreign currency trading is an illegal activity as per the Exchange Control Regulations by the South African Reserve Bank (2012), which states that only authorised dealers are permitted to engage in currency exchange. Food vending could be both a legitimate and illegitimate income opportunity depending on whether the individuals involved have the required permit or license to trade as street hawkers as per the municipal by-laws (Musina Municipality, 2017).

Be that as it may, informality does not happen in a vacuum, as the space where informal activities occur is usually a formal space that has been informalised (Laguerre, 2016). Informality permits flexibility, transformability and freedom of movement of socio-economic networks, allowing marginal spaces to be changed into places of social interaction and action (Suau, 2013). According to Lefebvre (1991), abstract spaces or *representations of space* are formal and measurable. Global borders can be considered as such spaces through the geopolitical dominance and authority of different countries. However, Lefebvre (1991:49)

goes on to further suggest that ‘centres of power’ are “dominant forms of space” that try to shape the peripheral spaces they dominate. In his theorisation of what he terms the informal city, Laguerre (2016) argues that, found in the informal economy and the informalisation of urban spaces is a pervasive informal city, which lies just below and in the crevices of the formal city. This suggests a peripheral relationship to the formal system which dictates its value and status, although the irony is that informality is central in urban practices because social actors intentionally modify their behaviours by making distinctions between the formal and informal (ibid). Laguerre (2016) suggests that though it constantly interacts with the formal system, upholding or at times hindering it, the informal city is a figure of speech, understood as not geographical, but as a somewhat physical and interpretive robust cultural arena. When there is inadequate formal space to meet the demands of every individual of the urban community, the informal space becomes a product of that formal system, as social actors feel compelled to change formal space into informal space to perform their informal activities (Laguerre, 2016). The informal system seems as a replacement for what is absent in the formal system, with public spaces, streets and residences being the most dispersed areas where the informalisation of space takes place (ibid). Urban informality is a mode of production of space that links, on the face of it, the separated terrain of suburbs and slums, revealing the always changing urban relations between the unlawful and lawful, allowed and prohibited, sanctioned and unsanctioned (Roy, 2011). Hart (1973) acknowledges that access to informal income opportunities is restricted mostly by the availability of space. Musina is a border town that cannot be considered a formal city by Laguerre's (2016) standards, yet the Beitbridge border with Zimbabwe is a formal and abstract space, whose dominance through international law controls the migration of people and the movement of goods. In addition, Musina municipality also has authority over formal land use in the town. Therefore, with different foci of power within the border town, the theories of informality are relevant to the

study in addressing whether the border town in its entirety can be considered a peripheral space dominated by the border, which then influences the ways in which informal traders acquire and transform trading spaces.`

2.4.4 Space and Identity

Massey (1994) proposes a conceptualisation of space as a social phenomenon that develops from intrinsically dynamic social relations. As shown by both Lefebvre's (1991) theoretical analysis on the 'production of space', and Laguerre's (2016) work on informal spaces, there is an interplay between informality and social space. For Laguerre (2016), the idea of the informal space has been loosely defined to infer that it is a social construction that requires a close interaction between a minimum of two people as an essential condition. Furthermore, Lefebvre (1991) suggests that because social space embodies social relationships, the reproduction of spaces is also the production of difference. It follows then that inherent from the production of difference is identity, whether it's perceived or self-identified. However, Brubaker and Cooper, (2000) suggest that identity should be viewed more as an analytical tool within the social sciences, arguing that it is an ambiguous term which should only be used to understand specific contexts, similarities and relationships.

Questions of belonging develop as a result of the exclusion from, restrictions of access to, and participation within, various spaces and places (Anthias, 2008). An idea of space that takes into consideration its diversity allows for different interpretations and experiences of the social relations of space (Massey, 1994). Spatial organisation involves the arranging of social relations, often in economic terms the relations of production, and this infers inequality and positions of power and subordination (ibid). It is important to study the relationship

between space and identity as an individual's politics and motivations cannot be located completely in their social identity (Shome, 2003). The complicated nature of global capital is reorganizing spatial contexts in manners that do not ensure that just because an identity is of a specific national or racial position, it will always be that way (ibid). In terms of gender identity, specific ways of conceptualising place and space are linked with certain social constructions of gender relations as well as the coding of the spatial as either masculine or feminine, which in some social settings has led to the control of women's mobility as a key method of subordination (Massey, 1994). Space and place are significant in that they mirror and affect the construction of gender relations, from upfront exclusion by violence, to the emblematic meaning of places and spaces and the obviously gendered messages which they convey (ibid). At the border, relations between space and identity are particularly important as this is a site where the negotiation, conveyance and production of identities is most openly implemented by both hosts and immigrants (Shome, 2003). As a transnational space, the border creates a grey space which raises questions of belonging and the types of subjectivity that occurs especially to migrants (ibid). However, Brubaker and Cooper, (2000) point out that it is not necessary to theorize identity as something that everyone strives for, creates and negotiates, again because, as the authors suggest, in political clam making, social actors move between universalist and particularist claims. For this study, the conceptualisation of space and identity in the specific context of Musina is important for the interrogation of how the genders, nationalities or ethnicities of informal traders influence the ways in which space is accessed and used. This research study will also consider whether spaces are associated with particular social identities as a result of the process of self-identification or as an attribute by others and what this means for the spatial politics of informal trading.

2.4.5 Agency

In her theorisation of subaltern urbanism, Roy (2011:227) proposes that the subaltern is "an agent of change", given their clear political identity that has become associated with particular territories, such as the slum. Although some scholars have questioned the degree of political agency informal workers have, as they are a constituency traditionally deprived of historic collective labour power, Roy (2011:228) argues subaltern urbanism recovers the image of the slum inhabitant as an agent of change. Disregarding their lack of a collective identity, Bayat (1997) suggests that through, what he terms 'a quiet encroachment of the ordinary', the unassuming daily practices by individuals to improve and survive the challenges of life are likely to transform the world of politics. This political agency manifests in the form of the occupation of public spaces, obtaining independence from state regulation, as well as, attempts in accessing social services and opportunities (ibid). Existing urban theory on the 'right to the city' broadly explores how urban citizens attempt to access and transform their political, economic and social rights to the city through their everyday activities (Harvey, 2003). It should be noted that the subaltern constitutes of individuals who are marginalised and external to the structures of formal organizations, such as the poor, migrants, informal workers and the unemployed (Bayat, 1997).

Urban governance provides an alternative view of political agency which takes into account, but goes beyond, opposition to the government (Lindell, 2008). The assumption here is that, urban governance involves the various sites where practices of governance are implemented and challenged by a range of actors in different strata of relations, making the roles of both public (the state) and private (market committees) authorities in managing space important (ibid). Therefore, the implementation of political agency is at multiple levels, that is, both

internally in market committees and externally to the state (Lindell, 2008). Through these conceptualisations of agency, this study interrogates the different ways in which Musina's informal traders exercise their political agency in the acquisition and control of access to public spaces, as well as the governance of social relations in private spaces used for trading. This also allows for an analysis of what ways the border as a transnational space that shapes particular political subjectivities, influences the ways in which the informal traders choose to exercise their political agency in relation to space and informality.

2.5 Conclusion

Overall, the theories and literature reviewed in this chapter seem to suggest that there are both social and economic aspects to urban spatial configuration as expressed through informal trading. The political economy in which the informal traders work provides important insights into the ways in which their political agency is articulated or hindered. The following chapter describes the tools used in trying to understand the processes of urbanism within Musina.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Qualitative methods offer an effective way of gathering and evaluating data, establishing and adapting theory, as well as going into detail or changing research questions, activities that all together influence each other (Maxwell, 1998). Qualitative research methods have been used in the past to investigate border towns in Africa such as Walther's (2009) work on border markets and spatial mobility in the Sahel, and Allen's (2013) study on the economic and social opportunities found at the Kenya – Uganda border towns of Busia. Similarly, the use of interviews and observation as research tools are common techniques in understanding African urbanism and the spatial arrangements of informal traders as shown by Matsipa (2017) in her work on how space and home-grown economies are recalibrated by black hair braiding practices in Johannesburg's CBD; or Zack's (2015) study of the distinctive relationship of economic and spatial elements that allows for an emergence of entrepreneurial ethnic enclaves in Johannesburg's inner city. The current study uses a case study approach in order to gain insights into perspectives on, and processes of, the spatial configuration of the town of Musina by food vendors and foreign currency dealers. This method was particularly

useful for the researcher's 2017 honours study on clothing street vendors in Musina, and not only provided much needed practical experience but a network of contacts that were invaluable for the commencement of the current study. The case study method is significant in its exceptionalism as a result, the individual is not only added to the study but becomes its foundation (Janesick, 1994).

3.2 Overview of methods

A significant proportion of the study comprised of semi-structured interviews with participants, comprising guided questions on the nature of trading, decision making regarding their current spatial arrangements, relations with other traders and the state with respect of trading space. Interviews focused on participants trading history, challenges faced in their line of work, as well as views on their prospective futures. Therefore, the economic and social aspects of spatiality for participants' were expressed as oral histories as well as in their daily experiences. Participant observation was also an important research tool in the collection of data for this study. The researcher witnessed various forms of interactions amongst informal traders in relation to governmentality, and between informal traders and state authority such as, border patrol and municipal traffic police. In an effort to understand the residential spatial arrangements of Musina, the researcher, with the help of contacts, took a day to visit the townships and high density residential areas of Matswale, Nancefield, Mushongoville and Nancefield Extension 2 (See maps below).



Image 1. Map of Nancefield. *Source: Google Maps*

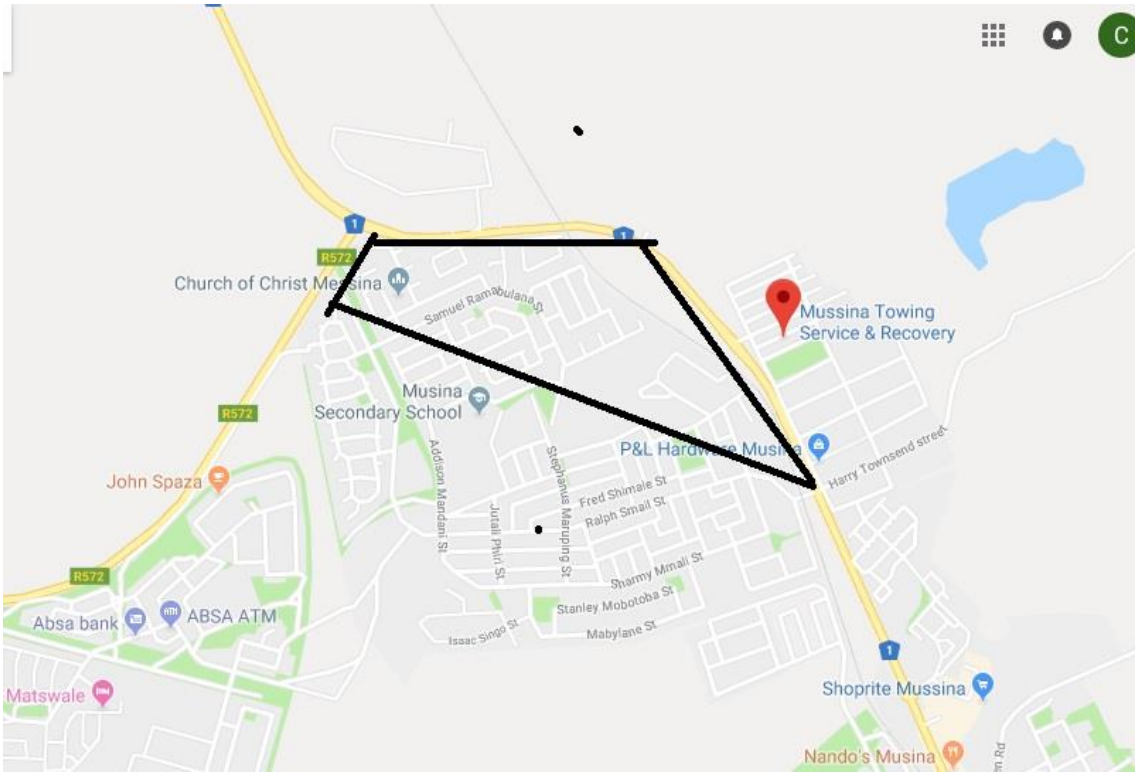


Image 2. Bordered area is Mushongoville. *Source: Google Maps.*

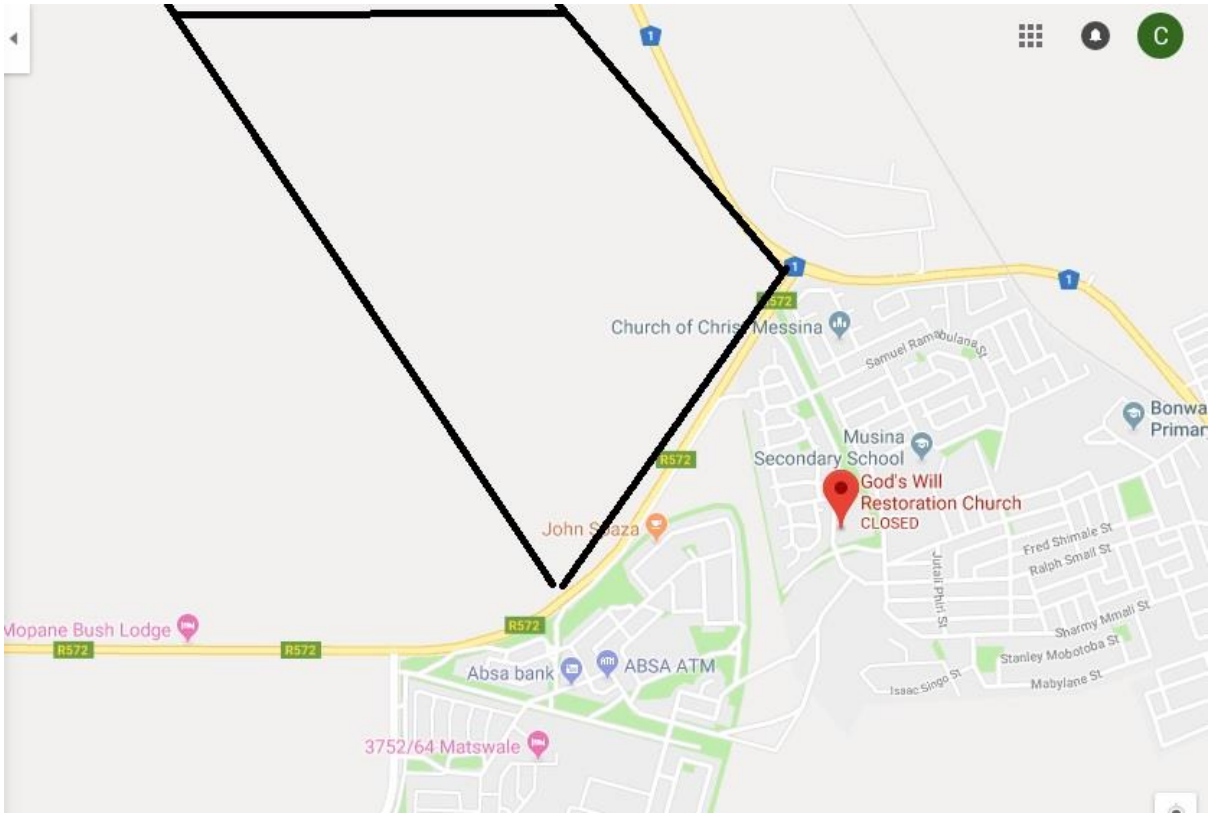


Image 3. Bordered area which is Nancefield Ext 2. *Source: Google Maps*

Data analysis was based on the conceptual framework proposed by Kawulich & Holland (2012) which suggests the categorisation of data into themes and an analysis of the narratives that emerge.

3.3 The politics of access to and in the field

The research was conducted in June 2018. Through the use of the aforementioned network of contacts, eleven new respondents were recruited for the current project via snowball sampling in addition to one contact who had participated in the 2017 honours study. The network of contacts included a business registration officer for the Department of Economic Development based in the Musina Municipality since 2006, as well as street hawkers trading

in children's clothing who had been participants in my honours research. Prior to commencing this study, ethical clearance was sought from the University of the Witwatersrand Department of Sociology Ethics Committee. Altogether, semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve participants for the study which included; seven whose varying degrees in trading perishables may be considered food vending; four currency dealers and one shop trader of a small medium enterprise (SME) (See Appendix 1). Five of the participants refused to have their interviews audio-recorded but allowed field notes to be taken. The same participants gave the bare minimum regarding personal information such as, their names or family dependents, while details such as their occupation prior to informal trading were vague, or only revealed much further during the interview process. This had some an impact in not providing the researcher a holistic understanding of research participants. Where consent was given, data were recorded on a digital audio recorder and transcribed. All participants articulated their wish for their identities to remain confidential, which was guaranteed by the use of pseudonyms in the research report.

Although potential respondents were presented with forms providing information about the study and to give consent, the small sample was a result of both expected and unexpected difficulties in recruiting participants. For instance, the researcher anticipated that the unsanctioned economic activity of informal foreign currency trading made potential respondents involved in this activity wary of being interviewed for fear of being exposed to the local authorities. In addition, this may have been compounded by the fact that, under the advice of my network of contacts, the researcher was warned that since my previous visit a year earlier, an increasing rate of crimes such as robberies and sexual assault were recorded in Musina. For this reason, as well as a lack of trust, interviews were conducted during the day at the informal traders' place of business, often being the streets of Musina's central

business district. Because of all these concerns, three of the four foreign currency dealers who participated in the study refused to be audio recorded. This had a profound impact on the study in that, despite the researcher presenting her student identification when introducing herself, there was a general mistrust communicated by foreign currency dealers of assumptions that the researcher was actually a television news reporter, thus resulting in the small sample. Most currency dealers refused to be interviewed for this reason, while two of the four who agreed to be interviewed insisted that the interview be conducted with both of them at the same time. Although it was not ideal as they both didn't want to be audio recorded, the researcher took to vigorous note taking and both participants seemed more comfortable conducting the interview together. As a result of the illegal nature of foreign currency dealing, compounded by the small sample size, the narratives of these traders focus more on their interactions with the state and less about the acquisition of trading space.

On the other hand, an unforeseen challenge in obtaining participants occurred in trying to recruit food vendors for the study. Most of the people who engaged in food vending whether selling perishables or cooked food around Musina were women. Even with the help of contacts, the researcher experienced difficulties in getting the latter to speak to her, with the reason expressed often being the fear of being seen by colleagues giving out interviews. In the beginning, a higher proportion of the food vending respondents who agreed to be interviewed were male. Unbeknown to the researcher, a view had been taken by some of the female food vendors that the researcher "only wanted to speak to male participants". This came to light after one of the interviews conducted with a male participant. A woman came to listen in halfway through this particular interview. The male participant had mentioned later during the interview that the woman had joined us was his wife. After the interview, the researcher was informed by female food vendors located at the market opposite from where

the interview had been conducted, that the wife decided to join the interview because they were not sure of my intentions and she thought that I was "seducing her husband". Not entirely convinced by this information, the food vendors pointed in the direction of the participant and his wife exclaiming to the researcher, "Look at her! She is accosting him now as we speak!"

The above account is a prime example of a lack of trust between researchers and potential respondents, and made me reconsider my positionality as a female student conducting fieldwork. According to Janesick (1994), the different steps of the design process involving contextualisation and resituating the research study within the collective experiences of the respondents and researcher, result in the latter becoming a research instrument in qualitative research design. This became quite apparent to the researcher once I became aware of the perceptions of potential female respondents of my positionality and conduct of fieldwork. What is ironic about the incident described above involving the male participant is that it allowed for a conversation to occur between the researcher and potential female respondents, resulting in more accessibility from this section of the population. The final gender composite of participants for the study consisted of thirty-three percent of being male, and sixty-seven percent being women. Overall, this experience left me with mixed feelings about my fieldwork experience in that, although I was displeased with how perceptions of my sexual identity influenced the research, I also could not ignore how the same views could have been the reason male respondents were more receptive to being interviewed. Identity is important in conducting fieldwork, and my sexual identity as a researcher had certainly become a significant handicap.

3.4 The politics of identity in the conduct of field research

Throughout the research, it emerged that that one's national identity provided various opportunities and challenges economically as well as socially. This can be attributed to the location of the study being a border town. Although all those interviewed had a basic understanding of the Shona language, some participants made sure to inform the researcher that they were not Zimbabwean. At the same time, there were participants such as, the foreign currency traders who told the researcher that "Everyone doing this job is from Zimbabwe, and if they tell you otherwise they are lying. They came here illegally by crossing the river." Be that as it may, all but two interviews which were conducted entirely in English were mostly conducted in Shona. English as a medium was used by the researcher during interviews in instances when respondents did not entirely understand the question in Shona. As a first language speaker of Shona, the researcher could not be certain whether participants' misunderstanding of the language could be attributed to their national identity, that is, not being Zimbabwean, as there was a probability that they were Zimbabwean but from a non-Shona speaking ethnic group. Regardless, participant's understanding of the Shona language was captured by one informant who stated, "Here in Musina, we speak Shona all day. Shona is money language. If you don't know [how] to speak Shona, you don't get customers actually". Thus, most of the participants' responses were often both in Shona and English.

For this reason, this research report will quote participants' responses in both the language originally communicated to the researcher, and use an English translation as necessary. The researcher has chosen against the exclusive use of English translated responses in attempts to not substantially water down the authenticity of participants' views. Translated English

versions of participants' responses are the researcher's own understanding of what was said in Shona, and may give the impression of concise and well-informed speech not found in the original transcribed text which is conversational and broad.

3.5 Methodological limitations

People mentally and emotionally struggle with life's intricacies and incongruities, making oral histories continuous "works in progress" (Green, 2004;41). According to Portelli (2009), the use of interviews in oral history allows for multiple perspectives and versions of events where the criteria of the reliability and credibility of oral sources is measured differently. What is often revealed about events is what they meant to individuals and what they think occurred, which makes interviews an important research instrument that uncovers new events or new details of well-known events (ibid). Collective memory as a concept articulates a feeling of the constant existence of what already occurred before (Crane, 1997). An obvious tension emerges between individual memories and collective memories as the attempts to achieve collective unity is often challenged by how individuals recall events (Green, 2004). People may thus be encouraged by or vulnerable to collective memories that appear to either accept or reject the importance of their identity (ibid). In the current study, participants were subjective and were therefore susceptible to recall bias. For instance, narratives about the acquisition of trading space at Musina's *pama* Jews were passed down to participants by their family members regarding how the initial process began. This informed their understanding of their trading history at this space, as well as their recollections of changes in ownership and threats of eviction that occurred later. As these are oral histories, the exact dates of when space was acquired for informal trade are unknown. Portelli (2009) argues that discrediting oral evidence isn't possible, but the dilemma arises from guaranteeing authenticity of such

information. Historical details regarding the initial acquisition of trading space *pama* Jews and subsequent clashes with the landowner were difficult to verify as most of the people involved are deceased. However, in attempts to confirm the details of the eviction, the researcher made enquiries with the Musina Magistrate court which had no trial records of it ever taking place. After speaking to one of the courts' lawyers, the researcher was informed that the informal traders may have just received a letter of demand for eviction from the legal representative of the land owner, making correspondence between the two parties outside of the court's jurisdiction.

The importance of oral history is again illustrated in that it provides information about the everyday living of ordinary individuals whose history is either omitted or inaccurately recorded (Portelli, 2009). The oral history method is fundamentally inventive and accommodating in nature, as the interview process requires researchers to work together with their participants (Thompson, 2015). Since researchers initiate the interview process, with that, they also bring about particular biases which makes participants respond to questions with the information they think is relevant (Portelli, 2009). This seems to be the case in the current study with some participants during interviews when questions arose regarding their relations with state authority regarding access and permission to trade, which included multiple versions on the costs charged by Musina Municipality for hawker's permits. Several attempts to interview an official representative from the municipality's Town Planning department were unsuccessful. The omission of this interview has an impact on the research findings in that it does not offer an official state perspective on some of the issues brought up by the informal traders about some of the formal decisions made with regards to spatial planning, especially, whether consultative processes with informal traders ever took place. In

addition, the researcher made several attempts to obtain a copy of the street traders' hawkers permit from the Musina municipality to no avail.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the qualitative methods made use of in this research study, highlighting the politics of access experienced during the conduct of fieldwork. These experiences have impacted on how I will conduct future research by considering the role my gender identity plays in accessing information from future participants. In view of the methodological limitations, where possible, official municipal documentation was used as a substitute for not being able to conduct interviews with officials from Musina's municipality. The following chapters provide an analysis of the empirical data collected during the study.

CHAPTER 4: THE SPATIAL ECONOMICS OF STREET TRADE

4.1 Introduction

An initial objective of the project was to investigate the ways in which particular economic agents in Musina's informal economy produced and transformed public space and influenced the spatial dynamics in the town. The following part of the report makes use of Lefebvre's conceptualisation of space, particularly the triad analytic, for an analysis of the ways in which informal traders gradually took over and later negotiated for the use of spaces ideal for their trading. When asked about the decisions that led them to their current trading locations, participants' responses revealed how spatial practices of informal trading led to a reimagining of both private and public spaces. In this chapter, this research report will argue that the current formal and informal use of space in Musina by food vendors and foreign currency traders can be attributed to the continuous process of the production of space through informal trading in the border town that can be traced as far back as the 1970s. This has had an influence on the spatial framework, socioeconomic practices and symbolic attachments the informal traders have to their places of work.

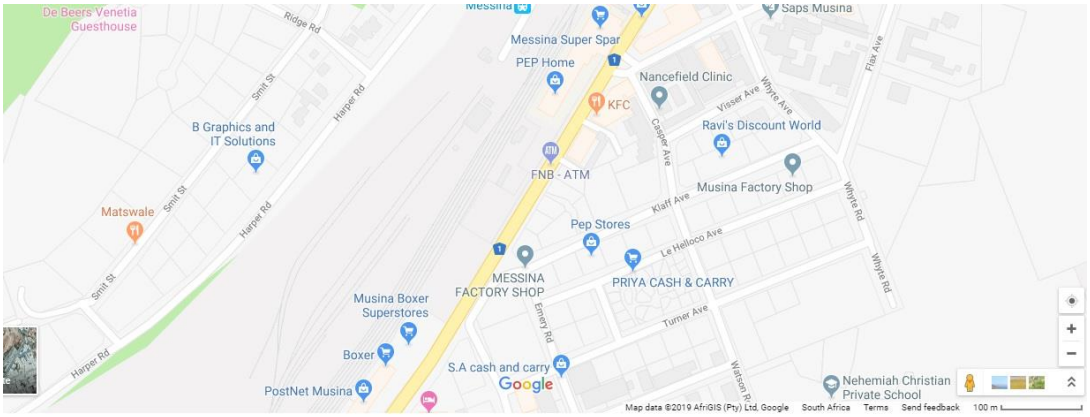


Image 4. Map of Musina Central Business District. *Source: Google maps.*

4.2 Appropriation of privately owned space – *pama* Jews

Located in Musina's central business district at the corner of Casper and Klaff Avenues (see map above), the market at present has over a hundred informal traders of different nationalities involved in various trades such as the sale of shoes, clothing, agricultural products as well as the provision of freshly cooked meals like pap and stews. The market is known by its colloquial name in Shona as "*pama Jews*" or "*at the Jews*". One participant explained how the name came about:

> *"Stand iyi inonzi Jewish Market because stand iyi yaiva yema Jews vaida kuvaka church yavo...Saka kuma 1940s, 1942 ma owners e stand iyi, zvinonzi pakaita ma land complications.... vaida kuvaka church. Havana kuzovaka church.* [The stand is called the Jewish Market because the stand belonged to the Jews who wanted to build their church...So around the 1940s, 1942 the owners of this stand, it is said, had land complications...they wanted to build a church. They did not build the church.] – (Interview with Ephraim*, 18 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

The informal traders who initially started working from this land were the family or friends of participants who are currently trading from this space. One of the participants recalled the stories told of how informal trading began "at the Jews":

> *"My mother was one of the first here. As she told us, vakatanga ku, vaitengesa. Like they were four selling under the trees here. So owner ye apa, stand iyi ndeche kuchurch handiti? So the owner of the place, the church members saw them akavabvunza kuti "What are you doing here?" They told them, "We are selling here because we see that we don't have a place to sell". So pakauya murungu akavatengesera ma tents. They were five actually. They gave them tents akavaudza kuti "Ndichataura nemunicipality kuti mushande pano". That's when they started to work here...over thirty years ago."* [My mother was one of the first here. As she told us, they started selling. Like they were four selling under the trees here. So the owner of this place, this stand is for the church right? So the owner of the place, the church members saw them and asked "What are you doing here?" They told them, "We are selling here because we see that we don't have a place to sell". So there came a white person who sold them tents. They were five actually. They gave them tents and told them "I will speak to the municipality so that you can work here". That's when they started to work here...over thirty years ago.] - (Interview with Mercy*, 24 June 2018).
>
> *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

The 'white person' referred to above was Mr Jack Klaff, a lawyer and trustee in charge of the administration of the stand in question. It is understood that the stand covered the area which today is from where Casper Avenue begins until the end of Watson Road (see image 1). The

name Old Taxi Rank market is also a result of how vast the area was that a section of it was used by taxis to pick up and drop off travellers. Over the years, there would be a simultaneous gradual increase of informal traders' occupying the land, as well as the migration of Jews to Johannesburg and Israel. This, according to one participant, contributed to Mr Klaff's decision to negotiate with the municipality at the time on the formal recognition of informal trading at the Jewish stand:

> "*After some time uya aona kuti pane vanhu vari kudini, kuuya. Ndopakazo konzoresa kuti Jack Klaff are consulta municipality a arrange vanhu in an orderly manner...Nokuti this thing was under - yanga ichi manajwa necouncil but iri under chii, Jack Klaff ne sense iripo...Nokuti uyu sezvatataura, panowanda vanhu panowanda utsvina. So they were complaining to Jack Klaff, the council kuti "Pane tsvina panodi panodi". Iye akati "Arrange it kuti zvi suite chii, ma standards amunoda."* [After some time, he saw that more people were coming. That's what made Jack Klaff consult with the municipality for him to arrange people in an orderly manner... Because this thing was under - it was managed by the council but it was under Jack Klaff is the sense given..... Because, as we said, where there are a lot of people, there is dirt. So they were complaining to Jack Klaff, the council, that "There is dirt and so forth". He told them, "Arrange for it to suit the standards you want".] - (Interview with Ephraim, 18 June 2018).

Prior to Mr Klaff's formal arrangement with the municipality, participants' understood the land to have been 'open'. However, after that the informal traders began making changes to their work spaces by building 3 by 3 meter asbestos stalls which demarcated trading space between individuals and helped in the storage of perishable stock (See Figure 1 below).

The accounts above show the relationship described by Lefebvre (1991) in his triad analytic; the Jewish stand was a conceived space formally planned for the construction of a place of worship. For the initial small group of informal traders, the land symbolised an ideal space for trading considering its commercial viability as some of the land was already being used as a taxi rank. Through their spatial practice, the informal economic activities facilitated the occupation and transformation of land set aside for formal development to become land for informal trading.



Figure 1. One of the 3m by 3m asbestos stalls found at *pama* Jews.

Even though the Old Taxi Rank market is still known as the Jewish place because of its original intended use, Lefebvre's (1991) conceptualisation of space allows for an appreciation of the market's existence today as a space produced over time by informal social and economic processes. Laguerre (2016) argues that the lack of officially accepted documentation proving ownership makes the process of converting previously unoccupied

land through occupation informal. Interestingly, participants suggested that there was no money paid to Mr Klaff for the use of the privately owned land even though they built their stalls on it or, for his part in negotiating with the municipality. However, even though the informal traders did not own hawkers permits to trade at that time, one participant mentioned that they paid a monthly fee to the municipality:

> *"It's just that they were known that there were people selling here... And inini ndichitanga kushanda pano it was around 2017, that's why I left school. No, 2007? 2007 yes! Taibhadhara mari kumunicipality. Mmmmmm, 2007. We used to pay R40 to the municipality every month."* [It's just that they were known that there were people selling here....And as for me, when I started working here, it was around 2017, that's why I left school. No, 2007? 2007, yes! We used to pay money to the municipality. Mmmmmm, 2007. We used to pay R40 to the municipality every month.] – (Interview with Mercy, 24 June 2018).

The account above is important in that it illustrates the ambiguous relations between the three parties – informal traders, the trustee and the municipality. Harvey (2003:941) argues that, the 'right to the city' is both the "right of access" and the "right to make the city different". However, the absolute rights to private property undermine the rights above since society is ruled by the market and promotes the accrual of profits (ibid). This suggests that although the occupation of the Jewish stand by informal traders was their "right to make the city different", there was still an understanding that they had to pay for the use, and these payments were made to the municipality. The ambiguity in this arrangement would however become even more significant in later years when the stand comes under new ownership, effectively changing the social dimensions of trading *pama* Jews.

4.3 Use of public Space – Streets, pavements and street corners

4.3.1 Casper Avenue

Simone, (2004) suggests an idea of *people as infrastructure* in the Johannesburg metropole, which highlights the economic alliances amongst the city's inhabitants. These individuals, who are most likely side-lined and impoverished by living in the city, engage in fluid, 'mobile' and short-term economic practices outside of the set regulations of how urban areas are to be occupied and utilised (ibid). The concept of *people as infrastructure* is relevant to Musina, as at the time of study, the most popular informal trading in the border town involved the wholesale trade of tomatoes in a public street at the centre of town. It was suggested by most participants and other contacts that rumours of tomato shortages in neighbouring Zimbabwe had begun in January, causing an upsurge in sales of the agricultural product by truckloads. There were various reasons for the apparent shortages including, red spider attacks and excessive 2017 summer rains which had damaged the tomatoes grown in Zimbabwe leading to the upsurge of the price of tomatoes. The demand for the tomatoes could not be sustained by the food vendors who normally trade in agricultural products as they sell small packs of about eight tomatoes. Those who were engaged in the wholesale trade of tomatoes were selling from their open small trucks, and at their peak would turnover three truckloads in a day which would in turn require several trips to farms located as far as forty kilometres away from Musina to replenish their stock. Since tomatoes were sold from the back of open pick-up trucks and bakkies, the transaction of buying, selling and packing the tomatoes for customers in reused washing powder cartons was done from these parked vehicles on the street (See Figure 2 below). As Simone, (2004) suggests, a particular

economy of insight and collective exercise is organized through the individuals' ability to socialise beyond, as well as, come to be accustomed with an extensive choice of positions of space, economics, residence and trade. Vehicles were usually parked on Casper Avenue (See map on page 36) where part of *pama* Jews is located and some cross-border taxis drop off and pick up travellers, therefore making this area particularly congested.

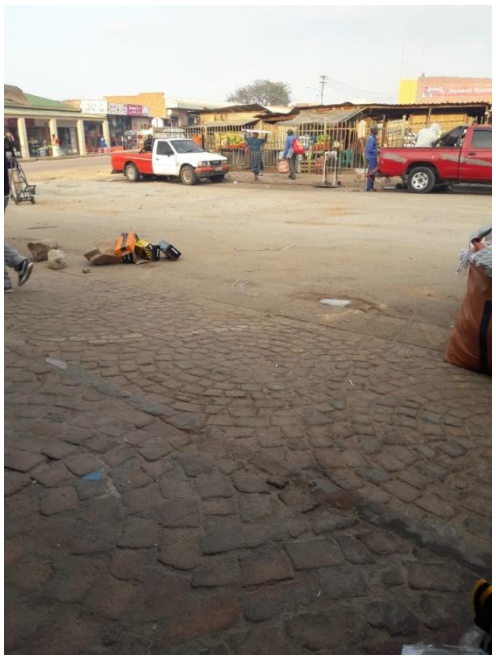


Figure 2. A couple of food vendors selling tomatoes from their trucks parked in front of *pama* Jews in Casper Avenue.

Asked about their decision to trade from this particular street one participant expressed concern about the risks associated with trading in other spaces:

> *"Ende macustomer havabvumi kuenda uko kuzasi [points further down the road]. Vanotya kuti chii, kuzasi ikoko kune maguma guma, vachatorerwa mari. Ehh, mumwe no mumwe anotenga kana ano hoarder unouya ipapa mukati me town. Uko matsotsi akazara ikoku. Vanhu vanotorerwa, kana isu tichitengesera ikoko ndinototi "Ehh, ndichatorerwa handbag". Handikufarire uku.....Customer inouya yoti "Handeyi*

kunorova ma box uko". Maybe akati "Ndonotora mota". Worse! "Hatiendeyi tinorovera uko. Ndaparka mota yangu uko, hatiendei tinorovera mabox uko". Toenda. Manje toenda tichitya." [And customers don't agree to go that side [points further down the road]. They are afraid that further down, there are street hustlers who may take their money. Each and every person who buys or sells comes here in the middle of town. That side there are lots of thieves there. People get robbed, even those of us who sell that side. I actually say, "Ehh! They are going to steal my handbag". I don't like it there....A customer can come and say "Let's go and pack the boxes there". Maybe if they say, "Let me go get my car". Worse! "Let's go over there. I parked my car there, lets' go pack there". We go. But we go there very scared.] – (Interview with Mama Wendy*, 24 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

According to Lefebvre (1991), when specific places are associated by intense feelings of distress or desirability, the space attains a "symbolic value" from then on becoming what everybody else associates with that space. Casper Avenue and its location seem to symbolize an attractive opportunity for anyone with a truck to park and engage in seasonal wholesale trading. For these vendors, trading began as early as 4 o'clock in the morning, as an early arrival facilitated choosing the most favourable parking spot:

"Unototanga kutobata customer yako, kana zvichiita. Ehh kuitira kuti, hanti pane nzvimbo dzinoita kuti basa rifambe? Macustomers akurimidze kuona kuti ndeipi irikutambika". [You can catch your customer, if it's going well. The reason is, isn't it there are particular places that facilitate the business better? They make customers

more attentive to what's going on.] - (Interview with David*, 24 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

The general view shared by participants was that parking in the street to engage in the economic activity of wholesale tomato trading from one's truck was not prohibited. The researcher was informed that she had actually arrived at the tail end of the trade, and that at its peak, 10 to 15 bakkies would be parked in both Casper and Klaff Avenues. Certain spaces are perceived negatively or positively with the different opportunities they give. From observation, most wholesale traders chose to park their cars outside of *pama* Jews which is the main agricultural marketplace in Musina town. While conflict amongst economic actors may emerge from the opportunities given by their entrepreneurial activities, social space is also not immune to the tensions that may arise between representational spaces and the symbolic values they comprise (Lefebvre, 1991). One participant alluded to this by saying:

"Haa panapa hapana zvenzvimbo. But kare vaimbo nzinga kuti "Aiwa. Inzvimbo yangu. Ibva iwewe. Uri muZimbabwean. Ini ndini muVenda, ndini first priority yekutengesera apa. Iwe ibva. Saka nekuenda tichingo zvirambawo kudidiwo takazosvika patakazo jairanawo. Kusvika pakazoitawo yekuti atanga kusvika, amira, amira." [Here there are no reserved places. But in the past they used to chase people saying "No. This is my place. You should leave. You are Zimbabwean. I am Venda. I have first priority to sell here. You should go. So as time went on, with us resisting we got to a point where we got used to each other. Until we got to a point where, whoever comes first takes the place".] – (Interview with Dezzi*, 21 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

The location of Casper Avenue and *pama* Jews specifically, represent an abstract space that is associated with prospect and profitability by wholesale food vendors that not only influences their production and transformation of public space in a commercially busy border town, but has an impact on the production of difference within their social relationships. The latter part will be explored further in the next chapter.

4.3.2 Pavements and Street Corners

Laguerre (2016) suggests that the relationship between formality and informality allows the latter to be flexible in its structure, varying in the proportion and length of time of the informal organisation, its locale as well as its position in society in general. Cross-border trading in Musina is integral to the border town's economy, with foreign currency transactions facilitating the economic process. Although the major banks are available as authorised currency dealers in the town and at the mall, there is a 450m stretch from the corner of Casper Avenue until Musina Boxer Superstore along the N1, popular for currency trading as dealers sit on plastic chairs along pavements and at street corners engaging in illegal forex trading (See image below).

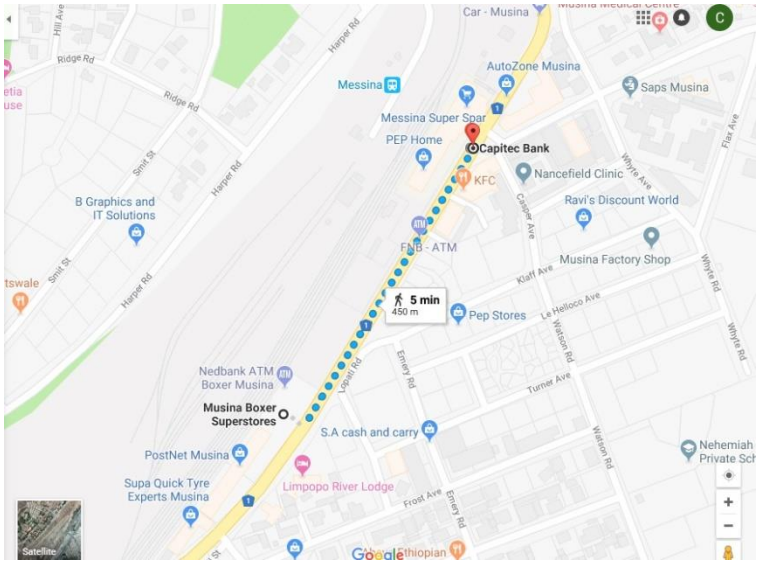


Image 5. Popular area for currency trading. *Source: Google maps*

A recurrent theme in interviews was a sense amongst participants that they did not feel particularly restricted from using public spaces:

> *"Takada kunoshanda pamberi pe [name withheld], kana uko kwamabva hazvina basa. Vatengesi tinozivana. Kugara muzuva so, hatisi vanhu vakasviba, izuva! [Proceeds to roll up sleeve] Ganda redu chairo ndeiri. Masikati tichabva pano kana zuva rapisa tichaenda kunogara kwamabva uko nokuti kunenge kwane mumvuri... Pano it's free for all. Business redu rine luck rema customer. Rimwe zuva zvinoita, mamwe mazuva hazviite."* [If we want to work in front of [name withheld] or that side where you came from, it doesn't matter. We traders know each other. Sitting in the sun like this - it's not because we are dark skinned people. It's the sun! [Proceeds to roll up sleeves] This is my actual skin tone. In the afternoon, we will move from here to go sit that side where you came from because there will be shade....Here it's free for all. Our business depends on the luck of getting customers. Some days it's profitable, some days it's not.] – (Interview with Mai Tanaka*, 25 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

It was suggested that trading spaces for foreign currency trading were all the same, and that there is no space that is more advantageous than the other. Together with the account above, it can be argued that there is more mobility in trading as a foreign currency dealer as it is dictated by the nature of the business. This was not always the case for participants as their previous choices in spaces for trade were controlled by the schedules of cross-border transportation:

> *"Ndaimbo shanda pa train station neku border. Pavakatanga kuvaka ma shops aya ema India ndipo patakata tanga kusarudza ma corner ekushandira. Mazuva iyavo tanga tiri vashoma vanotengesa mari. Kare pataiva very busy, munoona Engen garage iyo? Tairara ipapo nevamwe vanotengesa ma plastic bottle. Mabhazi eku Zimbabwe aisvikira ipapo pakati peusiku. Nguva idzodzo train yaifamba futi. Iyezvino hakusina mabhazi nema train anofamba nguva idzodzo."* [I used to work at the train station and at the border. When they started building these shops for those from India that is when we started choosing street corners to work from. Those days there were not many of us who traded in money. In the past when we were very busy, you see that Engen garage? We used to sleep there with the others who sell plastic bottles. The buses from Zimbabwe would arrive there in the middle of the night. In those times, the train was available too. These days there are no buses or trains that travel around those times.] – (Interview with Bongi*, 25 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

The formal structures, that is, the authorised currency dealers such as banks, are open for specific periods of time during the day. Yet the late travel times of the cross-border customer

allowed for the emergence of the flexible informal trading in foreign currency. This flexibility found within informality presented the informal traders with the ability to be mobile in their transformation of space – at the border, the service and train stations. With the urban development of Musina and changes in cross-border travelling, foreign currency dealers managed to adapt and encroach upon street corners and pavements within the border town's central business district in order to conduct their business.

For one of the participants, her choice to conduct her currency trading by sitting in front of a clothing store on a public pathway began with requesting permission from the store manager back in 2013. Years later, a new store manager took over the running of the store and with this came about the need to re-negotiate for permission to trade from the public pavement. Details regarding the arrangements with the current manager came to light after the researcher took note of the participant cleaning the store windows prior to the commencement of the interview:

> *"Uh uh. Handishande mushop iyi but its only kuti, panapa patakagara panze, like they will be saying munofanirwa kutibetsera since you are not paying rent kugara kwamuri kuiita. Saka munofanirwa kutibetsera kusuka mawhindo, because dzimwenguva munoisawo tsvina panapa, ndosaka waona tichitsvaira panapa. Ndiyo nzvimbo yatinoshanda panapa. Kungo shandawo. Haa kubva 2013 we used to not to do that because panga pane mumwe manager. Ende manager anga aripo, he was a male manager. Vashandi vake, ibasa revashandi ivavo. But then munongoziva vanhu vechikadzi how are we. Zvakanzi....Saka munyuwani akazouyawo chikadzi, akati no, because vanhu ava - because she wanted us, iribhoo. Then pakaita vamwe vakataura naye kuti "Vanhu ava they have been here for long". And ndobva ati "Vachagara*

havo but tinenge tichi chinjana maduties because they cannot just stay for free". Isu tino cleaner panze ivo they clean inside." [Uh uh. I don't work in this shop but it's only that, here where we are sitting outside, like they will be saying you have to help us since you are not paying rent to sit here. So you have to help us clean the windows, because sometimes you leave dirt here that is why you saw us sweeping here. This place is where we work from. It's just *some* work. Haa, from 2013 we used to not do that because there was this other manager. And the manager who was there, he was a male manager. His staff - that was their job. But then you know women how we are. They said, the new manager who came after is a woman, she said no, because these people - because she wanted us, okay. Then there were people who spoke to her that "These people have been here for long". And she said "They can stay but we will be exchanging duties because they cannot just stay for free." We clean outside, they clean inside".] – (Interview with Rumbi*, 28 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

According to Laguerre (2016) an analysis of an individual's informal economic actions reveal how they are attached to the formal economy when they facilitate the purchase and provision of services in that economy. The account above suggests that the current store manager agreed to the continuation of the arrangement as she found that it would be mutually beneficial. The fact that its mostly currency dealers who sit in front of the store may be a recognition that the money exchanged by customers may then be spent in the store. The division between the formal and informal economies as they manifest in urban space illustrate how both economic realms complement each other. The surprising aspect of this account is the idea that the informal traders were not "paying rent" for a public pathway, implying that by virtue of the store's location, the storefront was part of the property as well

and that the manager recognised the importance of space. Trading space was not always perceived as the immediate and local by some informal traders but was also understood as the access of trading space beyond Musina CBD and the South African border, which will be discussed in the next section.

4.4 The Border and Spaces Beyond

Partitions or fences in areas and other examples of obvious boundaries, by and large give the impression of the presence of divisions between spaces, while in actuality "what exists is an ambiguous continuity" (Lefebvre, 1991:87). In contrast, boundaries that are obscure are extremely uneven outlines of genuine social space that produce distinct levels of the local, regional, national and global (ibid). The wholesale trading in tomatoes was not an activity in which those who engaged in held hawkers permits for. Therefore, like the foreign currency dealers, the unlawful nature of this economic activity allowed for mobility in seeking different spaces to trade from. With the soaring temperatures of Musina, averaging around nearly 30 degrees at the time, the traders faced the challenge of how to make sure they sold all the stock available on slow moving days. The South African side of the border thus became an optional space for trading as an idea of going to the customer to make sure no stock went to waste:

> *"Ahhhh muno mutown vanhu vanouya vachizouya nekumakuseni. Ku border ndeve manheru manje. Havauye vekuborder kumadomasi makuseni akadai. Haa maskati. Ku border vanhu vanotanga kuwanika kuma 1, 2 ikoko. Ndipo pandinozoenda kuborder kunotengesa akasatengwa. But ku border tinenge tichingo tengesera imomo mumota zvakare."* [Ahh here in town people come but they come in the morning. At

the border they are there in the evening. They don't come to the border for tomatoes in the morning like this. Haa afternoon. At the border people, start showing up around 1, 2 - around that time. That's when I go to the border to sell if they [have] not [been] bought. But at the border, we will be selling from our cars, just the same] – (Interview with Dezzi, 24 June 2018).

Although it was not clear from the interviews if it is still the municipality that has authority over street hawkers at the border, participants' suggested that the trading spatial arrangements there were quite different from what occurred in town:

"Ehh, ndino enda ku border ndonetsa vamwe ikoko kuti ndiwane pekutengesera matomati. Ehh iko ku border kune vanhu vanogara vachitengesa nekare" [I go to the border and fight with others there for me to get space to sell tomatoes. There at the border, there are people who already have been selling there for long.] - (Interview with Mama Wendy, 24 June 2018).

Another participant added:

"But ku border uku kune nzvimbo. Ndiko kuchirikuitwa zvenzvimbo. Zvekuti, "Nzvimbo iyi ndeyangu" because kuno cleaniswa munhu. Because matomati anogona kubuda mamwe anenge akanganisika, saka vanhu zvavanoita macustomer vanotenga vanonhonga aya vachirasa. Saka ndozvakazo tsvakisa zvenzvimbo manje ku border, kuitira kuti hakuzikanwe kuti munhu atenga pane ve agriculture. Ndivo vakazouya neplan iyoyo yekuti "Inzvimbo yani?" for the sake yekuti pa cleaniwe." [But there at the border there are reserved spaces. That's where they are still doing the system of

reserving spaces. They say, “This is my place” because they make people clean. Because the tomatoes, some of them may be damaged, so what people do - the customers who buy, they select the good ones and throw away the damaged ones. So that’s what made people start reserving spaces at the border, because it’s not known if it was the customer or the person selling. They came up with that plan that “Whose space is it?” for the sake of it being cleaned.] – (Interview with Dezzi, 24 June 2018).

The accounts above seem to imply that temporary spaces for wholesale tomato trading have emerged from negotiations with those who already established trade at the border. Nevertheless, those who trade in wholesale tomatoes also have an understanding of trading space not restricted to the confines of Musina town and the actual border but one that went beyond the frontiers and included driving into Zimbabwe if necessary:

“Kana kuZimbabwe kwacho ikoko ndinoenda nawo ndega. Kana zvatoipa ka? Kuti ndisazorasa. But kuZimbabwe kwacho ikoko manje ukaenda nawo asati achinja unenge uchinomatengesa nedifferent price just for the sake kuti udzose mari yako. Kuenda padhuze, paZvishavane apa. PaZvishavane, Gweru, unoenda.” [Even there to Zimbabwe I will go with them on my own. If things are bad? So that I don’t end up throwing them away! But in Zimbabwe if you go with them just before they go off, you will be selling them with a different price just for the sake of recouping your money. You go nearby - to Zvishavane. To Zvishavane, Gweru, you can go.] – (Interview with Dezzi, 24 June 2018).

Another participant who is an informal cross-border courier commented:

> *"Ndinotenga madomasi ekuita resale kumberi ku Zimbabwe. Tinotengesera pamusika, ehe pamusika ndipo patinotengesera. PaMashavare Growth Point, pa Beitbridge. Taka hoarder crate rinenge rakazara kudai, tosvika totengesa ma one one. Fact iripo ndeyekuti ndinouya ndichitenga kana 2 crates each and every day nema potatoes."* [I buy tomatoes for resale further on in Zimbabwe. We sell them at the market. Yes at the market is where we sell. At Mashavare Growth Point, in Beitbridge. If we hoard a crate that is full like this, we arrive and sell the tomatoes one by one. The fact is I come and buy maybe two crates each and every day, including potatoes.] – (Interview with Kundayi*, 19 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

Taken together, these accounts again show how the illegal informal activity of wholesale trading in tomatoes allows the informal traders to not have a fixed trading space. The flexibility found in the informal trading allows the traders to imagine trading space beyond the confines of the South African border, but to markets in neighbouring Zimbabwe, extending their supply chain and adapting their daily tasks to include cross-border trading. As Nyamnjoh and Brudvig (2014) suggest, the lives of excluded urban citizens are associated with the uncertainties that come with restricted access or right to use, leading them to manoeuvre around these obstacles and engage in a 'flexible citizenship' as well as, 'flexible mobility' that allows for a daily reimagining of the spatial. This understanding of citizenship in urban Africa has led to the construction of identities that moves beyond customs, dialects, metropoles and nations as individuals recalibrate their ideas on boundaries and belonging (ibid).

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter began by looking at how informal trading has transformed and produced privately owned space in Musina, focusing on the history of *pama* Jews. It went on to suggest how this market is now a focal representational space in the centre of the town, and its location influenced the production and transformation of a public and congested street. The ways in which currency traders appropriate and negotiate over the use of space illustrated how public space is perceived by those involved in illegal informal trading as accessible. Laguerre (2016; 30) suggests, "the informalisation of urban space is subtle and may not have a permanent character." The same can be argued regarding peri-urban Musina, as this chapter has argued that unlawful informal economic activities allow social actors a degree of mobility and choice in selecting spaces to trade; they are not bounded to one particular space in the border town or within the country as they even engage in cross border trading and sell their products from other spaces outside of South Africa. The entrepreneurial economy of the border town has allowed for the informal traders to have different conceptualisations of space that sees the spatial as beyond fixed.

The chapter that follows will focus on how the informal traders understand their political subjectivity through an analysis of their positionality as informal economic agents, their relationship with other traders and various levels of the state found in the border town. This chapter will also focus on accessibility to trading spaces and governmentality.

CHAPTER 5: THE SPATIAL POLITICS OF STREET TRADE

5.1 Introduction

> *"Pafa mwana hapashaike muroyi."* [Whenever something goes wrong there is always something or someone to blame] - A well-known Shona proverb, expressed by one of the participants, David.

As alluded to by the statement above, within social relations there is bound to be an element of conflict. The politics of space in Musina are articulated in the political economy of the border town. Thus far, this research report has argued that in order to capitalise on the entrepreneurial nature of the border town, foreign currency traders and food vendors in Musina have used their agency to produce both permanent and temporary trading spaces. The informal traders have done this through the appropriation of spaces they deemed vacant, underutilised, much safer or profitable for trade than others, and in some cases, they had to negotiate in order to use the space. According to Lefebvre, (1991) in contrast to representational space which has been planned out, lived space is the space of the daily practices of those who use it making it subjective because, it has a starting point and it comes with experiences of adversity, triumph and the state of being without. The following chapter provides more detailed analysis of the relations between the food vendors and foreign

currency dealers with other informal traders, as well as how they deal with the different levels of state authority. In doing so, this chapter argues that the experiences of transforming trading space have shaped the way informal traders perceive their national identities or precariousness. As a result, informal traders have mobilised their political identities to gain control of and access to trading spaces combining statist politics as well as cultural politics.

5.2 Informal traders and contestations over space

As mentioned earlier, *pama* Jews is situated on land previously earmarked for the construction of a synagogue but later converted into trading space initially by informal traders and later through the input of the stand's trustee, Mr Klaff. Arrangements with the municipality made by Mr Klaff permitted the traders to not only utilise the stand for informal economic activities, but also allowed them to build trading stalls and pay a nominal monthly fee of R40 to the council. However, it was suggested by participants that from 2011, tensions arose due to the change of ownership of the Jewish land, when the late local businessman Jayson Rana who owned Jayson's Superstore and Jayson's Lion King Hyperama in Musina, purchased the stand from the trustee, Mr Klaff:

> *"The owner! The owner who first gave our mothers the place, Jack Klaff! He is the one who told us that, "I am no longer going to be with you guys, this place is sold.... because this place was sold to a certain Indian man. Now he is passed.* [Jayson?] *Yes. [When did he tell you it was sold?] 2011? Somewhere 2011 handiti? Somewhere 2011."*–(Interview with Mercy, 24 June 2018).

Participants insist that they received no formal communication or had any prior knowledge that the stand was on the market, and were only informed after the sale. It was suggested that the stand had been sold as a part of an urban development project at the time which included the partitioning of land for town planning and making streets for Musina's central business district. One participant pointed out that, the Jewish place was a stand that "had remained for the purpose of development", during a period where those who had land were being encouraged to "make use of their land". Mr Rana was already known to own several stands in Musina that had his shops, including Jayson's Supermarket which is located next to *pama* Jews. As soon as the stand came under new ownership, the informal traders began to experience abrupt changes:

> *"That's when we went from R40 and started paying R400, neh bhudi? To Jayson. Yes. From R40 to R400. And Ethiopians were paying R3 000. And R3 000 was monthly. Security was R12 000. R21 000 you remember bhudi? Some paid R21 000. Ethiopians [paid it on top of the R3 000]. Yes, like security. You see like when you get to a place....?* [Deposit?] *Yes."* – (Interview with Mercy, 24 June 2018).

According to participants, Mr Rana received the monthly payments since 2011 which he had requested as rent for informal trading as well as the securitisation of the market. In order to do this, Mr Rana put the market under meticulous control with the allocation of numbers for each asbestos stall and installed metal fencing around the property:

> *"Jayson was the one who gave us stall numbers.... These [points to asbestos stalls] is ours. This fence is our money that we paid. That's what he told us that "The money that you paid I made a fence for you guys". So we saw that we are paying this R400*

for nothing. No aitoti it was for rent. Yah. Because this land, these soil, the stand is his." - (Interview with Mercy, 24 June 2018).

Other participants concurred:

"Fence iyi initially paipane a small fence yanga iripo. Uyu [Jayson] achitora ownership ye this place, akavaka nokuisa this fence. Eh, it was just nguva yakauya na Jayson. Uyezve for security reasons because there was no a well- established security yanga iripo. It was just a- (Woman interjects: It was mostly a claim kuti inzvimbo yangu iyi abva aisa security yabva yaguarda pano yabva yasecure pano)." [This fence, initially there was a small fence that was here. He [Jayson] when he took ownership of this place, he started by putting this fence. Yes, this happened at the time Jayson came. And the fence was also put up for security reasons because there was no well-established security available. It was just a – (Woman interjects: It was mostly a claim that this is my place as he put security to guard here and make this place secure). – (Interview with Ephraim, 19 June 2018).

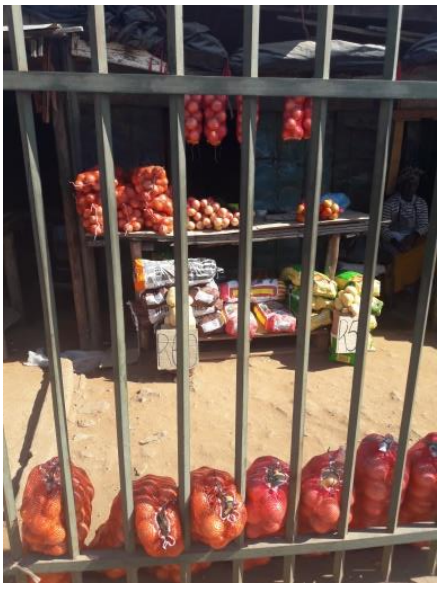


Figure 3. Part of the metal fence that surrounds the *pama* Jews market place.

Lefebvre (1991) proposes that with regards to space, use differs from exchange, as the former indicates the occupation and not, the possession of space, while the act of occupation itself suggests the involvement of an activity, the repetition of tasks, time spent and what the space symbolises. This is illustrated in the way that participants' understood the time and emotional investment they had put in trading from the Jews place and how this differed from what they described as Mr Rana's perception of the land as his property. Participants admitted that Mr Rana's decision to charge for rental and security were not decisions he made arbitrarily but were approved by a *pama* Jews market committee consisting of informal traders he met with regularly. However, as time went on, other traders increasingly expressed their displeasure regarding the amounts being charged and after five years of paying rent in addition to money to the municipality, the informal traders decided to stop:

> *"Jayson had his [market] committee. When that committee, people started to talk, they choose another committee cos' I was not involved in that committee. I was involved in this, the third one...We saw that we were paying for nothing. [You just decided to stop?] Yes, because water we were paying....And the money that we are talking about, we were paying per month."* – [Interview with Mercy, 24 June 2018).

It is after they stopped paying the rentals, participants say, that Mr Rana tried to evict them and rumours began to swirl that he "...wanted to develop something else on the stand and do away with the people". After getting rid of what they deemed to be 'Jayson's committee', the current committee which one of the participants' chairs decided to fight the eviction legally:

"That's when we found a lawyer, and the lawyer told us we are going to fight so that we won't pay. It's almost 3 years that we stopped paying Jayson. And we paid the lawyer. And the lawyer stopped the eviction because the lawyer told us some points. He said "When a place is sold, that this place is 'For Sale'. And the owner must first come to us because there were tenants here, and ask us if we can buy this place or what". But he failed to do that. We just saw that we were told that this place was sold. We were not told that there was a 'For Sale' or what what, nothing." – [Interview with Mercy, 24 June 2018).

According to Lefebvre (1991:365) space inherently creates conflict between how its conceived and how it is experienced in that the space in question has been conceptualised in two different ways, resulting in 'contradictions in social relations' emerging from the 'contradictions of space'. The relationship between the informal traders with Mr Klaff saw the two parties' interests align on the use of the Jews stand. In contrast, the Jews stand as lived space for the informal traders was a stark contradiction to what it represented for Mr Rana which resulted in the breakdown of relations. When stories emerged that Mr Rana was asking the municipality to relocate the informal traders to a new trading space on Watson Avenue which is further down the road (see image 1), the informal traders added confrontation to their legal fightback. One participant explained:

"...but people resisted. Haa Vanhu vakatoramba vakatoona kuti no! We cannot go where there is no business. [Did the people just refuse to leave?] No it's not as easy as that because resistance is resistance in all forms. Sometimes people were marching to his shop as a threat kuti we cannot act in the manner yaurikuda kuti ipinde yairi."

[....but people resisted. The people refused and decide that, no! We cannot go where

there is no business. [Did the people just refuse to leave?] No it's not as easy as that because resistance is resistance in all forms. Sometimes people were marching to his shop as a threat that we cannot act in the manner that you want us to] - (Interview with Ephraim, 19 June 2018).

Socio-political conflicts are noticed in the way they relate to space (Lefebvre, 1991). The threat of eviction had a profound impact on how the participants viewed their precariousness in relation to Mr Rana and the municipality:

"Vakawana zviripo. Ehe. Vakawana vanhu vari in existence, everything zvitoripo. So that is the challenge ehe. Zvino zvinotoratidza kuti even vanhu vachi analyse vanhu vanogona kuona vanhu vane, by being black and poor, vanhu vane ma challenges avanenge vanawo avano dzvinyirirwa nevanhu vanenge vari chii, better off. That's the thing and it's easier for somebody with money kuti agone kuno forcer vari in offices kuti va acter. Nokuti iye achitotengawo akatenga behind the back off the people. Zvinoreva kuti transaction yakanga iriye iye ne chii, nevanhu veku council kuti vave nema clarifications ne ku clear kuti he deserved to buy that thing." [He found things here. He found people already in existence [and] everything already here. So that is the challenge. And it shows us that, even when people analyse, [some] people can see other people [that] are black and poor who have these challenges that they have, as [people] supressed by [the] people who are better off. That's the thing and it's easier for somebody with money to be able to force those in offices to act. Because when he made the purchase, he bought it behind the back off the people. This means that the transaction was between him and the council people for there to be

clarifications and to [give him clearance] that he deserved to buy that thing.] - (Interview with Ephraim, 19 June 2018).

Taking part in collective action and perceiving themselves as well as their actions as 'political' occurs at the point individuals feel challenged by those who jeopardize their income (Bayat, 1997). The threat of their eviction and relocation to a different trading space resulted in a common enemy that changed the informal traders from thinking like individuals to collective resistance. As the participant continued:

"So vanhu vanotova, municipality inotova nema registers emazita evanhu kuziva kuti nhingi stand yakati, nhingi stand number yakati. So vanhu vaitobhadhara as individuals again. But after the conflict yaka openwa na Jayson, yakakonzera kuti vanhu vadini, vangoita se group vachibhadhara sokuti the name irikushandiswa uku[municipality] ndeyani, ndeya Jayson....Ehe so people were willing to do anything at the expense ye izvi because iye he came vanhu vatovapo. And aka failure kuva nekucherekedzera vanhu as he had said achitanga kuuya..... Iye achi saver sokutenda kuvakwa neku [inaudible] nevanhu vatema. Sekuti later, because money is money akaita backtrack from that abva ada kumover people out." [So people had - the municipality has registers with people's names to know whose stand this belongs to, [or] this individual has that stand number. So people used to pay as individuals. But after the conflict [started] by Jayson, it resulted in the people becoming a group when they pay so that the name being used there [at the municipality] was Jayson....So people were willing to do anything at the expense of that because he came and [found] the people were already here. And he failed to appreciate the people as he had said he would when he first arrived....And he saved and should have been grateful

> because of what was built [inaudible] by black people. So later, because money is money, he backtracked from that and wanted to move people out. So that moment is what caused people to refuse.*"*] -– (Interview with Ephraim, 19 June 2018)

Their attempted eviction by Mr Rana led the informal traders to associate their experiences of suppression under a powerful and influential proprietor, an outcome of their precariousness and racial identities. The informal traders mobilised these identities into a collective power in order to resist the potential forced relocation to a new trading space. As Bayat (1997) argues, galvanising individuals in street politics requires for some amount of organisation, made possible when people acknowledge that they have a shared identity moderated by the space they occupy.

A significant element in the political claim making by street trader organisations to a 'right of to the city' in order to secure and operate businesses legally, as well as having the authority over who and what to trade is determined by trader representatives (Bénit-Gbaffou, 2016). As representatives of the informal traders at *pama* Jews, the market committee was instrumental in leading the informal traders to re-establish their rights to trade from the stand. Certain that the eviction would not go through after two years, the market committee made the decision to no longer pay their lawyer. Mr Rana passed away in 2017 and current relations with his family, who were beneficiaries' of his estate, are described as good. In addition, the market committee decided to revert to their previous arrangement, paying the municipality for water, sewerage and refuse collection which now includes clearing the historical debt for the years they had stopped paying for these services

5.3 Informal traders relations with state authority

5.3.1 The state and its management of space

Since the inception of towns and cities, the role of the political realm in social space has been interrogated, with political power understood to be the tool that encroaches upon existing space through the use of coercion in order to attain economic targets (Lefebvre, 1991). Laguerre (2016) points out that before urban spaces are used formally through the creation of city laws and codes, the same spaces are used informally. Prior to the border town's development, the area that surrounded the Jews place together with the old taxi rank was very large. It reportedly extended from what is currently the beginning of Casper Avenue until where the Nehemiah Christiaan Private School is located in Watson Street. As one interviewee said:

> *"Ehe [panga pasina nzira]…. Uyezve pakanga pasina futi madevelopments apa. That next shops idzo [points to Jayram's properties]."* [Yes [there were no streets]....And there were no developments here. Like those shops over there [points to Jayram's properties]. – (Interview with Ephraim, 19 June 2018).

With regards to informal trading, the official standpoint is articulated in Section 5.6.6 of the Limpopo Development Plan which suggests that municipalities should take charge with regards to driving informal economy support (Musina Municipality, 2015). In addition, Musina Municipality defines an informal business in Section 8. 1. 74 of its 2010 Land Use Management Scheme as, "the conducting of business which, with the consent of the local municipality after consultation with the adjacent owners, is conveyed from place to place,

whether by vehicle or otherwise, in a street or at any other place accessible to the public, at any open property or in, on or from any vehicle or moveable structure, subject to requirements laid down by local municipality" (Musina Municipality, 2018). Furthermore, Section 3 (1) of the Musina Municipality Street Trading By-laws states that those intending to trade as street vendors need to apply to the council for the allocation of a trading stand (Musina Municipality, 2017). A participant whose market is situated along the N1 mentioned:

> *"Before we received the permits we used to trade inside of town. This was in 2010. When we got our permits in 2008, the municipality allocated this space for us. They told us not to go further than over there [where the road curves] and for us to move up closer to each other."* – (Interview with Nthabiseng*, 28 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

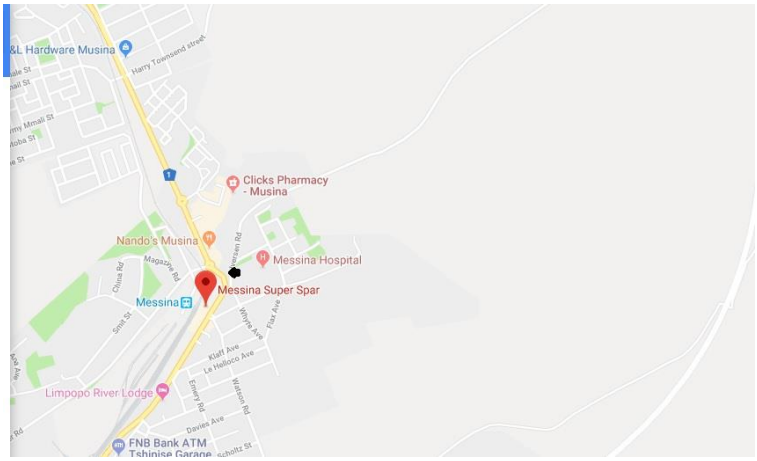


Image 6. The N1 in Musina. Arrow indicating where the national road curves. *Source: Google Maps*

According to Lefebvre, (1991) it is under the authority of the state, through its organisation and categorization, that social space is deemed to either be private or public, which means that the production of space occurs with the states involvement. The trading site along the N1

is located after Messina Super Spar before the national road curves (see image above). For clearly safety reasons, the Musina municipality advised traders to not set up their markets where the road curves as this is a blind spot in a very busy national road and could prove dangerous for both motorists and pedestrians. As the administrator of public spaces, the municipality charges hawkers a monthly fee, which initially began at R50, then became R62, and at the time of the interview was R80 per month. In previous years, the traders had access to running water and the ablution facilities located in Klaff Avenue when these services were under the municipality's administration. These facilities are now privately owned by Ravis Discount World, resulting in the traders having to resort to bringing water from home as well as, paying for the use of ablution facilities. Section 4 (1a) of the Street Traders By-laws states that street traders are allowed to place property on public spaces only for the purpose of commencement to trade (Musina Municipality, 2017). Participants have since built corrugated iron storage units to store their perishable stock. When asked of their expectations with regards to service provision from the municipality, one participant responded:

> *"I don't know why they don't build a shelter for us here..... We pay R80 for a place, to get a permit and to not be harassed."* – (Interview with Nthabiseng, 28 June 2018).

The participant's response illustrates how some informal traders associated having a hawkers permit as a method to permanently secure their trading and as a form protection from state persecution. However, there is also an obvious expectation from informal traders for the municipality to provide for services that they pay for as municipal citizens. Participants spoke about how they received big umbrellas from the nearby Messina Super Spar to protect them from the elements. On the other hand, it was suggested that the municipality also allows for flexibility in the paying of monthly fees. The participant added:

"They don't charge interest but they let you pay when you can. Some go for six months. I went for three months without paying. But when you owe the money, what you pay is the new rate not at the old rate you owed. On Monday I paid for the three months I owed." – (Interview with Nthabiseng, 28 June 2018).

The informal arrangements between the municipality and the informal traders are demonstrated in the payment plans and the room given to build structures on public spaces. Yet traders still understand that their positions as municipal citizens' means they deserve the delivery of municipal services. As Brown et al (2010) point out, urban citizenship is a position generally given to individuals relative to a spatial entity, and in a democracy this grants specific rights and duties to citizens.

5.3.2 The state's involvement in the production of space

In the previous chapter, this report argued that an appropriation of public spaces occurs daily in Musina, usually by those involved in illegal informal economic activities. When asked about the state's role in the production of space, wholesale tomato traders expressed that it was actually the informal use of space that was the municipality's concern and not their informal economic activities. One individual stated that:

"Kutotengesa zvechisimba ipapa. But kune ma days pavanouya vachipenga vachiti hatisi kuda munhu. [Muchitobva mabva?] Ehh ahh! Vanotora matomati, ku kutura. Vanotora nekudini, kana ku clampa mota vongoyi isa clamp voyi siya ipapo. Ozononetsana nawo onobhadhara matraffic fines. Inenge yakunzi traffic fine.

Madeedzerwe yainenge yakuitwa, onobhadhara fine yako. Waka wirirana navo vanongo gona kukubhadharisa ipopano, kana kuri kuti wambotanga wakaoma musoro.... It's a case yekutoti shandai, itai musika. Vanenge vachiti chii, itai nzvimbo payi, mumusika umo[points towards pama Jews]." [We sell here by force. But there are days when they come very angry saying they don't want anyone here. [And do you leave?] Yes! They take the tomatoes, and throw them out. Yes they confiscate, or even clamp the car and just leave it with a clamp here. You will have to fight with them and pay traffic fines. They will be calling it a traffic fine. They start calling it traffic [violation]. That's what they decide to call it and you have to go pay your fine. If you speak to them nicely they can make you pay for it right there and then, but if you had started by being headstrong....It's a case of them [saying you are allowed to] work but in an official marketplace. They tell us, "Go and get space in there [points towards *pama* Jews] – (Interview with Dezzi, 24 June 2018).

Another participant who actually has a hawker's permit to trade in clothing acknowledged that while the permit did not cover wholesale tomato vending, it guaranteed her a trading space as pointed out in an encounter with a traffic official:

"*Permit yehembe ndinayo. Haazvematomati hazvina mapermit, haayi. Toto biira municipality. Municipality inotibvumidza kuti titengese madomasi kubva, kubva makuseni ne5 kana kubva ne4 ichiti 8 oclock apa kwe kusina munhu. Kuuye vaye vemota dziya dzeuko [malaicha eku Venda]. Ehh traffic kuswera nezuro akataura kuti "Why uchi parka uko [pamberi pema Jews] uchiregera kuparka uko kunzvimbo yako? "Tichibva, kutengesera uko, vakati ndiiuye ndiparka apa. That's why muchindiona nhasi ndichidzokera kuno nokuti ndofunga next week ndinenge ndave kutengesa*

nhumbi apa, ndodzokera apa." [I have the permit to sell clothes. There is no permit for this tomato trade, no. We cheat the municipality. The municipality allows us to trade in tomatoes from, from the morning at 5 or even 4 until 8 o'clock when there is no one here. Until those other cars come [the local informal couriers from Venda]. The traffic cops yesterday came to me and said "Why are you parking there [in front of *pama* Jews] and not parking at your designated spot?" Then I moved from there [as] they said I should come and park here. That's why you see today I came back here because I think next week I will be back to selling clothes, so I will be back here.] – (Interview with Mama Wendy, 24 July 2018).

According to Laguerre, (2016) informal spaces can also be produced when the state deliberately chooses to ignore city laws on the use of public spaces, allowing individual agency to convert these formal spaces for informal activities. The accounts above illustrate that wholesale tomato informal traders, together with Musina's municipality are involved in the transformation of public space for informal economic activities. For Laguerre, (2016) the reason why the state is flexible and accepts informal practices is because the function of spatial informality as a mediator is useful in accomplishing formal goals. He uses an example of illegal street parking as an informal activity to achieve the formal goal of attending a church service (ibid). The wholesale trading of tomatoes in Musina is an illicit informal trade and the product is packed in ways to facilitate its smuggling across the border. One participant, an informal cross-border courier stated:

"Pa border vanombo netsawo but the thing inenge iripo, tinenge takuita smuggling yokuti unongoita kuti zvisawonekwewo of which ndizvo zvinhu zvinototiyita kuti tiite mari." [At the border, they sometimes give us trouble but the thing is we will be

smuggling in a way that makes it not noticeable which is what actually makes us make money.] – (Interview with Kundayi, 19 June 2018).



Figure 4. Customers select tomatoes for purchase. Tomatoes are sold per crate and then are packed to precision in washing powder boxers.

Formally, the state as local government or customs, is not earning revenue from the wholesale tomato trading which makes it an illicit economic activity. It can be argued however, that because it is a border town, Musina municipality allows for a greater degree of flexibility from its traffic officials because the town's political economy is based on trade. State officials therefore do not overtly stop informal traders from the wholesale trading of perishable goods. However, when it comes to the transformation of public space, the municipality officials at times obstruct or provide opportunity for the traders agency by either issuing fines, confiscating property, allowing particular times for trading to occur or, blatantly turning a blind eye to violations to city regulations. It would seem from the accounts above then, that what is of importance to the state, in this case the municipality are actual spatial practices, and not the illicit informal economic activity.

5.3.3 Relations with the state; negotiation and resistance

There are some illicit informal economic activities that are not completely ignored by state officials in Musina. Foreign currency traders and mobile food vendors are two groups of informal traders that have experienced systematic harassment from both municipal officials and border patrol for trading without a permit and black market currency trading. One participant spoke about the difficulties in acquiring a hawkers' permit:

> *"Vema hawkers permits vakutonetsa because, kana vatouya they just remove everything that you are selling. Vanotora. Ehe vanouya vachitora because they are not allowed but at the same time, they don't allow us to get ma hawkers permits acho because vanoti, "Vanhu veku Zimbabwe ma foreigners you are not allowed to work." Pane vano qualifier to have those. Like inini hangu ndine permit but then, pa black market they cannot give. Kana uchida zvemusika vanoti endai but it's very difficult for you to get it. It's very difficult because you have to be..... You just g, they just give you a form voti fillai, mo filler, moita zvese zvamunoita mopedza mono submitta. It will take decades. They won't even reply you unless kana utonewo anotokuziva ikoko, but kana usina anokuziva then..."* [Those who check for hawkers permits give us trouble because when they come they just remove everything that you are selling. They confiscate. Yes they come and confiscate because [it's] not allowed but at the same time, they don't allow us to get the hawkers permits because they say "People from Zimbabwe are foreigners. You are not allowed to work." There are people who qualify to have them. Like me. I have a permit but then, they can't issue one for black

> market work. If you want to do market trading they say go [and apply] but it's very difficult for you to get it. It's very difficult because you have to be... You just go. They just give you a form and say fill it in, and you fill it in and do everything they require and submit it. It will take decades. They won't even reply you unless if there is someone you actually know there, but if you don't know anyone then...] – (Interview with Rumbi, 28 June 2018).

Section 3 (12) of the Musina Municipality Street Trading By-laws states that the qualification for a hawkers permit is determined amongst other things, by whether the intended trader is South African or if they are in possession of a valid work permit or refugee document (Musina Municipality, 2017). For those who do have hawkers' permits, the municipality is not doing enough to discourage people from trading illegally. One participant reported:

> *"Those ones across the road over there [involved in mobile street trading], they can chase them for the whole day harassing them and then some days they leave them. Those people don't have permits and the municipal police come to chase them and they come back. That's why they don't carry a lot of things, so that when the police come, they can just run. Sometimes we refuse to pay, because why are they leaving them?"* – (Interview with Nthabiseng, 28 June 2018).

Those engaging in mobile informal trading carry their products on top of their heads in small basins or reed baskets, and this portability allows them to escape any imminent harassment from municipal officials. During fieldwork the researcher witnessed municipal officials arguing with illegal mobile informal traders regarding their lack of hawkers' permits. Participants who also observed this confrontation told the researcher that the municipality

was too accommodating and that this justified their decision to sometimes not pay trading fees. The municipality had asked for a meeting to be held on the previous day at 11 am with registered street hawkers, but participants informed the researcher that they "Decided to not attend because it was during trading hours." According to Simone, (2004) the function of urban politics is not to be a centre of arbitration and discussion between opposing views, claims, and understandings, instead, it's role is to be the growing criteria for the evaluation and judgement of the capabilities of all citizens. As such, by comparing themselves to those who are trading illegally without permits, Musina informal traders who are registered hawkers choose to become recalcitrant by avoiding paying traders fees and attending meetings. This also has an effect on the relations between the informal traders, which will be discussed in the next section.

With regards to the municipality's town regulations, it has been suggested that there have been previous incidents of those involved in informal economic activities openly showing their defiance. One example is of how local long distance informal couriers who travel between Musina and Venda (see map below) were eventually permitted to park in Casper Avenue after they had forcibly removed a 'No Parking' signage post.



Image 7. Map of Venda. *Courtesy of Musina Tourism.*

A participant explained:

> *"Zvine probably two years izvi zvaitika. Ava vema bakkie vakaona council yava vharira panze...Ndofunga vakagona kuzvirunner for less than 6 months. Vanhu vazobva vareacta. So people had to force kuti zvivaiitire zvakanaka. So they ended up vaonana neve chii, neve council vakataura kuti "Isusu hatina alternative. We cannot move away because ndipo pa area pari chii, pari busy. Saka to move kuti tino parka kumwe hazvigone." ....More or less the language they tried to say, "If you move us out of the town zvangodzoka to the same language yanga iripo yema whites ekare." So vakatoona, the council yakatanga iri slow to it but vaya vakatora matters into their own hands vakagona kuibvisa simbi iyo. Haina kubviswa ne council, yakatobviswa navanhu. The following day vakanzi they are free to park. But vatoita fight battle kuti zvidii, zvi acceptwe in the same manner yatakaita pano kuti tibvumidzwe ku trader."*
> [It's been about two years since it happened. Those who drive bakkies found that they

had been prohibited by the council....I think the council had managed to do this for less than six months. Then the people reacted. So people had to make things right for themselves by force. So they met up with the council and told them, "We don't have an alternative. We cannot move away because this is the area that is busy. So for us to move and park elsewhere is unacceptable."....More or less the language they used was, "If you move us out of the town it goes back to the same language that was there during Apartheid." So they saw that the council was slow to it so they decided to take matters in to their own hands and managed to remove the sign post. It wasn't removed by the council, the people removed it. The following day they were told they were free to park. But they fought a battle for it to be accepted in the same manner that we did for us to be allowed to trade here.] – (Interview with Ephraim, 19 June 2018).

The spatial aggravates the conflict intrinsic to the realm of politics and the state, since the management and acquisition of politicised space operates in direct contradiction to the state as a result of the political conditions from which it emerged (Lefebvre, 1991). Bayat, (1997) points out that the main objective for opposing the state by those who are marginalised is mainly to protect and advance what they have already achieved. Although both local informal couriers and informal traders registered as hawkers mobilised politically, their different strategies reveal how the latter has an ongoing relationship with the Musina municipality. Alert to the associated benefits mentioned earlier of having the hawkers permit, the insolence by informal traders is really an expression of what they feel is the municipality's lack of implementation of the states' power in ways that would be beneficial to them.

When the conduct of marginalised groups grow increasingly past a point that the state cannot ignore, it is then that the state shows its disapproval (Bayat, 1997). This is why state

responses vary from cooperation to clampdowns. The accommodating nature of local state officials has been noted by foreign currency traders as they point out that usually, to avoid arrests, they rely on tipoffs from those who have friends at the local South African Police Services (SAPS) of Musina. Participants went as far as suggesting that if an arrest was to take place, they would prefer if it was conducted by the local police as opposed to border patrol because with the former, it would usually lead to a simple fine. As one participant commented:

> *"Mapurisa emuno mu municipality anotitora asi tinoziva kuti tinobhadhariswa ma fine. Tinovharirwa tichizobhadhara fine."* [The police from this municipality they arrest us but we know that they will make us pay a fine. They will lock us up, and we will later pay a fine] – (Interview with Mai Nyasha*, 25 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.

However, participants mentioned that the police fines are arbitrary, once ranging from R200 to R1 500 on an occasion where five foreign currency traders were arrested at the same time for the same crime. Such incidents are one of the ways participants felt they were taken advantage of by the state. Operational raids, usually conducted by border patrol, consist of arrests and the seizure of currency which is supposed to be then forfeited to the state. Participants on the whole expressed their disdain for operational raids:

> *"Ma operational raids ndiwo ano netsa. Tinongo sumuka tichimhanya. Saizveve vakauya tinongo kusiya uchi nyora manotes ako tichi mhanya. Ma operations anotora mari yako yese munenge makunetsana kuma court, kana kuti vanotora votibira muma bag edu mari."* [The operational raids are really a problem. We just get up and run.

Like right now, if they come we will just leave you here taking your notes, and we will just run! With the operations, they take all your money and you have to fight it at court, or they just steal it right from our bags.] – (Interview with Mai Tanaka, 25 June 2018).

Another participant recalled an incident where it took hiring a lawyer and taking Musina policemen to court for 'wrongful arrest' and them confiscating the US$ 2 000 in cash she had on hand. It took a year for her to get her money back, which she had argued was not for foreign currency trading but for shopping as it was the currency used in her native Zimbabwe, and that the police did not catch her red handed trading in foreign currency. Talking about this issue the informant said:

"Because it's like the way they did it, zvanga zvisina evidence nezvavanga vachida kutaura. Because like, vakandiwana ndiri mushop....buying airtime. Then vakangouyawo vakati "We want to check your bag." Then I asked for the search of warrant. Then they wanted to be violent. Then I said, "Fine you can search..."Vakati "We have been watching you from a distance." Bvandati,"But there is a lot of technologies these days. If you could have taken me the picture.... Munhu wandanga ndichi chinja mari yacho ari kupi? Why did you leave the person achienda?"[Because it's like the way they did it, there was no evidence to corroborate what they were saying. Because like, they found me in a shop.....buying airtime. Then they just came and said "We want to search your bag." Then I asked for the search warrant. Then they wanted to be violent. Then I said, "Fine you can search...." They said, "We have been watching you from a distance." I responded, "But there is a lot of technology these days. Why didn't you take a picture of me....? Where is the person I was

exchanging the money with? Why did you let the person go?"] – (Interview with Rumbi, 28 June 2018).

The view that for one to break the law through informal foreign currency trading, one would have to be caught in the act of money exchanging hands was shared by another participant who exclaimed:

> *"If I am just sitting zvangu with my money they can't do anything."* [If I am just sitting here, by myself with my money, they can't do anything"] – (Interview with Bongi, 25 June 2018).

A thorough inspection of the municipality's by-laws reveals that there are no prohibitions against public loitering in Musina. The socioeconomic context of Musina has created different situations in which informal traders have responded through various strategies in their interactions with the state. These interactions have found informal traders defining their politics through their nationality or municipal citizenship.

5.4 Relations among informal traders' relations: the role of identity

Having discussed how informal traders produce and transform space as well as how the state is a part of this process, the final section of this chapter addresses the relationships amongst informal traders and the impact this has on the access and control of trading spaces. Laguerre, (2016) argues that although informality creates a pathway through the circumvention of formal administrative rules and procedures, this opportunity for people to provide for themselves and their families still weakens the value of impartiality and equal opportunity

that it affords some people to position them better in the formal sector, while simultaneously declining others from obtaining the same advantages. In the case of some of the informal traders in Musina, their established entrepreneurial ventures put them in a formidable position within the border town's informal economy, giving them some power to undermine those already involved, as well as those trying to become informal traders. Space is equally exposed to and is a significant component of politics, while a place's social framework, political appeal and local customs are the result of social interaction (Massey, 1994). As expected, being in a more favourable position has a bearing on the cultural politics between informal traders.

5.4.1 Gate keeping

A recurrent theme in the interviews was a sense amongst participants that because of struggles endured through their own spatial practices, the trading sites from which they work from 'belonged' to them thereby justifying their control of the access to these spaces from other traders. For those who trade at *pama* Jews, there is a familial element which meant trading spaces could only be accessed through inheritance. A participant mentioned:

> *"Panapa itori family business. Pane very slow turnover zvekuti munhu anenge atokura kana kuti afa for a new person auye...Nokuti that's why even shoko randa taura ini re inheritance. Ehe! Vanhu vaitotaura kuti "Ini ndirikuto tarisira kufambisira chii, [vana vangu]. Ehe! Kuti kana afoira chikoro ashaya imwe nzira odini, oita."* [This is a family business. There is a very slow turnover that a person has to wait until someone dies or is too old for them takeover...Because that's why I even used this word - inheritance. Yes! People actually said, "I am working for [my

children's] future. Yes! So that if they fail at school this will be the alternative."] – (Interview with Ephraim, 19 June 2018).

Although some of the foreign currency dealers insisted that anyone was free to bring a chair and begin trading with other established traders, the responses from these participants still pointed to the fact that it could only be a relative of someone already known within the business, permitted to set up shop. However, for relatives to take over, the established foreign currency dealer has to inform their co-workers ahead of time reasons for their unavailability, which is usually that they have taken ill or had to travel back to Zimbabwe to attend to family matters. Those who are not family are immediately informed that their access to the trading site is temporary:

> *"Kana ndisipo munhu mutsva akauya, anongoudzwa kuti "Gara hako asi pane vamwe Mai vanombouya kuti vagare pano."* [If I am not here, and a new person arrives, they will just tell them "You can sit here but there is a lady who comes and works from here".] – (Interview with Mai Nyasha, 25 June 2018).

Here, we find that inheritance as a product of social space comprises of two elements from Lefebvre's triad analytic, namely representations of space and spatial practice. The family relation who takes over a trading site, however long the duration, does so because of the symbolic representation of it being a family enterprise and the everyday lived experiences of the informal trader that have made this a reality. According to Storey, (2018) territoriality is the result of the categorisation and separation of space; how it conceptualised specifically mirrors territory and how it is controlled, as well as how it calls for the control of those making use of it. It then follows that those who don't control the use of space, only have

temporary right to use as alluded by the participant above, or often are always prohibited from access. One participant was of the view that the restrictions from trading at *pama* Jews surround one's citizenship:

> *"Haa mumusika manje ndimo mandingati mune - ndimo mandingati mune tribalism umu. Yekunzi,"Iwewe hauna chitupa. Hatidi we passport. Tinoda we I.D straight, straight." Saka, iwewe ungazogarira izvozvo zvekuti "Iwe une passport hauna ID?" Umu musika umu manje muno netsa kuti uyione nzvimbo usina I.D. Ah makaipa."* [That market is where I would say – I would say there is tribalism there. They say, "You don't have an I.D. We don't want those with passports. We want I.Ds straight." So, are you supposed to sit and wait now, that "You have a passport and you don't have an I.D?" In that market over there it's difficult to find a place without an I.D. Ah its bad." – (Interview with Dezzi, 24 June 2018).

According to the current chairperson of the market in question, there are currently a hundred and eleven informal traders consisting of seven Eritreans, twenty Ethiopians and the rest are either South Africans or Zimbabweans working at *pama* Jews. On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, because the access to trading stalls is via inheritance, those interviewed who currently work at the market, have themselves taken over their current stalls from their parents. This would imply then that, in contrast to the participant's experience above, citizenship is not really an issue. In fact, it was suggested by the chairperson that it had been a very long time since they gave out trading stalls. She specified the reason saying:

> *"From the time, Jayson was the one who gave us stalls numbers.....And from there, we told ourselves because we paid too much money to Jayson and we fought for this*

place so that we won't be paying rent and everything. So we told ourselves no one will come here. So we won't be giving out stands." – (Interview with Mercy, 24 June 2018).

The emotional suffering and financial sacrifices made by informal traders to continue to trade in Musina is a view also echoed by a foreign currency dealer. The participant mentioned:

"Kudhara zvanga zvisina basa but now munoona kuti, we have been here for long. And tichisungwawo, tichiita sei, tichinobhadhara dzimari. And then you find kuti mumwe munhu anogouuyawo just from nowhere. Ongouyawo kungoti ndauya.....Takazvimirira because takatombo svika time yekutoti takatatoti dzimwe nguva vamwe vedu vakatobatwa, kutovharirwa. Kutozvi sacrifice. So you find kuti just for somebody wo kuti angouyawo just from nowhere, paa free? Iyezvino, ndipo patakutiwo iyezvino at least tavato free. Hatichanyanyo kunetswa so nemapurisa. So zvekutongoti munhu anongouyawo after this whole struggle ongouyawo ongogarawo ongoshanda? Ikozvinho vanhu havachabvumi. Honestly havachabvumi. Because tinotoudzana ipapo kuti tatokwana tiripano. Because you will find kuti takati munhu ngaauye ka, location rwese angobva kuZimbabwe nhasi ashaya zvekuitawo achanongo uyawo ongogarawo oti "Ndakushanda." [In the past it did not matter but now, you see we have been here for long. And we were being arrested and so forth, paying lots of money. And then you find that someone else, to just come here from nowhere. To just come here and say "I am here!" We stood up for ourselves because there even came a time where actually those days, our friends were arrested and incarcerated. They sacrificed themselves. So you find that just for somebody to come just from nowhere, where it's free? So you [will] find that right now at least we can

say we are now free. The police don't harass us as much. So for a person to just come after this whole struggle, to just come and sit here and work....? Right now people no longer allow it. Honestly they don't. Because we actually tell each other here that there are enough people here. Because you will find that if we allow people to come, the whole location, whoever arrived from Zimbabwe today who has nothing to do, they will just come here and sit and say they are working.] – (Interview with Rumbi, 28 June 2018).

Territoriality is a tactic that involves the categorisation of space between those included and excluded from accessing it in order to compel, confine or contain an individual's mobility, while at the same time sending a message regarding who has power and authority over that territory (Storey, 2018). One of the reasons why access to trading space is jealously guarded by those already using it is the low barrier in starting out as a trader in Musina's informal economy. For example, to trade in foreign currency, roughly R500 is needed and knowledge of the official bank currency rates for the day which traders then charge on the black market. Informal foreign currency dealers differ from the authorised currency traders in that they do not charge commission. In all cases, participants reported that there has been an increase in traders over the years, thus increasing the competition. For some interviewees, particularly food vendors, their control of access to formal spaces at the N1 and *pama* Jews has not reduced the competition within the informal economic sector of food vending. One participant commented:

"Those who sell mobile affect us. We actually made the decision to not sell certain things like bananas because how is a person going to come to buy from us when ***they***

go to you? There is no more space to be allocated here. The municipality told us" – (Interview with Nthabiseng, 28 June 2018).

With regards to seasonal wholesale tomato vending, informal traders made an agreement that wholesale tomatoes should only be sold by the crate and not in smaller quantities in order for permanent food vending to remain sustainable. Wholesale tomato vending had an added convenience that it brought to the other food vendors when they need to restock the product, saving them a trip to the farms. However, because wholesale tomato vendors deliberately chose to park in front of *pama* Jews, there were different views regarding how this affected the food vendors from the market. One participant felt that the location of wholesale tomato vendors brought more customers who would then buy other products such as, potatoes. Other traders, though, did not share this view. Commenting on whether parking the cars in front of the market affected them, one interviewee said:

"It does [affect us] cos you will find out that, they will close - cos you find the cars being tight together, and a customer won't come. (Man chimes in: Or they will not even stop because there is no parking.).....[Also] these ones affect us that our tomatoes are no longer [selling]. Like people who are cooking inside they used to buy here. But now you find broken tomatoes they will give them [away] for free. You see. So that's where it affects us." – (Interview with Mercy, 24 June 2018).

The decision by wholesale tomato traders to go against the informal agreement and resort to selling tomatoes in smaller quantities for R10 is one of the ways they try to minimise losses and recoup costs.

Musina's political economy is so conducive for informal entrepreneurial activities that in their attempts to control the spaces they occupy, informal traders have not been able to keep competition at bay. Lefebvre (1991) argues that the spatial should not only be understood as something that is physical because the word 'occupy' is a figure of speech borrowed from the daily experiences of space. The individual embodies space through their conceptions of it, before they use their political agency to produce space (ibid). For this reason, by their mere presence, informal traders without trading permits or approval from their competitors to trade personify space even before the actual production of space takes place.

5.5 Cultural politics

5.5.1 Gender

Social space also comprises of particular representations concerning the social relations of production and reproduction, and these symbolic representations of male and female, work to reinforce these social relations in a state of simultaneity and unity (Lefebvre, 1991). It was the view of participants that although women dominated the informal trade in Musina, trading spaces were neither formally nor informally coded by gender – they were accessible to both men and women. Massey (1994) argues that there is dualism in the portrayal of space which consists of and mirrors the masculinity and femininity found in society's sexism. Space was at times viewed through a gender stereotypical lens, which had an influence on social relations and whether or not that space was conducive for trading. One participant commented:

> *“ Ndiko kwatakato tangira ikoko ku[name withheld]….Takabva because tawona kuti tawandisa. Because like, anenge angouyawo munomu asina zvekuita, akangofunga kuti “Ndongoendawo, ndakango itawo exchange money”, anongo tangira ikoko. Ndakazongo bva hangu ndirikuona kuti tanga tawandisa plus futi pakawandisa vakadzi futi.... mutauro unowandisa! Yah so I just decided to move.”* [I actually started working there at [name withheld]. We left because we saw that there were so many of us. Because like, whoever decides to come here and has nothing to do, if they just get the idea that, “If I can just go there, and start exchanging money”, they usually start there. I left because I saw there were so many of us there, plus if there are many of us women there.....there will be too much talk! Yah so I just decided to move.] – (Interview with Rumbi, 28 June 2018).

The various positions individuals hold as part of spaces makes them have diverse experiences and interpretations of the social relations that occur within it (Massey, 1994). For instance, in a strong patriarchal society where masculinity is the norm, femininity represents difference and these understandings of culture are conveyed onto the spatial as codes such as strength, humility, domination or subordination (Ohlsson, 2013). The participant’s account above reflects an experience of space which is gendered through clichés of the feminine being petty and gossips, because the space is exclusively dominated by women. At *pama* Jews, the numerical dominance of women was seen as an advantage by that group in that it allowed for them to gain more respect from their male counterparts. A participant in a position of power at the market felt that men were more receptive to her authority than women. Talking about this issue she said:

"They respect me, especially Ethiopian guys. If I say, "I don't want this", they know I don't want this. Actually, men respect me more than women..... Because when I talk to the women, some they speak back. But when I talk to a man, they just keep quiet and do what I am telling them." - (Interview with Mercy, 28 June 2018).

The account above illustrates again that social spaces are political spaces. While it cannot be said outright that *pama* Jews is a gendered space, a male informant spoke about how he had to adjust to working with so many women there. He commented:

"Yah certainly [vakadzi ndivo vanotonga]. Chinodiwa pa that provision kutoziva kuti ndozvazviri. Because you cannot simply override them nokuti ndivo vane majority...Zvanga zvine machallenges because environment ine vanhukadzi vane ma behaviour sechi, semukadzi. But at times unofanirwa kungoita suit to the environment because ndiyo environment yauri. At times unogona kuva sokuti you don't exist sokuti kana vachiita nyaya dzavo - pane nyaya dzevanhu kadzi unotoona kuti this is nyaya dzevanhukadzi idzi." [Yes certainly [it is women who rule]. What is required of this situation is the knowledge that this is the way things are. Because you cannot simply override them because they are the ones in majority...There were some challenges because an environment with women, they behave as women. But at times you have to just adapt to the environment because that's the environment you find yourself in. At times, it will be as if you don't exist because when they engage in their conversations – there are conversations for women that you can actually see that these are women's stories.] – (Interview with Ephraim, 19 June 2018).

Lefebvre (1991:358) argues that "spatial practice regulates life – it does not create it. Space has no power 'in itself', nor does space as such determine spatial contradictions." Therefore, the tension that emerges in response to a woman's authority or a man's attempt to adapt to a space dominated by the presence of another gender, are either symptoms or reflections of what is already occurring in society. What is decisive is not just the spatial proximity that is allowing for these contradictions to manifest in this way, but the "relations of power in which that proximity is embedded" (Massey, 1994:167).

5.5.2 Ethnopolitics

Poor and marginalised groups take part in various strategies to support their source of revenue through associational activities generally grounded on family and kinship networks (Brown et al., 2010). In data from research conducted for my Honours degree, it emerged that the creation of a savings investment society or stokvel by clothing street vendors helped to forge a collective occupational identity and sense of community amongst participants, which was pivotal in facilitating their formal recognition by the Musina municipality to trade formally in the town as hawkers. In the current research, the only participants who were actively part of stokvels were foreign currency dealers, and they viewed them as just a safety net to help recover financially when things were slow or, when they had been victims of armed robberies or fraud through counterfeiting. However, the *pama* Jews market's committee worked similarly to the clothing street vendors' stovkel in that, overall, the relationships amongst market traders solidified since their efforts to stop their eviction by Mr Rana.

According to Lindell (2008) market committees generally have substantial influence over governing traders and also, have the authority to temporarily prevent the traders from engaging in entrepreneurial activities at the market. During fieldwork, the researcher witnessed an aggressive confrontation between market traders in *pama* Jews, and unfortunately, because she does not speak *tshi*Venda, could not understand what the confrontation was all about. One participant, who witnessed the dispute, commented:

> *"Because on Tuesday there was a fight here. Just because of jealousy. That's when I saw that it was jealousy. I even told them that, "You are jealous of another one", because this one - the wife was given a market by their church members. They are Somalians. So he left the market to the wife. And the husband they met here, so they got married. This side, these two are Eritreans. Those ones are Ethiopians. So the Eritreans are jealous of the Ethiopians.... They [are] selling the same things. The problem is that they are taking their, I don't know, tribalis[m] from home. So they brought it here. That's the problem we are having with Ethiopians but with us, no."*- (Interview with Mercy, 28 June 2018).

At the time of the research, the *pama* Jews market committee consisted of only four members, as the other three members had recently passed on. In order to bring calm to the marketplace, those involved in the fight were suspended for two weeks. Often, the traders would come back apologising to everyone after they experienced the loss of income. The participant continued:

> *"And you see [the] Ethiopians; people feel pity for them because they pay too much rent where they stay. So everything that they do, its money! So you will find us*

actually feeling bad, to feel pity to them, to say, "Just because you apologized and you went down, okay try." - (Interview with Mercy, 28 June 2018).

According to the participants, problems of tribalism or religious differences did not occur with "dark skinned" traders but with traders whom they categorised as 'Ethiopians' – which was usually everyone from Ethiopia, Somalia or Eritrea. Additionally, there was the perception that those classified 'Ethiopians' together with individuals categorised as 'Indians' – that is, those from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan – preferred to pay high rentals by sharing accommodation in Musina's low density areas, as opposed to staying in the locations of Nancefield, Matswale or Mushongoville were most participants stayed. The decision to rent and share houses in Musina's suburbs was generally informed by the fear of becoming victims of violence at the locations. A participant explained:

"There are three mosques in Musina; two in town, one in the location. I live down the road from the one mosque in town....It's easier to come over when you have family and relatives from Bangla who can teach you everything. I live there with my sister, her husband and 3 kids. We rent a house for R6 000 excluding water and electricity. We share the costs of food....Some of my friends own spaza shops in the location but it's more risky and dangerous to stay there because they always get robbed." - (Interview with Moosa*, 27 June 2018). *Please refer to Appendix 1 on participants.



Image 8. Arrows point to the two Mosques in Musina town. Highlighted area; Nancefield and Mushongoville. *Source: Google maps*

The account above is an example of Zack's (2015) argument of how migrants in Johannesburg's inner city expressed the importance of ethnic enclaves as spaces that allowed them to share the costs of economic threats, benefits of social protection, while upholding cultural norms from their countries' of origin. What is rather interesting is that, in a border town such as Musina with different nationalities and cultures, the ethnic enclave is the space of comfort for some migrants. Although there was some empathy for 'Indians' and 'Ethiopians' paying high prices for accommodation, their decision to reside in Musina's low density area's seem to reinforce their group identity as attributed by the other informal traders. One participant commented:

> *"It's their choice. Because some Ethiopians they stay at the location..... Because they pay too much rent where they are staying in town. I have got a friend, they pay rent from R4 000 to R5 000 for two rooms! In town my dear! You know what, you will find white people neh, they will move to - you see white people they build houses, and a room outside. They will go to that room, white people, and that whole house will be rented out. But it's a want. It's not a need. It's a want. Because at the location right*

now....What I know is that there are some flats. It's a bachelor flat, some they've got 2 rooms. It's R2 000 - 2 500. Electricity and water, air condition is there. Geyser is there. So it's a want. It's not a need." – (Interview with Mercy, 28 June 2018).

In general, there was a perception amongst participants that those classified as 'Ethiopians' and 'Indians' enjoyed larger amounts of income regardless of the scale of their enterprises. For instance, foreign currency dealers mentioned that for foreign currency transactions of around R100 000, they usually dealt with the 'Indians', as it was not advisable for them to carry such large amounts of cash on hand. Despite the abundant economic relationships between informal traders and small medium enterprises within the border town, the overt cultural differences took precedence. As one participant explained:

"That's why I am saying on our side, isu vanhu vatema hatiite izvi. But ivo, that's where we see. Ndizvo patinotanga kuzvioona..... We get along. You will never see mukadzi akazvivhara nemukadzi akapfeka bhurugwa vachifamba vese. Never! I have never seen that." [That's why I am saying on our side, us dark-skinned people don't do this. But with them, that's where we see [it]. That's where we start seeing it...We get along. You will never see a woman in a hijab and a woman wearing pants walking together. Never! I have never seen that.] – (Interview with Mercy, 28 June 2018).

According to Massey, (1994) gender and ethnicity are profoundly connected in our daily spatial experiences, and determine how we position ourselves within social relations. In Musina, those involved in the informal sector are all intertwined from the cross border trader, to the foreign currency dealer, food vendors and those who sell other goods such as appliances and clothing. All these economic actors rely on each other for the informal

economic activities to take place. However, there is cognizance that 'Ethiopians' and 'Indians' have a larger economic capital than other informal traders, making them vulnerable targets to criminal activities. 'Ethiopians' and 'Indians' become even more wary and turn to their ethnic enclaves as a sanctuary in response. On the other hand, their isolation from other informal traders and migrant groups reinforces ethnocentrism and group identities.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter began by describing the circumstances that brought about awareness amongst informal traders to mobilise their political identities in order to gain control of their trading spaces. A collective power emerged amongst the traders at *pama* Jews to organize and fight against eviction. The chapter went on to detail the role of the state, particularly Musina municipality, in both the allocation and production of public space. In doing so, this chapter identified the fluid relationships between the local government and informal traders that at times facilitated the open violation of city regulations on the use of public space. This section also explained how different the relations between the informal traders and the state are; from their expectations as urban citizens, to legal battles and, open resistance to city spatial regulations. It was then argued that these experiences are the basis for the control of access to trading space by informal traders. In addition, the data presented in this section illustrates that migrants categorised as 'Ethiopians' or 'Indians' self-identify with their countries of origin; the former is specifically exemplified by disagreements participants alluded to be a legacy of ethnic tensions that stem from migratory roots. However, as this section has argued, the attributions of national identities as either 'Ethiopian' or 'Indian' has led to an association of Musina's low density residential areas with these groups and thus contributing to the production of difference in space. Finally, this chapter proposed that while Musina border

town enables informal traders to have multiple economic relationships with other traders and small micro enterprises, gender and ethnic relations still reflect the broader stereotypes and vulnerabilities experienced by particular groups in society.

CHAPTER 6: FINAL THOUGHTS

The aim of the of this research was firstly, to investigate the ways in which food vendors and currency traders involvement in Musina's informal economy produced and transformed public space, influencing the spatial dynamics in the town. The most obvious finding to emerge from this research is that whether it was privately or publicly owned spaces in Musina, spatial conversion and production by informal traders was facilitated through the help of or approval from the state. In addition, the research has shown that, for some informal traders', their perceptions of space for the purposes of trading were not restricted to Musina CBD but actually went beyond the local. This meant that at times, traders engaged in their informal economic activities at the South African side of the border post, or by crossing the Beitbridge border to sell at markets in Zimbabwe.

The second aim of this research was to ascertain the ways in which the informal traders understood their political subjectivity in relation to the spatial politics within the border town. The results of this research show that there were at least four ways in which this transpired. Firstly, for food vendors from *pama* Jews, the politics of space in Musina was a racialized contestation between those with power and influence against the "poor black" informal

traders. Citizenship and ethnic identity was also perceived to have had a significant role in regulating one's access to trading space at *pama* Jews and the acquisition of street hawker permits from the local municipality. Thirdly, those who were in possession of hawker permits, as municipal citizens, felt that Musina municipality fell short regarding certain aspects of its service delivery. Finally, most participants understood that as current users of their trading space, the transformation and production of these spaces came with adversity and sacrifice, thus justifying why they restricted other informal traders from trying to establish their businesses from these spaces.

In general, therefore, it seems that these results provide insights on how space in Musina as a whole represents a market of opportunities and the flexibility afforded by informal economic activities allows this to occur. As one participant described it, "Whatever is popular at the time is what everyone is selling; today its tomatoes, tomorrow it may be peaches! It just takes one person to realize what's making money for the whole of Musina to join them the next morning!" For instance, at the time the research was conducted, it was rumoured that the popularity of the FIFA world cup was making the sale of television sets and DSTV decoders quite a profitable venture.

The use of space had a historical significance to some informal traders, as this meant that the spatial also symbolised experiences of struggle and sacrifice that then influenced how participants related to each other and to other traders. For some, the space was a legacy worth protecting for the future use of their chosen successors. For others, the everyday realities as users of space involved negotiation or daily contributions (i.e sweeping, cleaning windows). Thus, for these reasons, informal traders understood how favourable their trading spaces were and their need to protect them.

Conceptualising the spatial as not only local, but beyond the physical border allowed some informal traders to adapt to the restrictions in accessing space placed upon them by the state or other traders. This finding contributes to our understanding of informality, particularly how informal activity is important in its production of informal space as a periphery to formal space as argued by Laguerre. The border town of Musina as a whole can be viewed as a periphery to the Beitbridge border post, which is the formal space. Because of the border, informal economic activities such as foreign currency trading thrive in Musina, despite the presence of authorised currency traders.

Overall, when analysing the relationship between space and identity, this research strengthens the idea that social space contributes to the production of difference as first suggested by Lefebvre. Participants' experiences of social space were often shaped by two fundamentals; firstly, how space was conceived by those who owned it (i.e Mr Klaff, Mr Rana, the state) in contrast to those who made use of if it (the informal traders), which then determined if all parties interests were aligned or not. Secondly, social interactions were at times influenced by stereotypical social constructions of gender and ethnic identities. This resulted in assumptions that to access space involved patronage or verification of one's national identity as a method to decide who was South African in a town where most people could converse in Shona. In addition, there were constructions of the spatial that associated Musina's low residential areas with 'Ethiopian' or 'Indian' ethnic identities and furthered assumptions that these groups kept to themselves.

These results add to the growing body of research in African urbanism, particularly how these processes occur in an African border town. The evidence from this research suggests

that informal traders exercised their political agency at three levels; firstly, as subaltern economic agents who challenged Musina municipality by removing a street sign, as well as in the daily activities of mobile informal trading. The second level finds informal traders at *pama* Jews not only challenging the market's committee aligned with Mr Rana, but establishing a new committee that would organise the rest of the traders collectively to contest the eviction both legally and through protest action. Finally, informal traders exercise their political agency in a passive aggressive manner by choosing at times to not pay for their traders' fees or attend meetings called upon by the Musina municipality as a way to express their dissatisfaction with the local government. Therefore, this study allows for an understanding of the processes of urbanism that occur within the unique socio-economic and political context of Musina that cannot be addressed by Western urban theory.

This study was limited by the absence of an official contribution from a representative from the Musina municipality. It was not possible therefore, to get the local government's position on some of the information provided by participants with regards to the arrangement made by Mr Klaff and the Musina municipality, or the circumstances surrounding Mr Rana's purchase of the stand. Since the research was limited to the perspectives of the informal traders, it was not possible to assess how their production and transformation of space significantly contributed to the town's spatial dynamics without the state's official contribution. Notwithstanding these limitations, this research certainly adds to our understanding of how urban marginality in an African border town and, how individuals embody space before the actual production of space takes place. This would be a fruitful area for further work, particularly on the other side of the Beitbridge border in order to understand how the conceptualisations of space by Musina informal traders that view space beyond the local, influence the production of space on the other side.

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APPENDIX 1 - About the participants

Kundayi* – An informal cross-border courier also known as malaicha whose services are not limited to the buying and selling of agricultural products in South Africa and Zimbabwe. This male participant is aged 32 and has been an informal cross-border courier for eight years. The study recognizes him as a food vendor as he is only involved in the trading of seasonal agricultural products when it's profitable.

Ephraim* – A food vendor who works from a stall at Old Market taxi rank and trades in perishable agricultural products. Married male aged 41 with two children. He studied mechanical engineering and his wife is studying towards a degree in child development. He identifies as a Zimbabwean and has been in Musina for almost a decade. According to him, his late mother was one of the first food vendors at the market.

Mama Wendy* – A clothing street vendor who has a permit to trade as a hawker. At the time of the study, the participant was now food vending by being involved in the illegal wholesale trade of tomatoes from the back of her bakkie in the streets of Musina's central business district. Aged 47, this female participant identifies as South African and lives with her partner. She has five children.

David* – Food vendor involved in the illegal wholesale trade of tomatoes from the back of his pickup truck in the streets of Musina's central business district. Unmarried male aged 38 and worked in construction in Johannesburg six months prior to the interview taking place.

Identifies as Zimbabwean and has four school going children who still reside in his country of origin.

Dezzi* – Food vendor involved in the illegal wholesale trade of agricultural products from the back of his pickup truck in the streets of Musina's central business district since 2014. Prior to this, the participant used to work as a shop assistant in the small microenterprises (SME) ran by Asian migrants. Aged 28, he is married with three children and they live together in Musina.

Mercy* – A food vendor who works from a stall at Old Market taxi rank trading in perishable agricultural products and is the chairperson of the markets committee. Unmarried female aged 33 with two children who is the breadwinner of her household as her partner does not work. Originally from Malawi but identifies as South African. She has been trading at the market for 11 years.

Rumbi* – A foreign currency dealer aged 38. This divorced female participant has three children, one who lives with her and the other two living back in her country of origin, Zimbabwe. She migrated to South Africa in 2008 and began by braiding hair for a year before dealing in currency trading.

Bongi* – A foreign currency dealer aged 42. This female participant who identifies as South African has more than 20 years working in Musina. Prior to currency trading, she used to sell cool drinks. She has a daughter.

Moosa* - Runs a small microenterprise (SME) stocked with bags and shoes. Unmarried male aged 24 and identifies as Bangladeshi. Migrated to South Africa aged 16 and previously resided in Johannesburg before settling in Musina six years ago.

Nthabiseng* – Food vendor who has a hawker permit and trades in agricultural products along the N1. Aged 37, this female participant identifies as South African. She is married with two children but her husband is employed.

Mai Nyasha*– Female currency dealer. Age not provided. Identifies as Zimbabwean. Also sells cigarettes.

Mai Tanaka* – Female currency dealer who has been in Musina since 2011. Age not provided. Identifies as Zimbabwean.

Appendix 2 - Interview Guide

1) When did you start vending or trading in Musina?
2) What processes did you follow to work in the current trade?
3) How did you come to work in this particular location?
4) What was the most important factor when deciding where to conduct your trading?
5) Have you experienced conflict/tension over trading space? If so, how have you dealt with it?
6) Are you involved in collective organisations such as stokvels and have they been instrumental in accessing trading space?
7) In what ways has your gender or national identity played a role in influencing access to trading space?
8) What has been the municipality's response to your appropriation or transformation of public space as informal traders?