Spoken Crossings: Listening to South Asian East African Oral & Digital History, 1950s-1970s.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the mid-20th century lives of South Asians of different religious and cultural backgrounds who migrated to East Africa, through Oral History among other historical source material. It aims to challenge the ideas that have been put forward about these women in literature in the past, and to do so, it explores the extent to which local and transnational negotiations were essential parts of their lives as historical actors who experienced migration and navigated ideas, expectations and political formations that took place around them. Therefore, it argues that their actions can be seen as moments of defiance of physical and metaphorical borders. This project has two parts: firstly, there is a clear historiographical element, exploring a period in East African and Global History where historical actors were navigating colonial and post-independence landscapes - these are dealt with in the first two chapters. Secondly, but equally, it works with contemporary public history in its creation of an Oral History project that supports the transnational nature of the communities that contribute to it. For this reason, an online community Oral History space is developed into this project, the uses and benefits of which are detailed in the final chapter.

Link to capstone project

Acknowledgement Page

This thesis would of course not have been possible without the women and men who I worked with on this project and who offered to share with us their life stories from East Africa and beyond. Here, I thank them and offer them my gratitude for being able to share with me such a special moment of reflection on our shared histories. I also thank my supervisor, Professor Pedro Cardim for his support and guidance, and my second reader Professor Rin Odawara. I also extend this thanks to professors and colleagues at NOVA, TUFS and CEU for their help and support during this master's program.

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1. Introduction

> "Raat thodi ne vesh jaja, *the proverb I grew up on.* The night is short and our garments change. *Meaning: Don't put down roots. Don't get too comfortable. By dawn, we may be on the move, forced to reinvent ourselves in order to survive. Invest only in what we can carry. Passports. Education. Jewellery."* [1]
>
> - Shailja Patel

1.1 Hypothesis and argument

This thesis explores the mid-20th century lives of South Asians of different religious and cultural backgrounds who migrated to East Africa and aims to bring their lives into dialogue with one another, focusing on women's stories primarily. It aims to challenge the ideas that have been put forward about these women in literature in the past, and to do so, it explores the extent to which local and transnational negotiations were essential parts of their lives as communities who experienced migration. Therefore, it asks to what extent these networks were used to navigate the colonial political realities in East Africa in the mid to late-20th century, and how their actions might be seen as moments of defiance of physical and metaphorical borders. The capstone project formed results in an online Oral History community space, where I argue that these trends are visible.

[1] Shailja Patel, *Migritude*. (New York City: Kaya Press, 2010), 10.

This research concerns histories roughly between the 1950s and 1970s, focusing largely on modern day Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique, but more widely on the historical space of East Africa and the Indian Ocean world. It engages with Oral Histories, along with newspapers, biographies, writings and images, to link the personal with larger historical trends that were taking place in these countries at the time. Homes, shops, streets, public spaces, places of worship, workplaces and cinemas, among others, are thus arenas within which boundaries were drawn, redrawn, defied and pushed to their limits by these historical actors. It explores a period in history with significant changes in the lives of young South Asians in East Africa, who were experiencing new social and political realities compared to those of their parents and grandparents' generation. Most of the women who experienced their youth in East Africa later migrated in their young adulthood to Europe, North America or South Asia, and became what is commonly known as 'twice migrants'.

Naturally we encounter the question of why is this historical investigation important, and how might it be meaningful? This thesis aims to listen to the life stories of these ageing community members, many of whom expressed that they rarely had a chance to reflect on their histories even within their own families and the next generation. This research is for them, their community reflection and also to add texture to the historiography as it stands, attempting to approach it from a more holistic perspective. However, the reader should have caution here about the dangers of this kind of history based on life stories - Savita Nair wrote on this, "*While life histories may give an impression of being the true "voice" of the individual, it is important to remember that they are acts of production and researchers participate in creating the*

product."[2] Therefore this thesis unpacks the ways that we can understand oral testimonies through this historical lens.

Within this thesis, different memories and moments will be put forward to interrogate the ideas that have been prevalent in the literature of women *only* as static beings, representations of stability and upholders of tradition. The dichotomy is often highlighted in the South Asian migrant imagination between the *ghar* and *bahir*, or the home and the world, which were often associated with women and men respectively.[3] Rather, it will aim to explore how women, as their identities were constructed by experiences of coloniality, were historical actors first that navigated ideas, expectations and political formations that took place around them.

Within this, this thesis puts forth answers to the questions; How can we understand the spaces that South Asian East African women during the 1950s-1970s operated within? To what extent do local and transnational spaces hold as important sites of remembrance for these communities that challenge national boundaries? How can oral testimonies, and the memories within them, challenge dominant historical narratives of a group/community? And finally, how can the histories, memories and identities of these women, being that they are complex and imbued with many different experiences, encounter public history?

Overall, it argues that the local spaces were key for these migrant groups in pushing the limits of territorial boundaries and were places of continuous renegotiation of borders which did not represent their fluid life trajectories. Furthermore, categorisations that have been used for a

[2] Savita Nair, *Moving life histories: Gujarat, East Africa, and the Indian Diaspora, 1880–2000.* Ph.D. diss., (University of Pennsylvania, 2001). 42.
[3] Joanna Herbert (2009) "Oral histories of Ugandan Asians in Britain: gendered identities in the diaspora", *Contemporary South Asia,* 17:1, 24.

long time to talk about these communities, which have their roots in colonial categorisations, are insufficient in talking about their lives, being that they are imbued with such varied realities.

This project has two parts: firstly, there is a clear historiographical element, exploring a period in East African and Global history where historical actors were navigating colonial and post-independence landscapes - these are dealt with in the first two chapters. Secondly, but equally, it works with contemporary public history in its creation of an Oral History project that supports the transnational nature of the communities that contribute to it. For this reason, an online community Oral History space is developed into this project, the uses and benefits of which are detailed in the final chapter of this thesis.

1.2 Theoretical framing

The quote at the start of this chapter from Kenyan-born South Asian writer Shailja Patel encapsulates the difficulties of holding identity in a world defined by borders and nation states. This thesis attempts to look at how these ways of organising history have been challenged in the past and how we might argue for histories that do not exclude those on the margins of the nation states.[4] In her book *Cartographies of Diaspora,* Ugandan-Punjabi sociologist Avtar

[4] The research selects 'East Africa' to refer to the areas of central and south-central parts of the African continent which sit on the Indian Ocean. This includes the modern nations of Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique but also occasionally other neighbouring countries too. This is due to similarities of experience between these places as colonies of the British and Portuguese empires. Although experiences in Mozambique were significantly different, we see many similarities in the lives of the South Asian communities there, many of whom migrated from the same places as those who settled in Tanzania and Kenya, which is why it is included in this research.
The terms 'South Asians' and 'Indians' refer to people who come from the Indian subcontinent, but in fact, all of the oral histories discussed come from the western coasts of pre-independent India (Goa, Gujarat, Punjab) and Pakistan. Prior to the partition of India in 1947, these communities mainly identified with being from their specific cultural or linguistic communities. In East Africa, they were classified as 'Asians', a term which is avoided in order not to reproduce colonial racial categorisations.

Brah detailed the complexities of migrant conceptualisations of the self she had encountered in an interview;

> *'I am a Ugandan of Indian descent,' I had replied. He seemed satisfied by my answer. But, of course, he could not see that I could be both. The body in front of him was already inscribed within the gendered social relations of the colonial sandwich. I could not just 'be'. I had to name an identity, no matter that this naming rendered invisible all the other identities—of gender, caste, religion, linguistic group, generation….*[5]

Studies of the movement of identities and globalisation have taken many different pathways in recent decades. Brah was one author who explored the formation of identity and its connections with nationalism. The theoretical basis of this thesis is informed by these historical global migrations of people, looking towards Indian Ocean History and more broadly World History. The anthropologist Arjun Appadurai wrote extensively on migration, media and space, work which this dissertation is also informed by - he argued that the globalised world feeds the formation of post-national identities, beyond borders, with the help of media and imagination. This, he argued, creates what he deemed "diasporic public spheres" where those disconnected from their homeland occupy community spaces through imagination.[6] His work also built on that of Benedict Anderson, who identified the '*imagined communities'* created by nation states in order to elicit a national sentiment.[7] These debates were taking place alongside similar discussions in historical studies, whereby historians theorised over how we might approach histories outside of national borders in the future - from this, Global History and Indian Ocean

[5] Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. (London, Routledge: 1996), 2.
[6] Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization. (*Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996) 4-10.
[7] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of. Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

history emerged.[8] Sugata Bose characterised the Indian ocean as an *'interregional arena'* where many different ideas have connected with one another.[9] Isobel Hofmeyr describes the Indian ocean sphere as one where we can think about different ways that identities are constructed and formed through interaction with many different historical processes, such as empire and whiteness. Hofmeyr goes on to lay out the different waves of analysis of the Indian diaspora which have taken place in recent decades - the first was the 1960s wave, where historians focused on the traces of Indian culture and how it had evolved and remained. The second wave looked at what she calls "theories of purity and pollution" and the interaction between Indian identities with other non/Indian cultures. Finally, she highlights the more recent wave of the exploration of the Indian diasporic communities as colonial constructions - which this thesis builds upon.[10] Within the area of African history, Frederick Cooper in 1994 called for historians to rethink the territorial scope of colonial African History, and urged historians to encounter more moments that did not necessarily fit into the binary dichotomies between the state on the one hand, and anti-colonial nationalism on the other, that historians had previously presented.[11] This thesis hopes to contribute to this widening of the scope of understanding of histories of the Indian diasporas outside of the national paradigm, and their position in Global History.

Having outlined this focus on movement of people and the changing formation of nation states, this dissertation looks towards Migration History. Area Studies and Diaspora Studies, though they are useful in identifying how people connect to places, can often act to reinforce territorial

[8] The tradition of Global History was also linked in the past to the emergence of History from Below, of which the aims were viewed not only to widen the scope of historical studies, but also a rejection of the nationalist paradigm in history.
Sabyasachi Bhattacharya,"'History from Below.'" *Social Scientist* 11, no. 4 (1983): 6, 8.

[9] Isabel Hofmeyr, "The Black Atlantic Meets the Indian Ocean: Forging New Paradigms of Transnationalism for the Global South" – *Literary and Cultural Perspectives, Social Dynamics*, 33:2 (2007), 6.
[10] ibid.19.
[11] Frederick Cooper, Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 109.

boundaries more than they challenge them. A number of historians have argued this position, but as historian Savita Nair wrote, "*they do not imagine the world".* Meaning, they too are constrained by boundaries, which the World History and Migration History fields attempted to challenge.[12] Nair writes, *"cultural and social identities in motion across borders are imprisoned by nationality as it appears on passports stamped at the border. The possibility that regions rather than nations represent homelands for migrants and the capacity of regions to participate in histories that escape the nation, are thus obliterated."* Therefore, historians must try to move beyond borders so as not to ignore those who were missing from national histories, and must also avoid, as Diaspora Studies can tend to do, using binary oppositions as modes of analysis; such as the 'home' and the 'host' country, the 'destination' vs. 'origin', the 'migrant' vs. the 'settler'.[13] This dissertation, though it is located in spaces in East Africa, is a global story of movement, zooming in on particular 'moments', but is also contemporary in that the archive created through this research is a part of documenting memories and contemporary lives of the participants. Like the work of Global Historians, this project departs from a point of challenging Eurocentric notions of space and asks questions that aim to connect history with lived social and spatial experiences, which can only be achieved when we take the world as a framework on which to base the analysis.

1.2.1 The subject and positionality

It is important now to lay out the departure point of this research. Why, and indeed how, does this thesis deal with the histories of South Asian women in East Africa, given that it concerns

[12] Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton University Press, 2016), 80-86.
[13] Nair, *Moving Life Histories*, 27.

a wide variety of experiences where many different historical processes are acting upon these women?

The silencing of women's voices in history has deep linages, relating to power and patriarchal structures.[14] In her writing, the author Nita Kumar questions the purpose of women as "subjects", and how we can conceptualise them.[15] She calls us to immediately deconstruct the idea of the woman as a subject, otherwise we certainly fall into the trap of placing orientalist, colonialist and imperialist ideas upon them. The "woman" is a colonial category, an invention, as is "South Asian" and "Indian" - these would not exist without historical processes. The subject and object dichotomy, she says, can be challenged by a very simple concept known well to South Asian philosophy - knowledge is plural and heterogeneous, and many truths can exist at once. She writes about the ways that we can understand the position of women as subjects of history:

> *"Even while we want to act for the liberation of women, we must acknowledge that women, as such, have neither been liberated nor repressed. Rather there have been a succession of discourses about femininity, about purity, virtue, honour and womanhood that have displayed knowledge and power differently at different periods. The pattern of these discourses have been androcentric and patriarchal: man as the subject, the rational knower. The constitution of man as subject has been a power ploy. So must the constitution of women as subject be seen to be."*[16]

[14] See Miriam Meyerhoff, "Doing and Saying: Some Words on Women's Silence," in Mary Bucholtz, ed., *Language and Woman's Place: Text and Commentaries*, revised and expanded ed. (Toronto, 2004), p. 209. On how women's histories have been silenced historically in archives.

[15] Nair's work on the woman as a subject is informed by a number of historians, anthropologists and sociologists whose work came before hers, including Nita Kumar's (1994) *Women as Subjects,* Partha Chatterjee (1989) work in *Recasting Women*, and Foucault (1980) *Power/Knowledge*, among many others.

[16] Nita Kumar, *Women as Subjects: South Asian Histories* / eds. Nita Kumar. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), 9.

Therefore, simply placing women's voices into the narrative would be as much a falsity as when they are and have been historically ignored. And so, she argues that in using these terms that were constructed by western philosophical thought, we must then do the work of deconstructing their meanings and distancing ourselves as much as possible from orientalist and essentialist tropes.[17] This may be impossible, because they are inherent with biases, but I argue that focusing on women's stories still holds value - not to insert them into the existing historical narrative, but build new narratives that break away from old colonial structures of practising history. And so, the women discussed in this thesis are not subjects but historical actors - it is emphasised that the only things that really bind these women as specifically women, are the historical processes that act upon them, and the kinds of navigations they must make within these processes. What we understand as *male voices*, and other historical actors, even though they are not the focus of this project, are essential to its conception and realisation at all stages. Further sections detail this process, but it is important to highlight here that this thesis attempts to listen to the life stories and memories of women, alongside other historical source material.

This project is a collaboration between the project participants, supervisors, and the author: a second generation East African-South Asian-British; who grew up between Scotland and Tanzania. This offers problems and benefits, and is simultaneously interesting to be able to understand more deeply the histories that shape my own life, but also cautionary, in that it may cause an imposition of my own knowledge and biases upon the historical actors whose stories participate in the telling of this narrative. This research is informed by curiosities about the

[17] Ibid. 10-12.

lineages of these family histories. In Yasmin Alibhai-Brown's autobiography about her life growing up in Uganda as a second generation-South Asian, she writes:

> *"East African Asians have been very wary of written words and records which, once set down, can hold you to ransom, come and get you."*

She recalls an instance where her father discovered a collection of her diaries and letters and burned them without consulting her. She was warned by relatives that words can bring shame to the family. She goes on to reason *"For practical, enterprising folk, too busy doing and making and moving, there is no space for self or group-reflection. Artistic expression or the life of imagination is thought a foolish waste of time*".[18] Of course, this was only one experience, but this resonates with the version of history that I saw within my own family. Histories were shared carefully, sometimes reluctantly, and never really with the right words to express what happened. They were expressed in living rooms full of aunties, uncles and cousins, or over a small, cramped table at my grandmother's house in England, over hot cups of chai or steaming puris eaten with *achhar*, jumping between one person's memory to the next, and almost always laden with hasty mistranslations. It has only been in recent years that I have learned more and spoken more openly with those in my life about their migration stories and those who migrated at a similar time to them.

Therefore, this thesis takes the narrative choice to engage with the reader often through the first and the third person, representing a conversation between the various contributors to the project. A number of works have been written about the use of the first person perspective in

[18] Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, *The Settler's Cookbook: A Memoir of Love, Migration and Food"* (London: Portobello Books, 2009), 13-14.

history writing arising from both debates over subjectivity and the growth of memoirs in history writing.[19] The use of the first person, not intending to forego any formalities, on the contrary, attempts to give gravity to the conversations that occurred throughout this process and therefore inherits the approaches of History From Below and Working Class History, areas of historical studies that emerged with this democratisation of writing practices that occurred in the mid 20th century.

Considering the positionality of this work, I argue that it is necessary at this point in time, when more families of South Asian East African origins are beginning this journey of self and group-reflection. It makes space for an exploration of these narratives, historical actors and acts, identities and ideas through a journey through local, transnational and digital spaces.

1.2.2 (Post)colonial experiences

Postcolonialism and Postcolonial theory have complex historical and cultural lineages - and although it could be argued that the terms have been somewhat overused today, which can decay their meanings, these theories nonetheless hold value and must be addressed in this thesis. Many of the key texts from Postcolonial studies emerged in the mid 20th century alongside the independence movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America, within which theorists such as Franz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Homi Bhabha, among many others, debated the causes, situations and impacts of colonisation on colonised

[19] In his writing, Traverso traces these developments and highlights the influence within this from History from Below, which connects deeply with the areas of Global History and Oral History. Enzo Traverso, Adam Schoene. *Singular Pasts: The "I" in Historiography*. (Columbia University Press, 2023), 4.

lands, minds, and bodies.[20] Postcolonialism is a body of knowledge that allows us to critically analyse European colonisation and modern globalisation, from the past to the present, as something that continues to take many different forms.[21] This body of knowledge informs this thesis greatly as it aims to build upon the literature on the postcolonial realities of migration communities. Discussing the Portuguese colonial context, historian and anthropologist Catarina Pererira pointed out that South Asians who lived in Mozambique will always narrate their stories, in some shape or form, within the idea of 'before and after' decolonisation, because decolonisation ushered in a change in their political reality, whereby many of them were voluntarily migrating or, in some cases, were forced to migrate to Portugal. In the life histories outlined in this thesis, we see how the change in colonial realities placed different forces on their lives pushing them to take different actions.

The situation of the South Asian 'twice migrant' communities who lived in East Africa is varied today, and thus, there is variety in the ways that they might narrate their histories. For this reason, caution is advised to the reader here; this thesis should not be seen as an attempt to write a whole and complete history of these communities, but to highlight a range of experiences and analyse their relationship with local and transnational spaces. In the UK, there is a large population of South Asians present in the public sphere. There were a range of different waves of migration of South Asians to the UK, including the East Africa generations in the 1960s and 70s, as well as the migrants driven by the technological boom since the

[20] On Postcolonial theory, a number of texts were consulted which inform this dissertation. Edward Said *Orientalism* theorised on the creation of the *other* during colonisation and what this means for the Postcolony. Spivak's work *Can the Subaltern Speak?* has been an enlightening source of knowledge, particularly her writings on subject and object, and the problems of 'representing' the voices of 'subaltern' women. Fanon's *Black Skin White Masks* is a text which this thesis engages with, particularly his analysis of the structure of colonial power relations.
See Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967), Edward W. Said, *Orientalism.* (London: Penguin Classics, 2003), Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994) which guided this research on postcolonial theory.
[21] A. C. V. J. Pereira, *Postcolonial Objects of Collective Re-membering among Portuguese Muslims of Indian and Mozambican origins*. Ph.D diss., (Goldsmiths, University of London: 2016), 26.

1990s.[22] On the contrary, in Portugal, the population of South Asians is far less present in public sphere debates, and in some cases, the communities who migrated after the revolution are far more integrated into the middle class in Portugal.[23] Taking a few examples only means there is also the problem of possibly 'ignoring' communities that also have an interest in this conversation and have closely related postcolonial realities, such as South African, US American, Ugandan and many other countries that have been host to South Asian communities. The diaspora is so varied that it would be impossible to cover examples from all of these places, which is why this thesis takes specifically at life stories of women who migrated to the UK or Portugal as its given examples, due to these being the most natural connections available in the time frame of this research.

1.2.3 Practising Oral History

Originating from 'history from below' and working-class history, Oral History has its roots in understanding and giving space to the voices of those who were marginalised by society and by traditional hegemonic historical narratives.[24] According to the Oral History Association (OHA)'s Best Practices, Oral History is defined as;

> "*Both the interview process and the products that result from a recorded spoken interview (whether audio, video, or other formats). In order to gather and preserve meaningful information about the past, oral historians might record interviews focused*

[22] According to the UK census in 2021, 9.3% of the UK population had Asian origins, a figure which it is thought more than half of this is made up of people of South Asian origin. From "Census 2021 data reveals ethnic make up of UK population" 23.03.2023, Accessed 16.04.2024.

[23] Pereira, *Postcolonial Objects…,* 14.

[24] L. Abrams, *Oral history theory.* (London: Routledge, 2010). 153.

on narrators' life histories or topical interviews in which narrators are selected for their knowledge of a particular historical subject or event".[25]

The Oral History association says that the practice must be guided foremost by respect, and it must be sensitive to social relationships and power dynamics. Indeed, memory and its place in historical studies is carefully considered in this thesis. In his work Pierre Nora identified the distinction between memory; while memory is something living and evolving, history is a constructed representation of the past, and is suspicious of memory, viewing it as something irrational.[26] We may further add to this as many postcolonial thinkers have done, that the history as it relates to nation states and nationalism is an extension of the colonial project, which must be deconstructed by interventions into the practice and reformulations of the way we reflect and remember the past.[27] In his work, Nora points out the contradiction of institutionalised Oral History archives, which reflect more the perspective of the interviewer rather than the participant. And so, in line with the argument presented by Nora, memory and sites of memory, along with the oral testimonies, require continuous reflection and discussion in order to prevent them from becoming mere constructions. We engage with these histories and memories and recognise our role and agency in their production, evolution, and life.

Leading on from this, the project takes into careful consideration the power structures inherent in collecting life stories through Oral History, as well as preservation and ethical best

[25] See the Oral History Association Core Principles: https://oralhistory.org/oha-core-principles/ Accessed 22.04.24

[26] Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." *Representations*, no. 26 (1989), 7-14.

[27] See Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (London, 1974) and Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago, 1996). These authors explored how archives are not passive but are instead places of power.
See, Arjun Appadurai, 'Number in the Colonial Imagination', in Carol Appadurai Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (eds), Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 314–40, which explores the role that archives played in colonial states in upholding power and authority (among other studies).

practices.[28] This research particularly engages with the OHA's Social justice task force, and their approach to radical Oral History "*guided by the most vulnerable*", which is detailed further in chapter 4 of this thesis, along with approaches to digital Oral History which will inform the creation of the capstone project.

[28] These involve, but are not limited to: gaining informed consent, communicating the goals of the project and potential risks clearly, providing the narrator the option to review the interview afterwards and the option to withhold it or remove anything they would like to take out of the interview, and finally, carrying out preliminary research on the topic. Within this, we communicate the right of the narrator to refuse any questions, aim to minimise harm to them and aim to inform them of a clear plan of the work and the final distribution of the interview. These practices are all laid out in the OHA's guide. https://oralhistory.org/oha-core-principles/ Accessed 22.04.24

1.3 Literature review

Prior to the analysis of the areas that will be discussed, it is necessary to draw attention to some of the main points of historiography of South Asians in East Africa to understand the departure point of this thesis and how it intends to build upon existing historical analysis. Histories of the South Asians in East Africa have been largely male, upper-class and upper-caste centric, particularly in the mid-twentieth century around the time when large numbers of South Asians were migrating from East Africa to Europe and North America. Historians such as L. W. Hollingsworth and George Delf were among the first few historians to explore the role of Asians in East African society in the 1960s, and largely focused on the economic activities of the communities.[29]

In the 1990 historians began to explore South Asian history beyond the territorial boundaries of the Indian subcontinent, which also came out of World History and Indian Ocean History.[30] Along with the texts mentioned so far, this thesis pays close attention to the debates in feminist and South Asian women's historiography particularly, including the work of the Subaltern Studies group, and Nita Kumar's work on women subjects, which followed these debates.[31] Furthermore, studies on diasporic groups have expanded in recent decades and thus more historians have documented the lives of South Asians in East Africa. Two historians who wrote extensively about these communities were Savita Nair and Sana Aiyar.[32] Both of them advocate

[29] See L. W. Hollingsworth, *The Asians of East Africa,* (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1960), George Delf *Asians in East Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963).
[30] Their role within print culture and nationalist networks, for example, was explored by Hofmeyr, Kaarsholm and Frederiksen in their study of the publics of the Indian Ocean, yet the perspective of Asian women is not a common theme in these Indian Ocean histories.
[31] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak "Can the Subaltern Speak" in B. Ashcroft, G. Griffiths, H. Tiffin, *The Postcolonial Studies Reader (*London: Routledge, 2006).
[32] Sana Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya: The Politics of Diaspora.* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2015). Nair, "Moving life histories".

for a more nuanced and pluralist understanding of the position of South Asians in East Africa. Aiyar was one of the first historians to bring together the wide, complex and varied experiences of South Asian East Africans, looking at spaces of interracial collaboration and conflict, recognising the complexities of ethnic relationships in colonial East Africa.[33] Both Aiyar and Nair's approaches are interesting points of engagement as something that this thesis will be building upon, particularly their approach to life histories.

Regarding public space and cultural history, which is an area that this research engages with, a handful of texts focus on women's perspectives or cultural and daily life experiences. Laura Fair and Richa Nagar explored boundaries and hierarchies in relation to public spaces.[34] Nasar looks at self-representation of Asian groups through their newspapers, arguing that analysis of the public sphere is crucial in understanding racial hierarchies as well as diaspora and belonging.[35] Furthermore, a number of historians have explored the Portuguese and Mozambique context looking at the identity constructions of different communities.[36] Susana Trovão and Sandra Araújo, as well as Margaret Frenz looked at the relationships between colonial politics and identity formation of Indian minorities in Mozambique during the Estado Novo.[37] The works of Felicity Hand and Joanna Herbert are both exploring women's lives through Oral History, and open up questions about women's bodies as sites where debates over honour and dignity are fought in the public sphere. I hope to take into account their analysis of

[33] Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya.*
[34] Richa Nagar, "I'd Rather Be Rude than Ruled: Gender, Place and Communal Politics among South Asian Communities in Dar Es Salaam." *Women's Studies International Forum 23*, no. 5 (2000).
Laura Fair, *Reel Pleasures: Cinema Audiences and Entrepreneurs in Twentieth-century Urban Tanzania*. New African Histories Series. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2018).
[35] Nasar, S. (2013). "The Indian Voice: Connecting Self-representation and Identity Formulation in Diaspora" *History in Africa, 40.*
[36] Pereira, *Postcolonial Objects of Collective Re-membering.*
Inês Lourenço and Rita Cachado. "Hindu Transnational Families: Transformation and Continuity in Diaspora Families." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 43, no. 1 (2012): 53–70.
[37] See Susana Salvaterra Trovão, Sandra. Araújo, 'Ambivalence, Gender and National Identity Imaginings on Indian Otherness in Mozambique during the Estado Novo (1933–1974)'. In: *Gender and History.* 2020 ; Vol. 32, No. 2.

private and public spheres and their role in the lives of the communities.[38] There are also a few texts analysing political and spatial organisations in pre- and post-independence East African countries which this thesis will engage with throughout.[39] This thesis will be building on these analyses by fusing together the local and transnational spaces, and continuing these historian's methods of engaging with women's voices.

This thesis engages with a number of texts on the relationship between people, geographies and Oral Histories, to aid the creation of the Oral History project.[40] According to Dolores Hayden in 'The Power of Place', landscapes are an under-utilised resource for public history, allowing communities to articulate and define their own pasts. In this capstone project, Oral Histories explore how history and memory can be combined with spatial analysis to allow for the articulation of a past and present. Landscape, which was described by Anthropologists Pamela J. Stewart, and Andrew Strathern as *"the perceived settings that frame people's sense of place and community"*, is closely linked to how communities construct historical narratives. The concept of 'landscapes' allows us to look beyond the nation state boundaries, and bring together both materialist and symbolist perspectives - the former emphasising political and economic organisation, and the latter representing cultural meanings. As Stewart and Strathern

[38] Felicity Hand, "Impossible Burdens: East African Asian Women's Memoirs." *Research in African Literatures* 42, no. 3 (2011). "Coping with Khandaanity in Diaspora Spaces. South Asian Women in East Africa." *Narrating Diasporic Experiences of Indianness.* Ed. Juan Ignacio Oliva.
Joanna Herbert in her 2009 article "Oral histories of Ugandan Asians in Britain: gendered identities in the diaspora", *Contemporary South Asia,* 17:1, 24 explores the lives of women after the expulsions.
[39] Adam, ed. *Indian Africa,*
Gerard McCann, "Possibility and Peril: Trade Unionism, African Cold War, and the Global Strands of Kenyan Decolonization." *Journal of Social History 53*, no. 2 (2019),
Caleb Edwin Owen, "Recreating Citizens: Leisure, Mobility, and Urban Status in Late Colonial Kenya." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 51, no. 1 (2018),
Emily Callaci, *Street Archives and City Life: Popular Intellectuals in Postcolonial Tanzania,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017).
[40] Alistair Thomson, "Moving Stories: Oral History and Migration Studies." *Oral History (Colchester) 27*, no. 1 (1999) is an interesting text for me, as well as Sherna Berger Gluck,and Daphne Patai (eds.). Women's Words: The. Feminist Practice of Oral History. (New York: Routledge, 1991) which were useful starting points for me in this project. In my third chapter, I will be including an analysis of the question of the utilisation and benefits of oral history in this context.

point out, through visual or narrative remembering, people create landscapes to which they have connections. And so, these ideas accompany the Indian Ocean history perspective well, as they attempt to take the world as a scope of analysis and do not take the modern political formations as a given fact.

1.4 Research methods

This thesis will engage with several primary sources to explore the research questions - the main body of this research is based in Oral History, for which it will be drawing on testimonies gathered as well as the testimonies from the Crescent Community Radio archive, which are detailed below. In total, it engages with 9 different Oral History testimonies, as well as a range of sources surrounding them. This thesis will engage with these life stories throughout, quoting their voices in order to gain a clearer *direct voice* of the historical actors, and encouraging the reader to engage with the full transcripts in the capstone project website. The selection of the women attempts to incorporate a range of different experiences of historical actors, so that the thesis may understand how history acts upon them, how they navigate change and power, and how they assert themselves into history. Because of this, I interviewed women both in Portugal and the UK. This is because, though their experiences are similar in many ways, they experienced different life trajectories due to the different colonial and post-colonial realities in which they lived. Their perspectives offer different routes of understanding lives across borders, which this project sought to incorporate.

The first group of women interviewed were women from Mozambique, whose families migrated from the former Portuguese colonies in India, namely Daman and Diu and Goa. These

make up two Hindu women who now live in the UK and Portugal, and two Goan Christians. We considered interviewing these women due to their life histories, which are intertwined with East Africa, South Asia and either Portugal or the UK. In person interviews were preferred, when possible, in order to create the best interview experience for the women, many of whom are older members of their communities. I argue that through these examples specifically, we get an idea of a range of different experiences which fit within the scope and time frame of this project.

Though this research actively sought out women's life stories, because they were the most natural connections, the stories of men were not ignored, quite to the contrary. The son of one of the interviewees was very involved in the process of collecting the oral testimonies of his mother and aunt, and aided in the posing of questions and interpretation of answers. This thesis also draws extensively on male historians and engages with autobiographies of men to inform the creation of this thesis.

Notable are the limitations: naturally, those who come forward to talk about their lives have already some layers of historical privilege, being that they are able to safely, and with cultural and linguistic confidence come forward to share their stories. This in itself, Kumar points out, is a kind of vocalising of their own resistance - whereby those who might only speak and may not overtly assert themselves, are in fact inserting themselves into the structure of power.[41] Naturally, there are many women who would prefer not to come forward or do not have the means, and therefore, their perspectives cannot be taken into account. But I argue that this does not mean that the project falls short, but merely that these women assert themselves in different ways. This project does not attempt to represent all women from these communities, but gives

[41] Kumar, Women as subjects. 17.

an example of how we might understand a select few of historical actors that choose to assert their narratives *now*, in this day and age.

Through the testimonies from Crescent Community Radio archive, this thesis engages with the voices of women who came from Muslim South Asian families who generally relate their identities to modern-day Pakistan, coming from families who migrated to Kenya and Tanzania, and who now live in the UK. Crescent Community Radio is a grassroots community charity which engages mainly with the British Muslim populations in the UK, aimed at "*documenting the history and current issues affecting these communities*". They have created a number of Oral History projects, including the East African Lives project, which is available on their website and involves 29 interviews which aim to document the lives of the (in this case, largely Muslim) 'twice migrants', those who migrated to East Africa, and again later to the UK. Of the 29 interviews, this research deals with 5 of their interviews. The criteria for selecting these interviews in particular were as follows; women who were born in East Africa, were of South Asian origin, and who experienced migration in their lives. This research chooses to engage with this project because it offers an in-depth example of a community Oral History project that thoroughly involved those that had been interviewed.[42] And so, Crescent Community Radio's work is an example of how to conduct an Oral History project and was a point of inspiration for this research throughout.

[42] From their website, they write *"We have completed 29 full video interviews that have been converted as audio interviews and available on Mixcloud, Youtube and Facebook. We did aim to complete 30 interviews in total. We have also completed 15 live radio shows to promote the project and raise awareness of heritage amongst the East African community. For our final event, we will be producing an exhibition involving A0 size placard posters, artefacts, banners and an audio/video presentation. All content will be archived by the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah RACE Centre as well on Crescent Radio's website, and social media."* https://www.crescentradio.net/eastafricanlives/introduction-to-east-african-lives/ , Accessed 02.03.2024.

To deepen the analysis, we also draw from biographies, photography and websites, quotes and newspapers. Namely, the autobiography of Yasmin Alibhai Brown, activist and writer of South Asian descent, as well as the autobiography of Sofia Mustafa, the first Asian woman to hold a position on the Legislative Council in Tanganyika.[43] Although their stories are not conventional ones, they can be useful in understanding the kinds of forces that acted upon these women. This project also utilises newspapers to support the research. The digitised collection of The East African Standard (an English language newspaper) from the year 1962 has allowed me to gain an understanding of the ways that young Asian women navigated urban life in Nairobi, the kinds of work they took part in and their relationship with culture and leisure activities. I also draw on the website ”Sikh Heritage” page entitled “Nostalgic East Africa” for images and in some cases poetry and testimonies. The Kenyan born activist, writer and poet Shajila Patel’s book *Migritude* also provides some artistic insight for my project. Along with the quotations from women’s life stories, these snippets of historical sources and reflections will flow throughout the thesis, allowing for a range of voices from different spaces to create a comprehensive analysis.

[43] George Gona, *Zarina Patel: An Indomitable Spirit,* (Nairobi: Zand Graphics Limited, 2014). Sophia Mustafa, *The Tanganyika Way: A Personal Story of Tanganyika's Growth to Independence*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

1.5 Historical background

Summarising the historical background to the South Asian communities in East Africa is complicated due to the diverse experiences and life trajectories of these communities. However, it is important to understand some of the main historical markers before this thesis goes on to explore the local and transnational spaces that made up the lives of these migrant communities.

There have long existed connections between the Eastern coast of Africa and the western Indian subcontinent prior to European colonisation.[44] The spread of Islam from the 8th

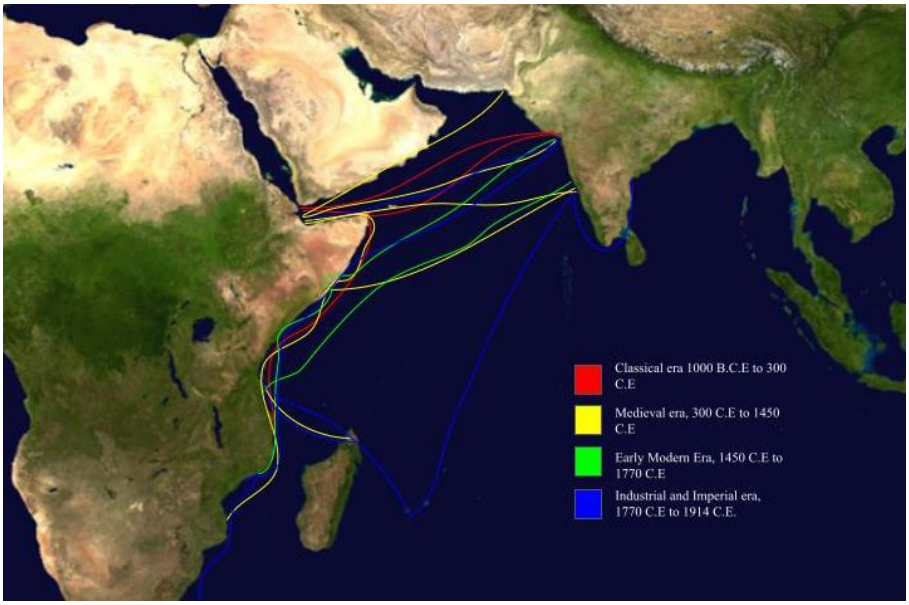

Figure 1 - **Rough** guide to movements of people and goods between East Africa and South Asia (sea routes only).

century onwards created further transnational cosmopolitanism in East Africa, a place that was already host to a range of different cultural and linguistic African communities. The Swahili coast cities were important hubs with complex ethnic linguistic compositions, where

[44] Michel Adam, ed. *Indian Africa: Minorities of Indian-Pakistani Origin in Eastern Africa*. (Mkuki na Nyota Publishers, 2015). 4

Arabic was fused with a number of localised Bantu-origin languages.[45] Historical travel writers such as Ibn Battuta wrote about the presence of people from the Indian subcontinent as merchant traders in these cities in the 13th century, but there are records of these traders even further back.[46] This meant that there was already a sizable number of people of South Asian origin integrated within the Swahili population in coastal cities and trading ports such as Mombasa, Stone Town in Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam.

During the period of colonisation, Eastern Africa was used as an area where different forms of colonial governmentality were experimented, as well as different forms of forced/slave labour.[47] At this time the region saw the introduction of colonial division of racialized groups. Following the Abolition of Slavery in the colonies in 1833, the British Empire introduced the Indentured Labour system in order to supplement its dramatic loss of capital. South Asian labourers were hired, often on short-term contracts for 5 years with the option to return to their home or renew their contract. In the case of the Portuguese empire, Historian Rosales writes,

> ”*By subordinating Mozambique administratively and commercially to India, Portugal established the conditions for Indian traders to occupy a privileged position in Indian Ocean shipping. The first migrants left India to trade, setting up small coastal establishments in Mozambique. Initially, and for Hindus in particular, their presence was temporary, and they returned to India frequently. In addition to the traders, there are records of the presence of another migrant group of Hindu masons from Diu used as a specialised workforce in the construction of fortresses from the sixteenth century*

[45] Hofmeyr “The Black Atlantic Meets the Indian Ocean”, 8.
Kai Kresse, *Philosophising in Mombasa: Knowledge, Islam and Intellectual Practice on the Swahili Coast*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 37-40.
[46] Kamini Krishna, “History of Migration and Contributions of Indian Women in Zambia: Comparison with South African Indian Women.” *Anthropos* 111, no. 2 (2016), 3.
[47] Hofmeyr (2007) “The Black Atlantic Meets the Indian Ocean”,12.

onwards. After these early contacts, growth in numbers and permanent settlement of Indian migrants took place later, in particular from the last quarter of the nineteenth century onwards."

It is due to this movement of labour that the South Asian diaspora is one of the largest diasporas in the world today. Historian Krishna writes about the motivations for migration for some of these communities, who were of diverse backgrounds, many from poor families with little education, or, from *brahmin* or *vaishya* (priest or merchant) caste groups;

"*The British policy towards cottage industries in India, for example, brought most of the factories to near shut down. Farmers were forced to grow cash crops that contributed to hunger and some even lost their land to heavy taxes. Kuper reports that village life in some parts of India was harsh; the country was underdeveloped, periodically famine-stricken and ravaged by disease. The hope of industries had decayed with the imposition of British goods and textiles, whilst peasants were in need of land… These reasons largely contributed to people looking for opportunities outside their country. With Africa sharing the same colonizer, who favoured such migration, it became an easier choice for the Indians to migrate."*[48]

The period between 1895 and 1903 saw around 40,000 labourers recruited from various parts of the Indian subcontinent, with approximately a third of these permanently settling across East Africa. Indeed, a large proportion of the descendants of the communities today would have been at least partially descended from indentured labourers. Some other religious and cultural

[48] Krishna, "History of Migration", 4.

communities from South Asia have different trajectories, though, with many migrating for familial or commercial reasons. By 1921, there were around 23,000 Indian labourers, merchants, *dukanwallahs* (small shopkeepers), retailers, professionals and their families settled in the towns and cities across Kenya.[49] In the case of Mozambique, the migration of Goans began in the 16th and 17th centuries resulting directly from Portuguese colonisation, which had a twofold effect - some communities of Hindus and Muslims escaping persecution and heavy taxation in Portuguese ruled areas of India migrated to British East Africa, and Goans who had converted to Christianity were encouraged to populate Portugal's colony in Mozambique.[50]

A sizable number of Indian families moved down to Mozambique after restrictions on trade in the British Empire in the 1930s pushed them to take their businesses to different cities.[51] Families were from a range of cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds: Ismaili, Hindu, Sunni Muslims, Christians, Parsees, Sikhs and Jains.[52] It was under these conditions that many South Asian women came to settle with their families or communities in East Africa. Many of these communities rooted themselves down in different parts of the East African coast and came to recognise these places as their territorial homeland, with India often remaining as their 'spiritual' or 'ancestral' homeland.[53]

During the mid 20th century as imperialism took new forms, we see the growth of decolonisation movements, moments of which will be touched upon in the following chapters. The disastrous Partition of British India in 1947, which came to be India and Pakistan, marked

[49] Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya*, 2.
[50] Rosales, *Things of the House*, 31.
[51] Trovão, Araújo, "Ambivalence, Gender and National Identity", 4.
[52] Adam, *Indian Africa*, 19.
Under Portuguese rule in Mozambique, Indians who were not of Goan origins were referred to as *monhés.*
Rosales, *Things of the House*, 76.
[53] Ibid, 2.

a significant shift in how empires were perceived and how communities who had migrated prior to independence identified. Following this, 1961, the Portuguese were pushed out of Goa, Daman and Diu by Indian forces, which formally ended their rule in India, ultimately leaving a choice for many communities of Indian origin whether to remain under the fold of Portuguese rule or return to their ancestral homelands.[54] Prior to this, dictator António de Oliveira Salazar had ordered the internment and subsequent expulsion of many Indians from Mozambique due to fear over escalation of the Goa Crisis and distrust of Indian nationals.[55] Simultaneously, Kenya and Tanzania won independence in 1963 and 1961 respectively, following a number of years of indigenous anticolonial organisation, along with global pressure and alliances between decolonising nations.[56] Mozambique organised its national movement for independence with the formation of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) in 1962, eventually gaining independence from Portugal in 1975.[57] Each new nation held different outcomes for the South Asian communities residing within, but in the cases of all three, mass exoduses took place with thousands migrating to the West, exoduses which were also partially influenced by the policies of Idi Amin in neighbouring Uganda.[58] Though the expulsions and migration are not the focus of this dissertation, it does touch on them in the following chapters. And so, this does not by any means provide a full background to the experiences of the South Asian

[54] Luís Nuno Rodrigues, "International Dimensions of Portuguese Colonial Crisis." In *The Ends of European Colonial Empires: Cases and Comparisons*, edited by Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo, and António Costa Pinto, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 252.
[55] Frenz, *Complicating Decolonisation,* 1008.
[56] Ibid. 61-65.
[57] Rosales, *Things of the House,* 24.
[58] Marie-Aude Fouéré, "'Indians Are Exploiters and Africans Idlers!'". In *Indian Africa*, 376.
Historian Margaret Frenz notes the differences between the expulsions of 1961/2 in Mozambique, and those in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, which must be highlighted. The latter were rather due to a change in policy, most clearly in Uganda in 1972, to create a scapegoat and push back against South Asian financial monopoly of goods. She writes *"Amin's strategies moved from a vision of establishing an African nation-state to establishing a nation-state for Africans, or, in other words, shifted from an outward-looking, global anti-colonial perspective to an inward-looking, ethnically defined nationhood".*
Frenz, *Complicating Decolonisation,* 1012.

communities in East Africa, although this context is essential for understanding the following chapters.

1.6 Structure

Given everything detailed so far, this thesis is divided into 3 further chapters, beginning by exploring spaces where we can locate the lives of South Asians in East Africa. It takes the departure points of the home, workplaces and social spaces, exploring where boundaries and borders were drawn and redrawn through these life stories. It will then move to explore the transnational connections of these communities to challenge the historical borders that these communities are often faced with. These chapters both incorporate the aims of challenging Eurocentric notions of space and connecting World History with lived social and spatial experiences. In the final chapter, it will go on to discuss the topic in the context of public history, and how this research combines digital history with oral, spatial, visual and cultural history for the capstone project. It will explore online spaces of remembering, and attempt to understand the past of communities whose histories cross national boundaries. The conclusion consolidates the main arguments on the purpose of this thesis and how the research may develop in the future.

2. Local spaces

Hearing stories of migration necessitates practising careful listening - memory and modern-day experiences can blur the lines of what a person might recall, and can imbue various layers of meaning in history.[59] Personal life histories evolve and shift over time, and thus map complex lineages. One quote, though it might be used to exemplify something, sits within an entire narrative which informs its articulation, the meanings of which may continue to evolve depending on the setting we listen to them in, the chairs we sit on, the noises and scents that surround us, or the small words or actions that might jog the memory of the speaker. While practising Global History, capturing moments within larger historical trends is essential, according to historian Sebastian Conrad - who argued that the macro and the micro are interconnected and must be appropriately balanced with each other in order to practise history through a global lens.[60] Similarly, historian Burton encouraged us to take domestic spaces as sources from which communities construct their own histories.[61] This chapter follows the threads of spaces that life operated within, such as homes, shops and public places. In turn, it asks; what can these spaces, which hold significance as sites of remembrance for South Asian East African women, tell us about how they navigated colonial realities? What kinds of negotiations and navigations were happening in the lives of these people who were experiencing a period of change in East African history? Writing in 1960 on the presence of South Asians in East Africa, historian L. W. Hollingsworth wrote that "*the tenets of their religion prevented them from mixing much in the social activities of other communities"* and cemented their place in the private realm in his writing.[62] This chapter challenges the notion of

[59] Nora, "Between Memory and History", 8.
[60] Conrad, *What Is Global History?*, 74.
[61] A. M. Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive : Women Writing House, Home, and History in late Colonial India* (Oxford, Oxford University Press 2003), 4.
[62] Hollingsworth, *The Asians of East Africa*, 129.

South Asian women in East Africa as a ”cloistered” community, as has been widely presented in literature in the past. The focus on specific sites that challenge the idea of women as representations of the *ghar*, the home, in contrast to men as the *bahir*, the outside world. Savita Nair argued in her writing that women's experiences show how migrations can elicit ‘cultural change’ in a society.[63] This chapter will delve into if these life stories demonstrate that or not, and how we might gain a more textured picture overall of migrant communities in East Africa. This chapter will begin by looking at shops as spaces where boundaries were negotiated, seeking to go beyond the simplistic narratives that have been presented in the past about these people. It will then go onto look at social spaces, where colonial urban planning was acting upon people and how they navigated these realities, where boundaries between social groups were drawn or erased.

2.1 The *duka*: life in work and work in life

Since the late 1950s and early 1960s the South Asian populations made up large proportions of East African urban populations, and therefore exploring South Asian social lives must take place through the lens of urban life.[64] During this time the cities in East Africa were undergoing considerable changes, with the rapid growth of urban migration and the unplanned expansion of the city boundaries, as well as new ideas of urban citizenship and the space of women in the city. South Asian communities were often residing in the business districts of the cities due to the commercial activities of many families.[65] This was the result of decades of exploitation of

[63] Nair, Moving life histories, 187.
[64] In 1957 around 75% of the Asian population of Tanganyika lived in just 14 cities and towns. In Kenya in 1963, at the time of independence, 30% of the capital Nairobi was of South Asian origin. Ghai, Ghai, *Portrait of a Minority, Asians in East Africa.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970) 110. Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya,* 3.
[65] Callaci, *Street Archives and City Life*, 24.

African resources and labour, and the idea that had been perpetuated in India that East Africa was a place where families could quickly build their wealth.[66] During the collection of the life histories for this project, one of the places that we encounter rather frequently is the shop, the *loja* in Portuguese, or the Swahili word *duka.*[67] We begin with the *duka,* because it represents one common working-class experience not commonly delved into through the lens of women's experiences - it acts as a space in between the home and the world, where encounters between different communities are often located. They were held as important sites of memory of some of these life histories and were often one of the main sources of income for many families who migrated to East Africa.

One of the participants in this project recalled her life in a small town called Angoche in northern Mozambique where she lived with her family. She was born in 1962 to a Hindu family in Mozambique and when she was young moved to Diu in India. Though she attended school in Diu up until the age of 11, when she moved back to Mozambique at the age of 12, she recalls spending most of her days helping in her fathers shop, serving customers and organising stock there. Having gone to school in India, her primary language was Gujarati, but working in the shop she learned Portuguese in her daily interactions with people in the town. During 1974, the revolution and war in Mozambique began and she recalls that the shop was not doing well due to fighting nearby, causing her family to flee to a relatives house in Ilha Mozambique, an island off the northern coast. After a month, they returned home to their village near Angoche and times were hard because of the war. In her teenage years, recalls sewing and crocheting in order

[66] A number of historians have written about this encouragement by the colonial state for South Asians to migrate to East Africa, including Aiyar in *Indians in Kenya.* Rosales wrote about how in the case of Mozambique many Catholic Goans were encouraged by the state to settle in East Africa and were even given financial and political incentives to migrate. See Rosales, *Things of the House,* 31.
[67] Originating from the Indo-Persian word *dukan* meaning shop.

to make some extra money because times were hard for her family.[68] Despite these hard times she has fond memories of life in Mozambique and recalls celebrating Indian festivals such as Diwali, Holi and Navratri, dancing *garba* which is a traditional dance commonly done by Gujaratis on Navratri, playing cards and making sweets with other families. She also recalls it being a diverse town, recalling encounters with different Indian communities, Muslims, Ismailis and Hindus.

This life history, though it is unique in its details and nuances, touches on elements of life and also ways of recounting history and memories that may allow us to see patterns with other experiences from different South Asian communities. For example, we know that many lower-middle class or working class families, as well as specific merchant-based caste groups opened shops when they migrated to East Africa and would often set up these *dukas* in rural parts of the countries. In the early 20th century, these shops simultaneously were aligning with the expansionist desires of the colonial state, but also built to cater for other communities who were moving to these areas for different types of work. In the life story above, we also understand the necessity of movement in the lives of these communities. Indeed, due to the Goa Crisis of 1961, many Indian families were under threat of incarceration in detention camps and expulsion by the Portuguese colonial state, which was officially enshrined into law in 1962 when a number of Indian nationals were given a period of 3 months to leave Mozambique, their properties and assets seized.[69] Due to these types of threats, life remained in a temporary state

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[68] Anonymous Interviewee 1, Interviewed by Asha Trivedy. November 29, 2023. Audio recording. (*see link to full transcripts/descriptions of interviews in appendices)*

[69] Frenz, *Complicating Decolonisation*, 1009.
In her work, Frenz details further the experiences of people of Indian origin in these detention camps, the numbers of which are thought to be around 15,000 individuals. These were largely the experiences of families of Hindu religion, but also some Muslim families.
Margret Frenz, 'Complicating Decolonisation: Mozambican Indian Experiences in the Twentieth Century', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 47, 5.
For further reading on the Muslim communities in Mozambique see M. Machaqueiro, (2012). "The Islamic Policy Of Portuguese Colonial Mozambique", 1960–1973. *The Historical Journal, 55*(04), 1097–1116.

for many communities who set up *dukas* as an easy way to create income for their families in times of political unrest. In the case of Kenya, many South Asian communities were migrating to rural towns due to the working opportunities on the East African railways, projects organised by the British colonial state to aid extraction.[70] In the context of family lives, these shops were an important part of the informal working sector and it was common for women to take a central role in the day-to-day running of these spaces. Savita Nair explores the *duka* in her work in the context of the Khoja Ismaili community who have had a history of mobility based on the guidance of their religious leader, Aga Khan. She writes about how the architecture of the storefront facilitated diverse kinds of interactions between the Ismaili women and people whom they encountered. She writes;

> "*... the configured space joining home and store enabled a choice of partial or whole exposure for these immigrant women, wives of merchants, storekeepers, and home keepers. Architecture enabled their activities to take on new directions, and to have new meanings."*[71]

This perspective touches on how the migration of this community, and the creation of new spaces to build these lives away from their 'homeland' created situations where they might have different choices for ways that they could navigate different social or economic relationships. She goes on to write about the diverse roles that women took in these shops, from distribution of funds to book keeping, to serving customers in Swahili or other languages. A point that Nair highlights that has been largely ignored by other historians is the role of women as "desired consumers of commodities".[72] Their work as well as their desires were what played

[70] Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya*, 8.
[71] Nair, 2001. *Moving Life Histories*, 171.
[72] Ibid. 194.

a huge role in the goods that were made, imported or sold - as we see in the life of the woman interviewed, at times they also had to take up new skills such as sewing and crochet in order to supplement income for the family when times became hard.

Taking a holistic view of the *duka,* we can see how they were both a place where colonial boundaries were drawn, and simultaneously pushed back against. Sometimes the migration of the communities necessitated new forms of social organisation which they might not have experienced before, such as encountering different languages, ideas and public spheres, which also went on to influence trends and tastes in different parts of East Africa.

2.2 Segregation of spaces

This touches on a point that is extremely important in understanding the lives of South Asian communities in East Africa: their lives were structured and dictated by the desires of the colonial state since their arrival. What did this mean in practice? Social segregation was a huge part of life under colonial rule. Under the British imperial policy, strict ethnic, caste and religious boundaries were enforced between groups. In the case of the Portuguese colonial policy, the overthrow of the republic and the start of the Estado Novo in 1926 ushered in new policies whereby everyone living under Portuguese colonial rule *was* Portuguese, encouraging colonised peoples to identify with the colonial project.[73] This was carried out through methods of Christianization and indoctrination through the Portuguese education system. Despite this, the colonial society rested heavily on social regulation, demarcation and hierarchization.[74] Indeed, in the later period of colonial rule in Mozambique, integration and cohesion was

[73] Khouri, N., & Leite, J. P. (2008a). Indians of Eastern Africa and Colonizations. Lusotopie, XV(1), 29-35
[74] Rosales, *Things of the House*, 17, 31.

encouraged under dictator Antonio Salazar's 'Lusotropical society', yet in fact, structural racial differentiations still continued.[75] So, the question becomes, how were these dynamics playing out in the spaces mentioned in the life stories?

As previously mentioned, there exists a common idea among the South Asians who lived in East Africa that their communities were diverse in origins, which is often a source of nostalgia for them.

> *"It was a very social town, people used to mix you know, in Gurdwara's, Mandars, Masjids, any function they were the Ismailis as well, there was a lot of mingling, all the doors were open to everyone, so all the communities knew one another".*[76]

> *"Nobody there even thought they are black, they are Indian, they are Sikh - we all lived together there was a lot of love between us to live in harmony".*[77]

Here we have included two different quotes from the Crescent Community Radio Oral History project, one of a Ismaili Muslim woman who lived in Nakuru in Kenya during her youth, and another Muslim woman who grew up in Mombasa, Kenya. Clearly visible here is the romanticisation and fond memories held by these women to the place where they grew up. Indeed, a number of historians have engaged with this phenomena in their writings. Another interviewee from the Oral History archive who grew up in Nairobi remembered speaking a

[75] Frenz, 'Complicating Decolonisation' 1103.
[76] Ruqsana Khan, Interview by Shabana Yunas. Crescent Community Radio East African Lives Oral History Collection. Accessed February 2, 2024. Video recording. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J14yEibf-SQ&list=PLxS8g3z9Cp98_OPxskJGIa4hrtP4qPAl_&t=9s
[77] Shabina Ahmed, Interview by Shabana Yunas, Crescent Community Radio East African Lives Oral History Collection. Accessed February 19, 2024. Video recording. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IvOfjDMW36I&list=PLxS8g3z9Cp98_OPxskJGIa4hrtP4qPAl_&index=12

wide range of languages when growing up in Kenya, including Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Swahili and English.[78] The author Michel Adam argued that the assessment of many historians that the South Asian communities were exclusive and that Africans and South Asians lived completely separately is rejected by the South Asian communities - we can see this in a sense in the quotes presented above, as the tendency is usually to remember a thriving multicultural society. However, his assessment of the lives of women in these communities is arguably slightly skewed with a eurocentric lens on the community - which for so long has been a problem with the historiography on East African societies. He writes;

> *"Some Indian women in Tanzania have been successful in a particular profession, business or politics. However, their success in life is measured by their community in terms of their marriage and their children. Even when they are economically independent, women do not enjoy certain privileges and freedoms that the urban society gives to men of the Indian elite. A woman of Indian origin would be rebuked if she went alone to a pub or if she lived in celibacy. Again, habits like drinking alcohol and smoking are highly condemned."*

While highlighting the kinds of restrictions that are placed on women of South Asian origin when it comes to, for example, family expectations, is compelling and necessary, Adam like a number of other historians we encounter, fall into the trap of measuring South Asian women's lives against the preconceived 'benchmark' of western or male experiences. He imagines a type of leisure and 'freedom' that places European ideas of leisure and 'freedom' as the standard, which arguably is something that must be avoided if we wish to write with the experiences of

[78] Atiya, Interview by Shabana Yunas. Crescent Community Radio East African Lives Oral History Collection. Accessed February 24, 2024 via transcript.

South Asian women in mind. Secondly, they do not acknowledge the colonial structures that exacerbated, or in some cases created, the racial hierarchies and segregation that existed in some East African societies.

Segregation of spaces in Kenya and Tanzania were prominent forms of organisation and were built into the fabric of the colonial cities, something which is still visible today in Dar es Salaam, Nairobi or Mombasa. The 1940s and 50s were periods where changes in imperial policy resulted in significant changes in urban planning, due to the desire of the state to remake populations into 'productive' urban citizenry. This involved controlling who could and who could not reside in the city, therefore marking an overhaul of ideas of urban citizenship. Michel Adam writes about the residential segregation in Nairobi;

> "*Nowhere else than in Nairobi is such segregation so visible, and it concerns all statutory and religious sub-groups. Largely confined in the northeastern part of the city (Parklands and Westlands), Indians share a same territory divided into several communal perimeters which, for some of them, have collective and enclosed housing provided with common services (security, garbage collection, maintenance of lawns, baby sitting, etc.). In such protected areas rarely visited by Africans – apart from domestic workers – Indians live and mix among themselves and visit one another like citizens of a miniature country of their own."*[79]

The segregation of racialized groups might have been at its most extreme in Nairobi compared to other cities in East Africa, and the author argues, was largely maintained by lateral social pressures within communities which upheld these colonial structures. This was also partially

[79] Adam, ed. *Indian Africa*, 47.

upheld by religious and caste expectations which created restrictions on things like marriage and social relationships. In this sense, the colonial hierarchical system more or less structured all elements of life because it contributed to the creation of identities - Marie-Aude Fouéré makes this argument in the case of Tanzania.[80] These separations between the Black populations, both indigenous people, Swahilis and urban migrants, and South Asian migrants acted to reinforce prejudices and tensions between the groups.

These separations were intentional tools of the colonial states, which attempted to control people not only through urban segregation but also through socialisation. In the 1940s and 50s in Kenya, new social spaces were built in the cities in order to create productive urban citizenry whose leisure time aligned with ideas of European morality - these segregated social halls, religious spaces, sports centres and cinemas were tightly controlled to not produce a population that might act out against the state. However, in the 1950s during the period around the Mau Mau insurgency in Kenya, the colonial government's control over these urban spaces began to decline.[81] Similarly in Tanzania, the mid-20th century ushered in many changing ideas about spaces in cities and what they represented. After independence, the Ujamaa socialism ideology romanticised the village life and saw the city as a place of corruption and danger, with women's bodies as one of the main sites of debates over morality. In this sense, policing the actions of women in the urban spaces became a way of enforcing racial boundaries even after independence.[82]

[80] Ibid. 384.
[81] Owen, "Recreating Citizens",. 93-97.
[82] Callaci, *Street Archives and City Life"*, 28.
Callaci writes extensively about the policing of bodies of rural-to-urban migrant women in Tanzania and how these played a significant role in the formation of urban citizenship for migrant women.

Around the 1960s, municipal governments in East Africa scrambled to make new spaces for leisure activities as an attempt to create more urban integration. These new spaces, while they were often directed towards the upwardly mobile middle and working classes, were widely mentioned in sources and oral testimonies from people of different backgrounds. Dancehalls, games fields, social halls and cinemas were used more widely and many of the young Asian women, in contrast to their parents, would have been able to visit such leisure sites.[83] Because of these kinds of policies that had their roots in colonial ideas, although governments had tried to fade out segregation in cities, its structures continued informally into the 70s and 80s and in some cases even until the present day. This is clear from the perspective of prominent Kenyan author Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, as well as other writers such as V. S. Naipaul, who wrote that their "*marginality"* in East Africa *"invested the Asian with an odd kind of invisibility."*[84] What I argue is consistently missing from these analyses of the use of urban spaces by South Asians in East Africa is how their colonial structures were acting upon these urban migrants. In the case of organisation of social spaces in colonial Mozambique, what I heard highlighted how segregation took different forms;

> *A: So you were talking about your friends and the people you used to socialise with, and you said that people were from different cultural backgrounds, different religious backgrounds. Was it usually Indians?*
>
> *O: No, we had all kinds of friends, my father had a big friend Lalu Bhai, that was an Indian. And we used to go with his daughters. ….*

[83] Owen, "Recreating Citizens", 87-97.
[84] Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya,* 1.

A: So you used to talk with different kinds of people?

O: Yes. We used to - my mother had lots of friends from, uh, she never worked. I mean 'never worked', or at home, she had social work and all, she used to be in groups of all kinds of people, but there was a little bit of separation in Mozambique because in Mozambique there was an influence of South Africa you know, of apartheid of South Africa so people sometimes used to make a difference. Uh, actually I never felt that myself. But I know that my father felt it. My father was working in, how do you call that, customs? I think it's the customs department. He was working in this department. Uh, he said that there he felt that then he had he came out and he went to work as a manager to this big office.

But I don't know if all the families there used to be like that. Yeah, I'm not sure. But from our family, from cousins and all we used to, to be friendly with everyone, Indians, white people, we call them white people - Europeans, whatever - we had friends all over.

…

A: Was there - I've never been to Maputo so I don't know - was there, is there, a lot of urban segregation between different groups? This is how it was in Dar es Salaam.

O: Oh no. No, not too much. We have high class people, an area for them. There was a part that was a very expensive part of the city. So that's why there was segregation in that sense. But not because of race, it was because of money, you know, but it became racist because only whites had that money, and even if Indians had that money because Indians were also rich, Indians were not going to live there, they didn't like that place.

Yeah, they're own houses somewhere. [85]

As we see in these extracts from an interview with a Goan Christian woman who was born in Mozambique - urban segregation was not perceived as a simple fact of the colonial city - it was more complicated, intertwined with class and race equally. This may be because, as many historians have highlighted, the Portuguese colonial government placed an emphasis on shared cultural and linguistic aspects in order to unite its populations, in contrast to the British Empire which took a more divisive approach.[86] Overall, although there are arguably a vast range of experiences on how South Asian women navigated these urban spaces in East Africa, what we see is that women tend to remember those positive aspects of diversity within their own communities as something starkly different to their realities after migrating to the West - in this sense we can see how their oral testimonies are greatly influenced by their lives today. In the following chapter we delve further into transnational cultural connections with caste and religion.

2.3 Duality in urban life

The presence of a kind of duality of spaces is something that should be given more attention here and something that comes up often in the life stories of women of the South Asian diaspora from East Africa. Examining the English-language newspaper *The East African Standard* from the 1960s gives us an insight to the kinds of jobs that Asian women carried out and the areas

[85] Odete, Interview 3, Interviewed by Asha Trivedy. Audio Recording. January 29, 2024.
[86] Éric Morier-Genoud, Michel Cahen. *Imperial Migrations : Colonial Communities and Diaspora in the Portuguese World*. 2012. (Houndmills Basingstoke Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan), 200.

they were experienced in.[87] Regularly an advert in the work section would ask for "*Asian lady shorthand typist"*, or an Asian saleswoman or copy typist.[88] Some adverts specify their adverts for religion or community, asking for a Goan or Ismaili woman. This shows how a woman's background could influence the kinds of spaces that could be accessed and the extent of the cultural and social divisions of spaces. For example, Ismaili and Goan women were often seen to dress in western clothing and were usually fluent in English, which may have increased their chances of being hired by a European company.[89] Examining landscapes, as defined in the literature review of this thesis, allows us to understand more deeply these dualities that were occurring within East African cities. Indeed, one of the Goan women who I interviewed remembers her work in an insurance company in Maputo, where there were mainly Europeans working. She recalls about her life there;

> *"It was a free life, shall we say, not like in Portugal. In Africa, you had much more freedom. You know, you could do - Well, those days we had time to do everything. We used to play tennis, we used to play badminton. We used to go on excursions. We used to go camping. We had time for everything. I don't know how we used to get time for it but we had."*[90]

Here we can see the nostalgia for life that exists in the memory of this woman, and the reality may have been something quite different. Existing at the same time as this was the presence of growing tensions and violence in East African cities. Urban migration increased rapidly in the 1960s as young people of different backgrounds relocated to take up employment. There was

[87] The East African Standard (today The Standard) was a newspaper founded in 1902 by a Kenyan-born Indian businessman, Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee and was generally known for aligning with the colonial state.
[88] East African Standard, 12 February 1962, 3 January 1962. Accessed 13.12.2023.
[89] Ghai, Ghai, *Portrait of a Minority*, 31.
[90] Odete, Interview 3, Interviewed by Asha Trivedy. Audio Recording. January 29, 2024.

a rise in urban discontent, radicalised politics and everyday violence fostering discontent between communities - for example, in 1961 in Kenya, crop failures led to many Indian shopkeepers raising their prices, which in turn created a lot of anger among different African communities who felt cheated by the shopkeepers. Many historians also write about the high levels of racism amongst the South Asian communities against Africans, and cite these prejudices as attempts to uphold their proximity to European whiteness, but also to survive such a system.[91] This performance of colonial dispositions is essential to understanding the position of South Asians in East Africa. Historian Sana Aiyar highlighted how the visible material wealth of South Asian communities made them targets of commercial and domestic attacks.[92] The practice of *mangalsutra* in Hinduism of married women inheriting gold jewellery which provides them with economic security in the case of death or infidelity of the husband, made them very visible targets for these petty crimes. One Muslim woman recalls in her testimony that her family decided in the early 1960s to migrate back to Pakistan due to a rise in crimes against South Asians, which she remembers made it difficult for them to live there peacefully.[93] Indeed, in her book Aiyar documents thoroughly the period between 1967/68 when around 33,000 South Asians migrated out of Kenya due to the restrictions on commercial activity, working and visas introduced by the independent Kenyan government run by Jomo Kenyetta. Though many families did stay behind in Kenya and Tanzania even after these migrations, these tensions remembered in the urban landscapes were frequently recalled. In the

[91] C. Pereira, in *Postcolonial Objects of Collective Re-membering among Portuguese Muslims of Indian and Mozambican origins*, wrote about South Asian Muslim communities in Mozambique, whereby their performance of colonial dispositions and attempts to closely follow the actions of White Europeans constitutes what Franz Fanon called "*White Masks*", used as an "*empowering device",* allowing them to access privileged positions under colonial rule. 234.
Similarly, we understand this in the sense of 'mimicry' outlined by theorist Homi Bhabha. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 107.

[92] Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya*, 253.

[93] Naseem Aslam, Interview by Shabana Yunas. Crescent Community Radio East African Lives Oral History Collection. Accessed February 24, 2024. Video recording. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9dDfDRW_hE&list=PLxS8g3z9Cp98_OPxskJGIa4hrtP4qPAl_&index=8

case of Mozambique, my interview with the Goan christian woman mentioned above also represented these dualities;

> *A: Was it a tense time? At that time? You remember feeling it, even though you were young?*
>
> *O: Oh yes. Yes, it was. We were still there. When my father was going to South Africa for the doctor, he suffered from heart problems. So I drove him to Stenga(sp?), near Durban. For him to go to the doctor, when there was this very episode, very, how do you call it? "Portuguese revolution", the "tried" revolution of 7th of September. They tried to take the things back for Portugal. It didn't last! But actually my house was right behind the radio station. So they wanted to take the radio so that they could… so they came into our house. Behind the wall of the outside wall. And with the guns and all, trying to take the station. But we were not there. We were in South Africa. Thank God, we were not there! So we came back. When we came back, we came back, our house was full of these bullets and all! You know, everything changed and my father said we cannot live in this situation.*[94]

The examples shown above illustrate how colonial policies in the landscapes remembered were acting upon communities who were migrants of empire. Not fitting into a necessary idea of national citizens of any place in particular, their lives were constantly experiencing a pull between different localised realities which were created by the colonial state and lasted long after. We can even see these manifested in their memories today. In the quote above, we see how even the homes were sites of these contests and how they too needed to be navigated. I

[94] Odete, Interview 3, Interviewed by Asha Trivedy. Audio Recording. January 29, 2024.

argue this is not something that has been widely explored by historians up until this point, who largely focus on binaries of experiences.

2.4 Conclusion

To conclude, we return to the sentiments from the start of this chapter; the difficulties of recounting memories from the past, and how we as listeners, or participants in a conversation, can understand these memories. Often a fusion of nostalgia, longing, pain, happiness and grief, these Oral Histories do not begin and end with an hour-long recording. These life stories offer us something unique, and we must be ready as historians to understand them as something in movement, as it has shown how colonial governmentality has intertwined with histories of migration. The landscapes and spaces explored in this chapter not only help to gain a more textured and complex image of South Asian lives in East Africa but also challenge the idea that women were mainly occupying space solely within the home. In fact, their roles within urban spaces were diverse and necessitated them to make different choices on how to navigate these localised colonial realities. The rapidly changing social expectations and uses of public spaces present us with a complex picture of society in Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique. This chapter has explored a range of examples of different experiences and has provided a starting point for the reader to listen to the stories and testimonies in the capstone project with a deeper understanding of the presence of landscapes and spaces in memory.

3. Transnational expressions

> *"The human urge to trace long, biological bloodlines is strong. But our far past was swept away by careless fate impetuously carrying off my folk across the seas, away, away to new beginnings. They took little and left behind even less. Like many other East African Asians whose forebears left India in the nineteenth century, I search endlessly for (and sometimes find) the remains of those days. Few maps mark routes of journeys undertaken by these migrants; hardly any books capture their spirit or tell the story"*[95]
>
> - Yasmin Alibhai-Brown

This quote from the British South Asian-East African born writer Yasmin Alibhai-Brown captures the complexities of identity that are created as a result of migration. In her writing, she searches for answers to her questions about her past, mainly through reconstruction of memory through food and place. Following on from spaces, this chapter addresses one of the main aims of this thesis, which has been to move past national borders in the writing of histories - as Nair wrote, we must consciously make choices to break down those boundaries if we are to gain a more textured view of history of communities who have migrated. Therefore, this chapter poses the questions; what are the main ways that borders of nation states were crossed and/or challenged by these communities? How were these crossings manifested in daily life? Here, we take examples of politics, daily life and media. and see what kinds of meanings these crossings of national boundaries take on and how they affected the South Asian communities. It is worth noting that, although this chapter touches on the connections between place and

[95] Alibhai-Brown, *The Settler's Cookbook,* 11.

identity, it does not intend to take identity - as it has been conceptualised in a sense by historians and theorists[96] - but rather it focuses on moments of transnationalism, though these might go on to actualise connections between communities and places.

3.1 Roots of transnational connections

In her writing, Catarina Valdigem argues that the relationship between the person and a place to which they are physically dislocated comes from the objects and spaces that provide remembrance.[97] This context holds significance in this chapter, which discusses the generation of South Asians who were mainly born in East Africa and had little or no experience living in the Indian subcontinent but still maintained a level of cultural connections and ties to those places as 'homelands'. In the case of Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique there were tangible differences between the lives of people of South Asian origin, and the lives of those who were of black indigenous communities from East Africa. Aiyar argued that these differences were 'sustained' by connections to South Asia, which were built upon the colonial hierarchical structures.[98] In this sense, we understand their connections to South Asian contexts as

[96] Definitions of identity and the self have been long debated and have unfolded in different ways across different contexts. In many indigenous non-European contexts, the self was often defined with the collective, or elements shared with others, rather than individual characteristics. Western philosophical practitioners such as Descartes dealt with the concept of identity in relationship to the cognitive self, whereby the self is constructed as a subject. Michel Foucault (1979,1980) argues that identities are formed in the context of networks of power and discourse. Important to understand in this thesis is the context of colonial societal structures, which applied these ideas of the self to non-western individuals. According to Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978), the West defines itself by contrast to the 'other', which it sees as the inversion of the Western self. This conceptualisation was essential to colonial conquest and dominance from the initial stages.
Martin Sökefeld, "Debating Self, Identity, and Culture in Anthropology." *Current Anthropology* 40, no. 4 (1999): 417-420.
This thesis understands identity through Stuart Hall's definition, relating to complex power structures resulting from history of similarities and differences constructed by the modern world.
See Stuart Hall (2003) 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora', in Jana Evans and Anita Mannur (eds*), Theorizing Diaspora*. (Oxford: Blackwell), 237–46.

[97] Pereira, *Postcolonial Objects…,* 25.

[98] Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya,* 11.

transnational expressions. In her biography, Yasmin Alibhai brown writes about these connections;

> *"...Indian émigrés receded culturally, then seceded from Mother India in all other matters, keeping their proclaimed eternal bonds for ceremonial and recreation purposes. God and films still had to be Indian to satisfy; other connections were floating away like driftwood…"*[99]

In her writing she documents some of these rich and complex stories of memory and belonging, related to language, cultural and religious practices, media, but mainly, food. Her biography is self aware, honest and does not shy away from the prejudices held by the South Asian communities in East Africa.

In the political context, a number of historians have explored how connections were maintained through crossing spheres of influence between Asia and Africa, or as mentioned in the previous chapter, the 'Indian Ocean sphere'. In the early 20th century, ideas crossing territorial boundaries fuelled independence movements across the Indian Ocean sphere and led to the propagation of self-determination movements in diverse contexts with various historical actors. Simultaneously, trade unionism was at the forefront of the decolonising movement in Kenya, where the South Asian leader of the Kenya Africa Union (KAU) Makhan Singh made the first public call for full independence in 1950 from the British - *"Uhuru Sasa!" ("Freedom Now!"* in Swahili). The Kenyan author, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, wrote about decolonisation movements in Kenya;

[99] Alibhai-Brown, *The Settler's Cookbook,* 104.

> "*India's anticolonial struggles eventually led to independence in 1947, which had a big impact on anticolonial struggles in Africa. What India achieved could be realised in Africa! Gandhi stayed abreast of African politics, Kenya in particular, and wrote a letter of protest when the British imprisoned one of Kenya's early nationalists, Harry Thuku, in the 1920s."*[100]

In Kenya there was a long tradition of collaboration between the trade unionists and young Kenyan activists who were driving the independence movements, and the Indian communities who brought methods of anti-colonial resistance with them from newly independent India and Pakistan.[101] In the case of Tanzania, the political independence scene played out rather differently with the introduction of Tanzanian Ujamaa Socialism, built on principles of cooperative economics, which promoted traditional social and economic modes of organisation. Under the post-independence governance of Julius Nyerere, positions in government were reserved for people of Indian origin, who were still classified as 'Asians' as a continuation of the colonial categorisations. From the biography of Sophia Mustafa, a Muslim woman of Kashmiri descent who became well known for her work alongside Julius Nyerere, we can understand more deeply how these crossings of borders played out in East Africa between diverse cultural groups.[102] Though hers is an exceptional story, it still allows us to understand some of the complexities of holding an identity that crossed different borders. Born in India, raised in Kenya and eventually holding political office in Arusha, Tanzania, she firmly asserted that she considered herself Tanganyikan, rather than Indian. She writes in her biography about her political career;

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[100] Ngugi wa Thiong'o, "What Is Asia to Me? Looking East from Africa," *World Literature Today 86*, no. 4 (2012).
[101] McCann, "Possibility and Peril", 349-353.
[102] Sophia Mustafa, *The Tanganyika Way: A Personal Story of Tanganyika's Growth to Independence*. (London: Oxford University Press, 1962). 1-5.

> "*As far as the Asians were concerned, their votes would be divided. I was an odd person who did not belong to any community".*[103]

Her perspective demonstrates the division that was clear within communities of South Asian origin, between those who aligned themselves more firmly connected to South Asia, and those who were inclined more towards their East African 'homeland'. The few examples of South Asian political activists holding important positions in East Africa existed alongside other groups of South Asians (along with Arabs and African capitalists) in Tanzania who were viewed as exploiters, living off of landlordism. Combined with their fears over expulsion which took place in Mozambique in the 1960s and Uganda in 1972, many of these communities decided to leave Tanzania to migrate to the UK, the US and Canada.[104] Indeed, Richa Nagar wrote about these communities in Tanzania;

> *"despite the Asian Association's pleas for increased political participation… few Asians came forward to actively support the Tanganyika National African Union (TANU), the party which led the independence struggle. With the exception of a few individuals such as Amir Jamal, Sophia Mustafa and M. N. Rattansey, the Asian majority remained detached from the independence struggle."*[105]

While I agree with this idea that many South Asians remained "detached" from the political movements of the independence struggle in East Africa, these perspectives can minimise the complexities of these communities, some of whom at times felt like their lives were

[103] Ibid. 26.
[104] Adam, ed. *Indian Africa*, 367.
[105] Richa Nagar, *The South Asian Diaspora in Tanzania: A History Retold*. Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East: A Journal of Politics, Culture and Economy 16:2 (1996) 66.

'temporary' in East Africa due to their history of migration. These sentiments are echoed in almost all of the writings we encounter from women of South Asian origin in East Africa. It draws our mind back to the quote form Shailja Patel which was included at the start of this thesis, which echoes these sentiments of being temporary in a place. "*Raat thodi ne vesh jaja,... The night is short and our garments change*".[106] Indeed, language and everyday proverbs are a common way in historical sources that memory is transmitted. The historian Kai Kresse highlights the presence of philosophical proverbs in everyday life in Swahili-speaking cultures due to generations of merging of different religious philosophical traditions - demonstrating the "*transnational character"* of philosophical thought in the Swahili Coast.[107] In another Swahili proverb, we see these characteristics of caution in the separation between different groups - "*Baniani mbaya, kiatu chake dawa… literally "The Hindu Bania trader is evil, but his shoes are medicine," that is, Indians are mean but their business is good)."* Similarly, the Swahili proverb *"Wengi huwa kama paka urafi ki wa mradi" (Many people are like cats befriending a mouse, extending friendship to make a profit)"* shows the tensions in Kenya in the years leading up to independence. Through this proverb, South Asian communities were warned that they would not receive any privileges after independence as the British had afforded them under colonial rule.[108] One of the participants, a Goan Christian who grew up in Mozambique told me about her sense of connection to India or to being Indian;

> *O: We never called ourselves Indians. We call ourselves Goans. okay, that was the thing that only now, I realise the difference that we made, because Indians, Indians and Goans were very different in Mozambique, Indians were more commercial, from commerce, from business, and all, while Goans were more, I don't say educated, but*

[106] Patel, *Migritude*, 10.
[107] Kresse, *Philosophising in Mombasa*, 3, 37.
[108] Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya*, 18, 3

they they were doctors and lawyers professionals.. so we used to call ourselves Goans and we didn't like to be called Indians.

…

A: So would you say the main cultural kind of reference points that you had of feeling Goan? ... Was it like that connection with the food or the friends?

O: I mean everyone had been in Goa on my mother's side. Had lived in Goa. So they all had this link to Goa. And the clubs, these associations where I told you. We used to call "Club". The associations where we went, it was of Goan people. The Goan culture was very present all the time, you know…[109]

Through the memories of Odete, we can see how the connection to the cultural homeland of India was somewhat blurred - while the Goans identified strongly with their Goan community through things like socialisation and cultural practices (which were mostly exclusive), she went on later to tell me about how she felt far more Portuguese, and that the Portuguese culture was really present in her life through language, beliefs and religion. The social clubs are a topic that reoccurs in the life histories gathered, present in Mozambique, Kenya and Tanzania alike. The social lives of these groups, (whether Hindus, Muslims, Christians, or Parsees) were organised in associations which were focused on supporting the educational, recreational, cultural, or religious activities of the respective communities, including the upholding of caste and other religious traditions.[110] Indeed, since colonial society was upheld by social regulation,

[109]Odete, Interview 3, Interviewed by Asha Trivedy. Audio Recording. January 29, 2024.
[110] Frenz, 'Complicating Decolonisation', 1003.

demarcation and hierarchization, historian Rosales points out how stating their Goan origins was central to all families, many of whom avoided cultural aspects such as wearing sarees so as not to be associated with the other Indian communities.[111] Historian Margaret Frenz highlighted that the Goans from Portuguese colonies travelled on Portuguese passports and saw themselves as such - marking a distinctive difference from the British colonial context.[112] This difference in legal status (holding - or not holding - the passport) would have certainly impacted their relationship with their ancestral homeland.[113] And so, it was in this context that we can understand the basis of the "transnational" expressions of these communities - while some felt loyal to their countries of birth or residence, others maintained close ties to their homelands in South Asia due to the political formations that structured their lives. The ideas that have been painted in the past historiographies of these communities fail to account for the complexities of these transnationalisms.

3.2 Crossing borders in the home

Within the context of migration communities, the home has been considered a pivotal setting where cultural production takes place, as according to Historian Rosales, homes support the materialisation of practices from previous contexts of migrant communities.[114] A number of the historians of South Asians in East Africa have explored how many of the expectations of upholding traditions and transnational connections often fell upon women. Historian Felicity

[111] Rosales, *Things of the House*, 72.
[112] Margaret Frenz, "Representing the Portuguese Empire: Goan Consuls in British East Africa 1910-1963" in Éric Morier-Genoud, Michel Cahen (eds) *Imperial Migrations : Colonial Communities and Diaspora in the Portuguese World*. 2012. (Houndmills Basingstoke Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan), 194.
[113] It is worth noting here that, under the Estado Novo of Salazar, the Portuguese colonial state maintained close ties with Pakistan and by contrast saw India as a threat due to the Goa crisis, and therefore Muslims with Pakistani Passports were more protected under Portuguese rule than those of Indian nationality.
Frenz, *Complicating Decolonisation*, 1007.
[114] Rosales, *Things of the House*, 10.

Hand, who studied literature about South Asians in East Africa, writes about the concept of *izzat,* meaning honour of prestige, writing that *"The Indian woman is expected to be responsible for maintaining the Indian home in the diaspora by remaining true to her Indian womanhood through the preservation of her family's –and therefore the community's– respectability."* It is because of these expectations, she continues to write, that many communities in the diaspora in East Africa held on tightly to their traditions for fear of exterior judgement. This might have, she argues, come in the form of policing women's clothing, where they could go and with whom, and the options they had for education and work.[115] These sentiments are largely echoed in the biography of Zarina Patel, who is a Kenyan-born South Asian writer, activist and historian. In her biography, Gona documents her background growing up in a middle class family and becoming an advocate for Kenyan independence, human rights and facing backlash and many restrictions on her life due to expectations imposed by her community.[116] Of course, this commonly mentioned practice in the literature is quite different to the lives of some of the participants on this project, who as we saw in the previous chapter, mainly remembered elements of freedom in their society in East Africa compared to after their migration to the West. These could be elements that are almost forgotten or not mentioned in Oral History life stories, since the focus of the interview can sometimes tend towards highlighting positive memories. Similarly, Savita Nair discusses in her work the expectations on women in some families that she encountered in her research to uphold these notions of prestige and how often these were manifested in expectations of upholding certain Brahminical (upper) caste-centred practices. The concept of *kala pani,* or black water in some forms of Hinduism, is the idea that when one goes abroad, they are in a sense "polluted" by the foreign water and therefore need to purify themselves before entering sacred spaces. This, she argues,

[115] Hand "Coping with Khandaanity in Diaspora Spaces…" 15.
[116] Gona, *An Indomitable Spirit,* 26-49.

is something that the communities need to negotiate with daily and therefore also creates ties back to their ancestral homeland through these practices that need to be maintained in order to retain community honour/respect.[117] Of course, they were not practised within all families, but it was something that was expected in many cases. Indeed, similar sentiments are echoed in the autobiography of Yasmin Alibhai-Brown from her own Ismaili Muslim community.[118] In one of the Oral History interviews, a woman called Sabiha recalls the difference she felt when attending prayers in the Mosque because she had lived in East Africa;

> "*I had experienced racism in the masjid…, because I was Kenyan, I always felt that they didn't teach me properly, because they thought "oh yeah we don't want to learn", and I fell behind."*[119]

Another woman, Naseem Aslam, who grew up in Nairobi and later in her life moved to Pakistan where her family were originally from, remembers the prejudice of their community and how they felt sceptical of those who had migrated from East Africa.

> *"Everybody was talking about them, saying they haven't got manners, they come from the jungle, African peoples' country, they don't know how to go out, jumping all around, then my dad came, and he moved us to the city."*[120]

[117] Nair, *Moving Life Histories…* 52.
[118] Alibhai-Brown, *The Settler's Cookbook,* 18.
[119] Sabiha. Interview by Shabana Yunas. Crescent Community Radio East African Lives Oral History Collection. Accessed February 27, 2024. Video recording. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1UZo1io8kg&list=PLxS8g3z9Cp98_OPxskJGIa4hrtP4qPAl_&index=20

[120] Naseem Aslam, Interview by Shabana Yunas. Crescent Community Radio East African Lives Oral History Collection. Accessed February 24, 2024. Video recording. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9dDfDRW_hE&list=PLxS8g3z9Cp98_OPxskJGIa4hrtP4qPAl_&index=8.

Though these memories do not overtly imply an imposing of ideals and *izzat* on women, we can see in these quotes how experiences that fell outside of ideals in close proximity to South Asian cultures were met with scepticism by the communities and were difficult to navigate for these women. These negative associations to those outside of their culture may also form part of the influence of British colonial constructions of identity, and structures of community segregation which had been practised in India for decades prior, which enforced strict categorial linguistic, racial and caste-based hierarchies. The fact that they recognised these moments of difference and articulated them in their life stories tells us that they represented a significant part of their lives. Because of this, I argue their experiences represent a space between or beyond borders that is rarely acknowledged in this historiography. Furthermore, their experiences as historical actors that society understands as "women" further complicates their experiences. They were navigating different spheres of expectations placed upon them, being pulled between different ideas of what was right and proper - of society and social practices, politics and religion - but also of East Africa, the West, and South Asia.

3.3 Indian Ocean cinema publics

One of the Hindu women from Maputo, Mozambique who I interviewed became excited when we began discussing films. The cinemas were places where she remembered interacting with different kinds of people and also forming her idea 'India'.[121] She remembers walking 10 minutes to a nearby cinema which showed Portuguese and Bollywood films. Citing the most famous Bollywood actor, Amitabh Bachchan, and the highly popular film *Sholay* from 1975 which he starred in, her and her son reminisced in the interview;

[121] Anonymous Interviewee 2. Interviewed by Asha Trivedy. November 30, 2023. Audio recording.

> "*African people, they like films don't they? Yeah definitely. Amitabh Bachchan, Sholay… yeah" …"together yeah! We all watched them together*."[122]

The cinema halls and drive-ins are one area where trans-nationalities in practice may be observed, as cinema drew in a larger and more diverse crowd than any other activity.[123] Hindi language films came to East Africa with the growing population and the booming of Bollywood in the 1940s and 50s. They continued to be enjoyed by a diverse citizenry despite language and cultural barriers. For many South Asians who had been born in East Africa, the cinema was a place where ideas of their homeland were constructed. Regular screenings of the newest Bollywood films came to Nairobi, Mombasa and other urban centres, often creating such a buzz that the actors themselves made appearances at the film halls.[124] A number of historians have written about the presence of Bollywood films in the identity formation in the South Asian diaspora. According to N. Bertz, the Bombay film industry "*travelled exceedingly well"* with its universally relatable plots and songs – indeed, it was not uncommon for Swahili speaking audiences to sing these songs in Hindi. The commonly understandable themes and linguistic relatability allowed South Asians from a range of different backgrounds to formulate constructions of identity around these films.[125] The Globe Cinema in Nairobi, among others, is well remembered as one of the centres of urban leisure.[126]

[122] Anonymous Interviewee 1. Interviewed by Asha Trivedy. November 29, 2023. Audio recording. (*see link to full transcripts/descriptions of interviews in appendices)*
[123] Fair, *Reel Pleasures*, 180.
[124] East African Standard, 4 January 1952.
[125] N. Bertz, (2011). "Indian Ocean World Cinema: Viewing the History of Race, Diaspora and Nationalism in Urban Tanzania." *Africa, 81*(1), 69.
[126] Rasna Warah 'How Indian Cinema Shaped East Africa's Urban Culture', *Africa is a Country* (2021) https://africasacountry.com/2021/01/how-indian-cinema-shaped-east-africas-urban-culture, Accessed 12.03.24.

The Empire Theatre 1964. THe large posters on the right showed films being screened at Theatre Royal, Playhouse and forthcoming pictures at the Empire. (sent by Tahir Mirza)

Figure 2 - *This is an image from the website "Sikh Heritage " in the page Nostalgic Nairobi, which was a blog in the early 2010s documenting memories of South Asians who lived in East Africa. It shows one of the main cinemas in Nairobi, demonstrating these cinemas as important sites of memory for the communities. (Accessed 12.03.2024)*

The rapid growth of formal and informal film venues throughout East Africa in the decades leading up to independence led to the expansion of people from different walks of life who could attend the cinema, but also a growth in segregation in the venues.[127] Because of this mixing of different films which projected different types of cultural practices, music, styles and food, many of the women I interviewed recalled this as a significant part of East African culture. In the case of Mozambique, one of the women interviewed recalls the presence of Bollywood films in her life growing up in Lourenço Marques, the capital city, where Bollywood films were regularly screened - although she does recall that Portuguese films were more common and preferred among the Goan community.

[127] Ibid, 77.

"A: So do you think you grew up with any of those, like, Indian movies or music or anything like that or was it, mainly the Portuguese?

R: No, no music. Sometimes we had Indian movies in Lourenço Marques, and with friends we would go, let's go see, all three, four, five, six, friends go to see Indian movie, but normally it was the movie that is playing here in Portugal, also in Macau, or something more."[128]

Visible here is the difference between the women of Goan Christian descent in Mozambique, versus the Gujarati Hindu women, with whom the Bollywood films seemed to form a stronger part of their lives. This also exists due to the language, because Gujarati women would have spoken Gujarati at home and therefore would be more familiar culturally and linguistically with the context of Bollywood films. The Goan women on the other hand were more immersed in Portuguese culture, and spoke Portuguese at home, and as a result felt a stronger connection with the Lusophone cinema. In this sense the film industry formed a part of the construction of collective transnational identity, where communities living outside of the Indian subcontinent formed ideas of their 'homeland' through narrative constructions. Language, cultural traditions, historical practices of music, poetry and food, clothing and values would have all formed a part of their relationship to South Asia which was largely sustained by these kinds of media.

[128] Rita, Interview 4, Interviewed by Asha Trivedy. Audio Recording. February 15, 2024. See appendix for link to full interview.

3.4 Conclusion

Recalling back to the start of this chapter, as articulated by Alibhai-Brown, these cross-cultural lives hold stories that are not easy for our minds to comprehend, being that we are so used to articulations of history around national borders. This chapter has explored some examples of what we might call "transnational expressions" of people of South Asian origin in East Africa. These examples have explored how transnationality in these communities was not something fixed, but constantly changing, evolving and being complicated by different political and social realities in East Africa. The aim of this chapter has been to present a deeper understanding of the cross-cultural connections that these communities had in different contexts. Through the life stories of the women who I interviewed, I argue that we see how their expressions of transnational affinities could be sources of inclusion or exclusion from their communities. In the case of some of the women interviewed, inclusion in their community activities depended on them connecting to these transnational affiliations, for example, defining themselves as Indian and taking part in cultural and social activities that clearly expressed this. In other cases, and sometimes simultaneously, for some women such as Sofia Mustafa who was active in Tanganyika's political scene, defining these trans-nationalities caused them to be rejected from their communities by some. Overall, what we can gather from the examples presented above is that the experiences of these women have been far more varied than what has previously been assumed in the literature about South Asian women from East Africa. These variables often relied on elements that were constructed by their experiences of coloniality, such as strict linguistic and ethnic divisions. Though this chapter has underscored what could be seen as transnational historical actors, and through explorations of these communities, it has argued that different 'borders' were drawn in the home, the public spaces, in politics and in daily life, through occupying different spaces of media, politics, socialisation and religion.

4. Capstone Project

Link to capstone project

While the previous chapters of this thesis have delved into the historical elements of South Asians in East Africa, this chapter will detail the creation of the capstone project and evaluate its purposes and results. This chapter will address the core question of; how can the histories, memories and identities of these women, being that they are complex and imbued with many different experiences, be represented for public history? And indeed, what were the benefits of creating a capstone project in this context?

Within this question there are multiple parts. Initially, this chapter details the purposes of Oral History for community histories, before reviewing my methodologies of collecting the oral testimonies and evaluating the approach of this thesis. This will include a discussion about the strengths and difficulties, ethical concerns, and the place of memory and how these oral testimonies can be used as historical sources. Thirdly, this chapter will detail the creation of the digital Oral History project, including the inspiration for the project, aims and where it could have been improved. Finally, the chapter will reflect on potential future pathways for the project or ways that it could be developed further.

4.1 Why a community Oral History archive for South Asian East African women's Oral Histories?

There exist today thousands of online spaces for diaspora and migrant groups to connect and create digital spaces of reflection and connection in a world where communities are widely dispersed. Shared experiences are most likely what bind these diaspora communities together - historians have argued - whether that be shared experiences of displacement, resistance, adaptation or other forms of relational modes. Anthropologist Appadurai argued that, driven by mass media and migration, diasporic public spheres were the "*crucibles of the post-national political order",* and would be a huge part of global futures.[129] For this reason, the constructed nature of these groups should be emphasised, as was touched on by Benedict Anderson in his theory of *imagined communities*.[130] The emergence of these spaces away from archives, which have traditionally been the site of preservation of historical documents, mark a shift away from what we view as historical truth and fact. Historian Burton argues that we must interrupt the binary logics of primary and secondary source material, of archive and voice, of historical fact and fiction, if we are truly to challenge the legitimacy of the colonial archive.[131] Therefore, digital platforms can act to articulate narratives which create these imagined communities, which historians Borst and González detailed in their study of Afro-diasporic communities in Spain and Portugal.[132] Similarly, social networking sites provide these spaces of community and group reflection for the South Asian Communities of the diaspora who lived in East Africa. These spaces inform the creation of this capstone project, which intends to reach this further

[129] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large*, 14.
[130] Anderson, *Imagined Communities.*
[131] Burton, *Dwelling in the Archive* , 27.
[132] Julia Borst, Danae Gallo González, "Narrative Constructions of Online Imagined Afro-diasporic Communities in Spain and Portugal" *Open Cultural Studies* 3, no. 1 (2019), 288.

by creating a space where oral testimonies of the community who are ageing can be incorporated.

In using digital history for this project, a number of challenges and benefits emerge. Authors Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembrzycki argue that if we are not careful, the original intention of Oral History can actually be undermined by placing Oral Histories online. This is because by their nature, it is those who are least at risk whose stories will be put online, not to mention what it means if the authors themselves cannot have access to the content if they have no internet access.[133] Therefore, the Oral Historian working with digital platforms must be careful to consider the uses for their work, exploring different ways to make something that feels valuable to the group itself, as well as acknowledging and interrogating the question of epistemic violence.

In the case of this project, involvement of the participants was important to understand why they felt compelled to participate. Most of these reasons were as follows; making stories available for children and future generations, keeping alive the memories of their communities which do not exist in the same ways anymore, and making sure that they are not forgotten. In the case of this Oral History project, which explores migrant histories, digital tools are useful because of the dispersed nature of the communities whose histories are included. One of the main pieces of feedback received from the women interviewed for this project was that they did not realise that their histories were “important”or “interesting”, and that they were happy that someone was listening to their stories. Another woman interviewed with her son said that

[133] Anna Sheftel, Stacey Zembrzycki, "Slowing down to listen in the digital age: how new technology is changing oral history practice", The Oral History Review(1), (2017) 44. 107.

it was good to share these stories with her son who might not otherwise have known these details about her life.

4.2 Oral History approaches

The introduction to this thesis detailed the purposes of Oral History. In the creation of this capstone project, I was informed by writings on marginalised women's Oral Histories in order to understand how we can make sense of these life stories and avoid power imbalances and exploitative practices. Alessandro Portelli wrote in "*What Makes Oral History Different?*" about the cautions that the practitioner must take in assessing their own power over narratives and creation of meaning of the Oral Histories.[134] Revisionist historians and feminists in the West in the 1960s began to challenge these notions, and women of colour took these principles further when applying them to the Oral Histories of marginalised, black and brown women. They identified, using many case studies, how distinctive of an approach Oral Histories of black and brown women required.[135] Author Gwendolyn Etter-Lewis in her writing about black women's lives, noted that "*we must contest the male tendency to organise information in terms of separability and discreteness. The notion that a single cause creates a single effect is inadequate. Black women's experiences, for example, are influenced by their multiple social roles, which are acted out simultaneously. They do not have the privilege of only being women, or of only being black Americans in particular situations"...* Indeed, taking into account multiple overlapping histories and experiences is therefore necessary in the context of listening to marginalised women. In this context, while Oral History was initially seen within white

[134] Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories : Form and Meaning in Oral History*. (Albany N.Y: State University of New York Press, 1991) 54.
[135] Sherna Berger Gluck, Daphne Patai (eds.). *Women's Words: The. Feminist Practice of Oral History*. (New York: Routledge, 1991), 43.

feminism as being useful for empowerment, many began to push for its use for advocacy instead[136]. Since, as Portelli pointed out, no Oral Historian can essentially walk into an interview unbiased, we must enter as much as we can with openness to having our opinions challenged and pushed back against when the voices we collect don't fit within our preconceived ideas. We must also be wary of power imbalances in the witnessing of Oral History, and understand the dangers of what Spivak called *epistemic violence* on communities.[137] Power is present at all stages of the Oral History process, from its conception, to the formation of the interview, to the interpretation and publication of those Oral Histories.[138] According to Gluck, this is where advocacy must come at the forefront of the work that Oral Historians do.[139] She argues that by committing to a cause, and using Oral History to strengthen the argument, we can contribute to a vision of liberation that should come from the women themselves.

The Social Justice Task Force within the Oral History Association asked what does it mean to accept that Oral History work is political, particularly with regard to social justice groups and vulnerable communities, and how can we embrace this reality and operate accordingly? In their work, they aim to centre the narrator and be "*guided by the most vulnerable*", and focus on co-creation and the sharing of power when making Oral History. Within this, they advocated for 1) action steps that move listening beyond the audio to listening with an ear toward power sharing before, during, and after interview, 2) redirection away from institutionalised ideological methods, 3) expanded community definition, and 4) extended accountability. This is important to me because they make it clear that they place the beliefs and needs of the

[136] Writing on the collection of Oral Histories in occupied Palestine, historian Sherna Berger Gluck urged Oral Historians to stress more the benefits that their projects could hold for the women whose voices they were collecting. Ibid. 216.
[137] C. Spivak "Can the Subaltern Speak?" 28-29.
[138] Abrams, *Oral history theory,* 163.
[139] Gluck, *Women's Words,* 213.

community above the institutional practices, aiming to break down the strongly unbalanced power dynamics that are common in Oral History. They highlight how we have seen how poor practices in Oral History can quickly turn into violent results against communities when they are utilised by the state for targeting groups or individuals.[140] And so, this thesis has attempted to incorporate some of these principles detailed above within its conception of the Oral History archive. Indeed, these principles were a key motivation in the project's conception and aided the creation of the archive throughout.

4.3 Collection and Preservation

Collecting the Oral History testimonies and life stories is the primary element of this capstone project and required all of the care and attention detailed above. This process involved many months of communication with different women (and in many cases, their families too) through email correspondence or over the phone. Taking the time to get to know the participants was an essential element of this capstone project, because it meant that they could understand more fully what the aims of the project were and if they felt comfortable contributing their life stories. Two interviews were completed online over Zoom, which provided a number of challenges. Despite this, we still opted to continue with them - due to their dispersed nature, I argue that it provided a more transnational element to the project and was important especially considering the final capstone project is digital. Firstly, is the comfort of the Oral History interviewee, or the person recounting their life stories, which is of the utmost importance in the process. Secondly, audio quality and technical literacy were factors which were considered and were the main reason why I preferred to conduct interviews in person, especially since the project

[140] Oral History Association Guide to Social Justice Oral History Practice. https://oralhistory.org/guidelines-for-social-justice-oral-history-work/ Accessed 12.04.24

engages with older community members. We were able to overcome these barriers in the project with a combination of working with family members to conduct the interviews and relying on my own technical abilities.

Conducting interviews in person face to face was the most preferred way of collecting oral testimonies for this project. These arguably provided a more in-depth discussion and a deeper connection between the interviewer and the interviewee. They were more comfortable since they were conducted in the home or workplace of the participant. These provided the clearest recordings and the best transcripts, and also involved less difficulties with language barriers. These interviews often lasted longer because I would spend more time talking with the interviewee before and after.

Overall, the process of collecting the interviews was challenging and I argue could have been approached more smoothly in future. I would opt for face-to-face interviews wherever possible, mainly for the comfort of the interviewee and the ability to create a meaningful connection which allows the participant to feel more comfortable when recounting their stories.

The interviews carried out were semi-structured, and were not strictly confined to the interview questions. The questions for the interviews were devised as a guide, and to understand more about the lives of the interviewees in East Africa, but beyond this we followed only loosely the lines of questioning, (as advised by the OHA guide) in order to make the Oral testimony natural, comfortable and pleasant for the participant. The interview questions[141] were largely structured around 4 main areas; background to their life, social/work/home life, stories, and identity. It usually depended on what the participant felt which determined which questions we would

[141] See appendix 1.

respond to. The interview was set up as a conversation, and we shared stories throughout, including before and after the interview.

Organising the Oral Histories was a process that took time, but so too was the documenting of them. Preservation was something held in consideration throughout this project, and so, I aimed to explore methods that would specifically match the source material. Creating transcripts and descriptions of the Oral History interviews therefore had to be done in careful consideration of language, length, topic/discussion and what both I as the researcher, and the interviewee, felt would be best suited to the project.

In some cases, transcribing the Oral History interviews proved difficult because of the ways that the listener might misinterpret specific words or phrases. Creating word-to-word translations was not something we opted for in all cases, due to the fact that translations which could be not completely accurate in the cases where 3 different languages were being used at once (English, Portuguese and Gujarati) In these cases, we opted for creating summaries so that the reader/listener could engage with these alongside the recordings so as not to misinterpret the meanings of the translations. This approach was one that was inspired by the Crescent Community Radio archive, which also created summaries for their interviews instead of making full transcriptions.[142] When the interviews were fully in English, they were transcribed but still urged the reader/listener to engage with the full recording to create their own interpretations of the life stories.

[142] Note: in the case of Crescent Community Radio, all of their recordings are available on their website and on youtube, but their transcripts are not. Upon request and discussion with them about my project, I was able to gain access to the descriptions of the interviews, which they opted for creating in place of transcripts.

Another important consideration for digital archiving for the historian is the protection and preservation of the Oral History life stories. Among other things, the metadata, contextual information, images and sounds must all be considered in the preservation of the recordings and documents. A part of this project is sorting, processing and maintaining the Oral Histories. Within this, I made sure that there are clear guidelines about the engagement with the interviews should they be used further by other researchers. Due to this being a short term project, I and the participants agreed that their oral testimonies will only be published for a short period of two months, after which they will only be available upon specific request, whereby I would make sure to ask for their permission once again before sharing the recordings and documents.

4.4 Forming the Capstone Project

As previously detailed, the collective rememberings of these communities, while they also take place in physical spaces between friends and families, find particular popularity in digital spaces due to their dispersed nature across the West, East Africa and the Indian subcontinent. For the prototype for this capstone project I was inspired by a number of different projects that have utilised community Oral History archiving in interesting and innovative ways. These fall into two different categories: the first one is ways that these communities are already sharing their memories and life stories. These are mostly social media pages and small websites. The second category are sites where different communities have their memories and stories archived which use interesting approaches that inspired this project.

Concerning the first category, there are a number of active sites where the community share these histories already in some ways, though they are rather different to what my capstone sought to create. Brownhistory is one site where a lot of younger generations were sharing their family histories, submitting stories from their personal family archives to be displayed on the page. Though, this page has largely declined and recently has been more of a site for discussing history and contemporary South Asian politics.

Another interesting site that seems to have been used by the community is Sikh Heritage, a website which documented the memories of Sikh communities who migrated to East Africa. This project was community contribution based, including personal archives, short stories, poetry, and personal memoirs relating to many different parts of East Africa. It was also linked to a facebook page where participants submitted their stories which would then be shared on the site. Though the site has not been used since at least 2013 and we see no recent updates from it. Sites like these make us consider a number of elements of the community archive - the role of the moderator first and foremost, who decides what is included, and in a sense controls the narrative of the place of remembrance. This site made me consider the role of the "narrator" in this project and how it might be able to facilitate a more open and less restricted model of participation for the site.

The digital archives Everyday Muslim and the South Asian American Digital Archive are sites that are also documenting Oral History from these communities but mainly deal with topics relating to their lives after migration, and often do not place a focus on their lives before migrating.

Finally, we see how Facebook groups and personal pages became sites of remembrance, where people posted family photographs from their time in East Africa, and where the comments sections became places where communities would reminisce. The Nostalgic East Africa group, as well as Gujarati community pages and the Rafiki Kitchen group were places where images, stories and recipes were shared and discussed.

Though these pages were sites where communities offered memories of their time in East Africa, it may be argued that there was a lot that could not be said or remembered - the lack of ability to include voices or videos, the lack of engagement with younger generations, and the fact that they were more informal, all contributed to the decision that there was space to add to these existing sites with the creation of a community archive.

In the second case, this project was inspired by a number of stories from The Library of Congress Storymaps, which use innovative techniques to present and document marginalised histories. The way that projects such as Unravelling 'Ishq make use of poetry, images, historical background text and movement was a great inspiration for my project and something that I aimed to incorporate in my capstone project. These sites make use of interactive elements well for presenting public history because they create the ability to engage with visual and textual information relatively effortlessly. Lands of Freedom is a project which presents the Oral History and cultural heritage of the Matawai Maroons community in Suriname, which we were also inspired by. This project worked alongside people of that community themselves, and also their use of ArcGIS Storymaps to present the project. These projects aided in creating a vision of what elements had been reflected in other community digital spaces which this project could engage with.

Implementing the ideas detailed above has been a continuous process throughout this project from its conception to the realisation of the capstone project. The aim of it was always to make sure to listen to the women who offered their Oral Histories, creating balanced and respectful relationships based on shared experiences. Furthermore, it aims first and foremost to create a participatory project with spaces to contribute and add different perspectives and voices, especially when they do not fit into traditional preconceived ideas of the communities.

At the start of this project we developed a prototype on ArchGIS Storymap, using mapping in order to pin different sites of memory and incorporate the Oral Histories collected. After using this approach, mapping presented problems with discussing these histories. Mapping was problematic for pinpointing memories of specific places for a number of reasons. Because oftentimes the landscapes of cities had changed so much from what was remembered by the women who were interviewed, but also because the use of maps, while it is useful in visualising the connections and movements of these communities, could also have a harmful effect. Mapping in the current sense that we understand it can enforce in our minds the position of borders and create a sense of finality in how they divide and represent space, which went against the aims of this project.

Figure 3 and 4 exemplify how the prototype for the capstone project, which used Archgis and Storymap, experimented with different presentation styles including embedding recordings from the interviews, including quotes, clips from movies that were mentioned in the Oral Histories, archival images from the website Sikh Heritage, as well as including short historical contextual descriptions of these.

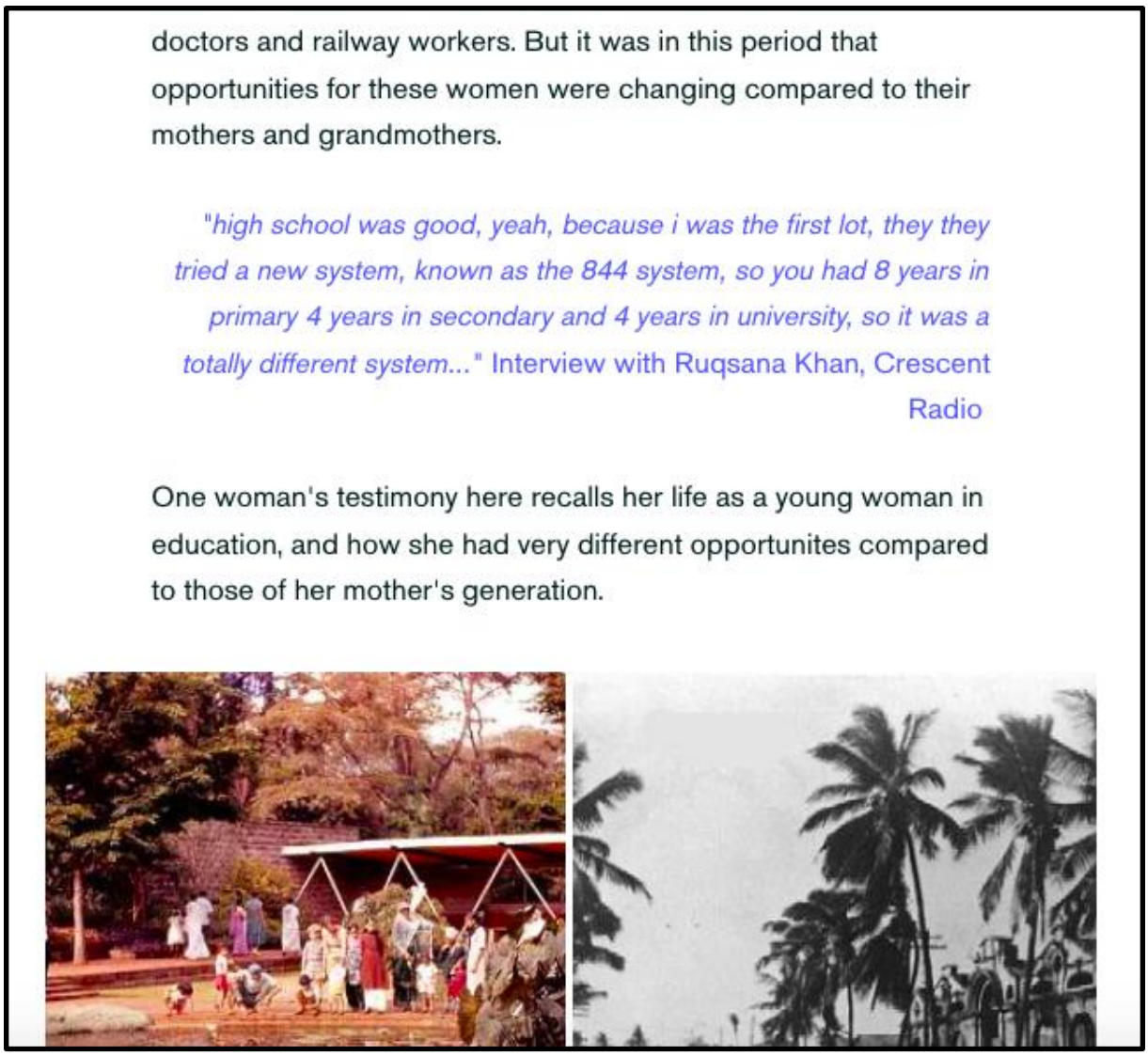

Figure 3 - screencap from Storymap prototype (1), with quotes from oral history testimonies and images from Sikh Heritage archive

Within the prototype, there were a number of elements that required changes - firstly, a section for users to interact and participate in the digital archive - making comments, posting their own pictures or memories or even recordings. Secondly, the site needed a safe tab where the Oral Histories could be stored, as well as being able to link to other similar projects. These needed to be able to be organised in a way that was accessible and understandable for the viewer but also those who had been participants of the project. Similarly to the other examples of projects explored above, the goal was to create a feeling of immersion in that world, so that it could provide the communities with a space to remember and reflect on their past.

In order to incorporate these changes, creating a website using the website building application Squarespace, and using it to embed the Storymap was the most effective option. This method allowed sections for the recordings and transcripts, and one section for participants to submit comments or reflections.

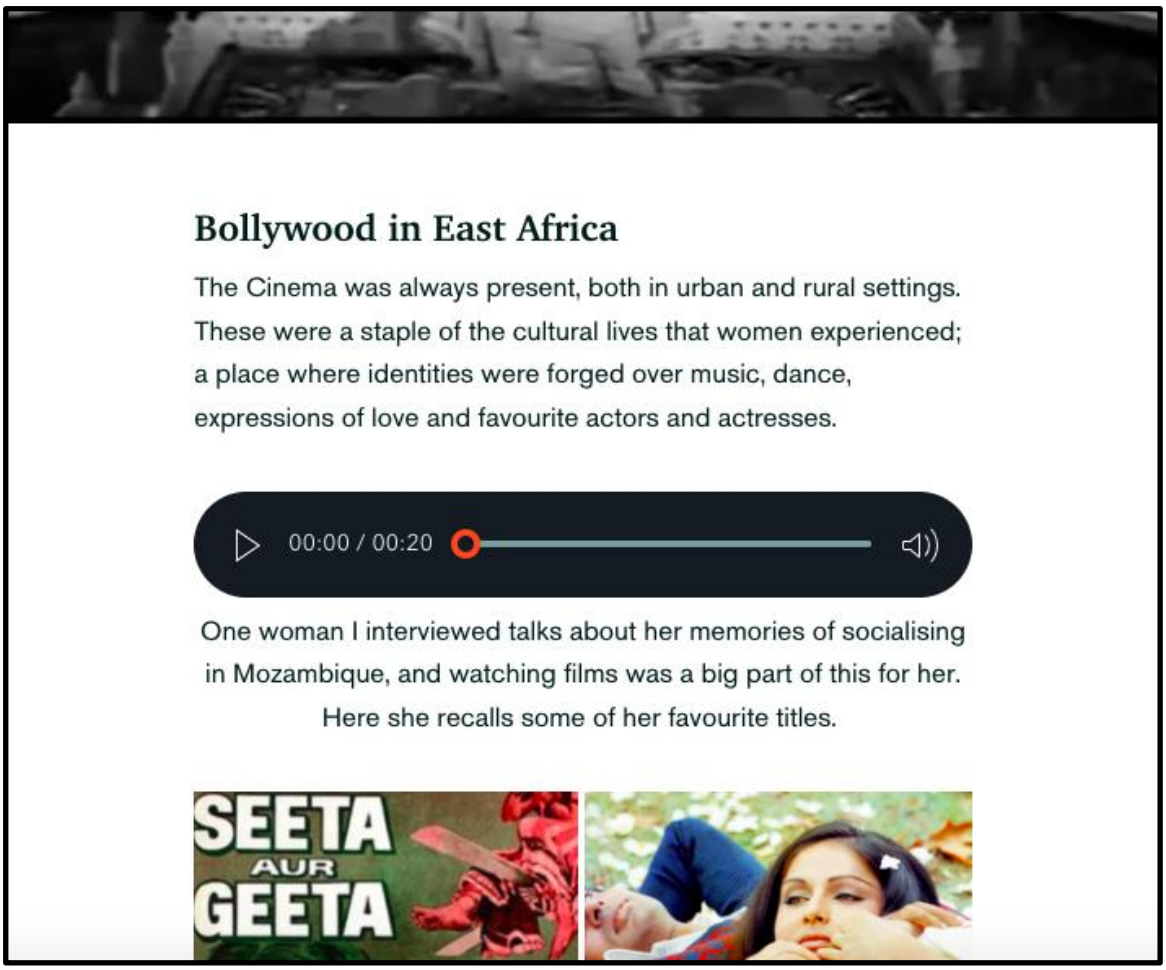

Figure 4 - screencap from Storymap prototype (2) where clips from oral history interviews were incorporated.

4.5 Reflection on the final Capstone

Finally, this section will comment on the outcome of the capstone project and how it may be adapted and improved in the future. For the presentation of the capstone project, in the end a number of decisions were taken in order to make the project clear and user-friendly, and suited to the aims of the project.

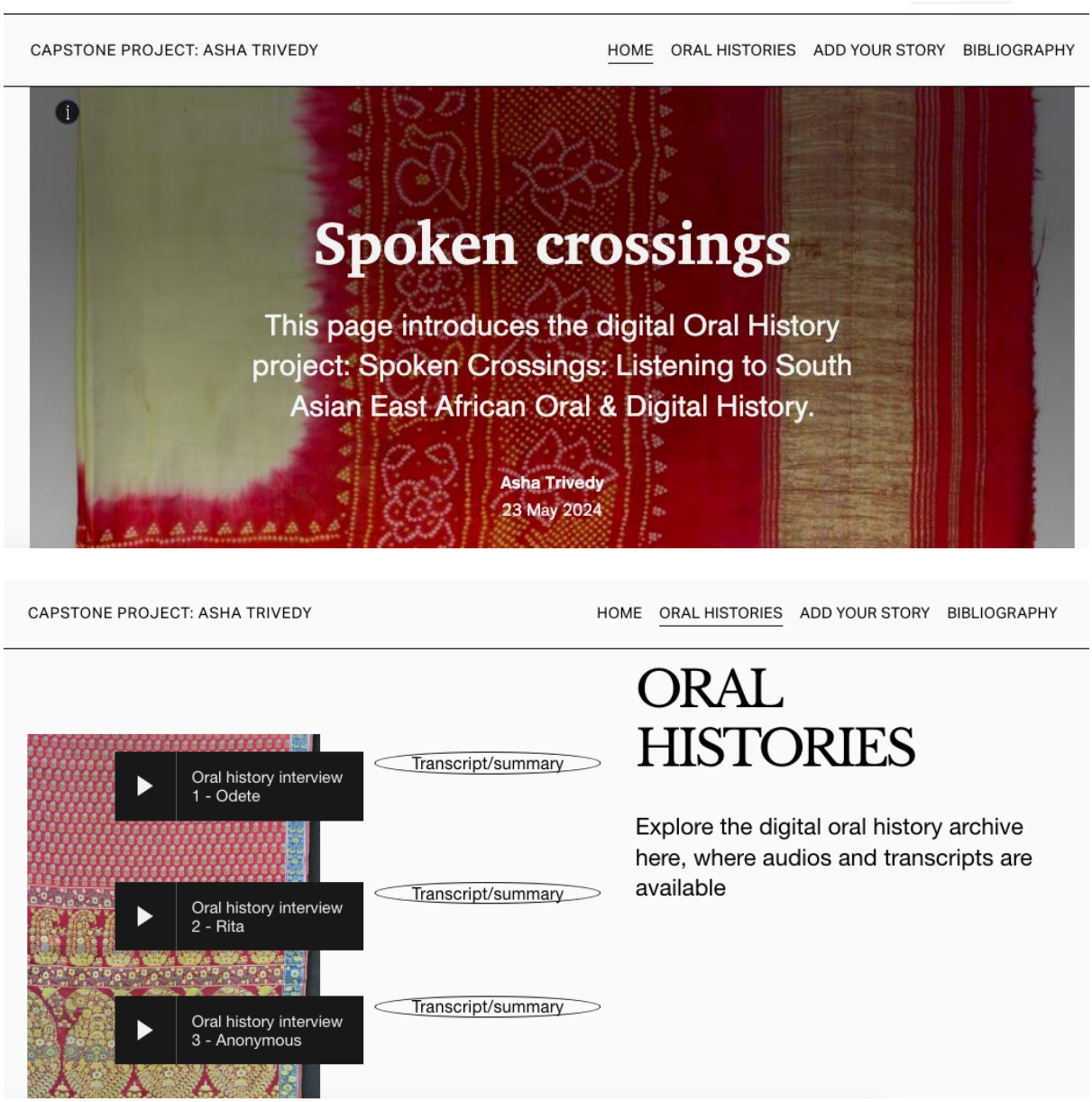

Figure 5 and 6 - Showing the 'Home' and 'Oral Histories' tabs on the final capstone project, linked here.

Figures 5 and 6 above show 2 of the tabs visible as an example of the final capstone project. The introductory page to the capstone project gives an overview, discussing some of the themes of the dissertation and gives snippets of parts of the Oral Histories. This ‘landing page’ of the archive is intended to guide the visitor into the archive and pick out some interesting points for them to focus on. Within this, we opted to include a few clips of the Oral History testimonies around central themes. This allows the viewer to engage with the archive without having to listen to the whole recordings, and also means that the participants' voices are present throughout which is something that was essential to the project. These clips were selected based on the themes, as were the quotes. The quotes selected mainly came from the Crescent Community Archive, which the further details about are included in the archive tab of the site. Under the archive tab, along with the recordings, the summaries or transcripts are included, and in the case of the Crescent Community Archive, links to their full archive of 29 interviews were included.

A number of the visual decisions made about the capstone project changed throughout the design process. Initially, though we had decided against using the technique of mapping in ArchGIS/Storymaps for this project, we in fact decided to utilise maps in order to allow the viewer to gain a better understanding of the geographical spaces that were being discussed in the project. I argue that this is important in orienting the viewer and allowing them to have some sense of spatial awareness of where the project is taking place. However, the decision was made to avoid using a basemap which included contemporary country names or borders, so as to bring in the idea of the true fluidity of these spaces, and allow us to reimagine within the project what these spaces meant. In this sense, the visitor to the archive gets a sense of the fluidity of movements of people and how the modern-day borders were not something pre-determined in the 20th century.

The choice of audiovisual material for the capstone project came from a number of different sources. Firstly, the images selected were ones submitted onto the Sikh Heritage website, which I argue is fitting because it is also an online community archive, and therefore the images were submitted by people with similar migration pathways to the project participants, i.e., South Asians who had lived in East Africa and who had migrated to the West. This choice, I argue, gives the capstone project a sense of reflection and places the viewer in the immersive environment of the time period of the Oral Histories. However, the site opts not to include images of the participants themselves, due to privacy reasons. During the period of developing the project, it was discussed whether participants should volunteer to submit images, however it was not pressed upon in order to maintain their privacy boundaries. In terms of the videos selected for the site, those mentioned by the participants in their testimonies were included, so as to further incorporate their perspectives into the storytelling.

Arguably it was essential to include in this site a section for participation, whereby participants could submit their own stories to the archive - this is available in the tap on the top right of the website. The idea is that these would be posted by the moderator after review of the content. The purpose of this is to make sure that the submissions align with the key aims of the archive and allow them to engage with the space in a meaningful way.

Finally, I argue that this capstone project could have been improved in a number of ways, and may continue to be expanded in the future in these ways. Firstly, due to the time period of this project, it was limited with the number of Oral History testimonies that could be gathered. Therefore, this project could have benefitted from a further breadth of perspectives of women (and indeed men) from different religious and cultural backgrounds to add more texture to the

perspectives within this project. However, I argue that within the time limits and lack of funding to support travel for conducting interviews, the interviews conducted were realistic given these circumstances. In this sense, fewer but more in depth interviews were opted for which allowed me sufficient time to form relationships with the participants and allow time to pay close attention to the ethical considerations of conducting an Oral History project. Furthermore, the lack of funding to support a more long-term website is important to consider - the project could have been improved with more time and funds and this is something to consider for future iterations of this project. There is also potential for this project to expand, include more testimonies, and become a place for reflection and discussion of the past of these communities who experienced multiple migrations.

5. Conclusion

In the introduction to this thesis, we proposed the question of what was the purpose of engaging with Oral Histories when writing about the South Asian diaspora who resided in East Africa. This question has been weaved throughout this thesis, which has attempted to unpack the use of women's Oral History, and also the use of borders, nation states and national affiliations in the writing of history. The following conclusion to this thesis will reflect on and analyse how the initial questions raised have been approached, and the significance of this topic more broadly in the historiography as it stands. Within this, it draws attention back to the Oral History testimonies which are at the heart of this capstone project. And finally, reflects on the creation of the Oral History project and how it might be adapted and furthered in the future.

This thesis has engaged with a number of different fields within historical studies, primarily Indian Ocean History, World History and Migration History. Along with Postcolonial studies, these areas have anchored this thesis and have allowed us to engage with micro and macro scales simultaneously. Considering these areas, this research sits within the most recent wave of the exploration of the Indian diasporic communities as colonial constructions, outlined by Isobel Hofmeyr.[143] However, it has built upon these analyses by exploring local and transnational spaces, as well as incorporation of contemporary public history. As a result, this project has engaged with the fields of Oral History and Digital History in its creation, and also engaged with feminist approaches to historiography and public history.

The histories of these communities continue to evolve long after becoming 'twice migrants', with many of these such community members continuing to inhabit transnational spaces in

[143] Hofmeyr, "The Black Atlantic Meets the Indian Ocean", 6.

between Africa, South Asia and Europe or the West. They visit and move between these spaces all of which hold significant space in their collective memories, therefore I argue that their lives are made up of various spatial realities. For this reason, digital public history has provided these communities, and many other communities who experienced migration, with a means to reflect on their past and future identities.

One of the main questions posed at the start of this thesis was; how can we understand the spaces that South Asian East African women during the 1950s-1970s operated within? To present answers to this question, this thesis dealt with local and transnational spaces. Beginning from the home, shops, streets, cinemas and social spaces, chapter 2 looked at the kind of spaces these were and what kind of realities that these historical actors were encountering. This allowed us to understand more deeply these historical spaces through the voices of those who offered their Oral History testimonies to this project. Through the engagement within the text with the Oral History testimonies, this chapter traced how these local and transnational spaces were important sites of remembrance for these communities. Because of their association with multiple local and transnational spaces, I argue that these communities' Oral Histories challenge the traditional notions of boundaries and borders that are so often present in traditional historiography about the community. Women's testimonies, specifically, remind us of the diversity of roles of these historical actors and their various different ways of asserting their identities in societies that were constantly changing during the pre and post-colonial eras.

Through the exploration of various different voices, I argue that this thesis has demonstrated how oral testimonies and the memories within them can act to challenge dominant historical narratives of a community. Many of the women whose voices were involved in this project experienced a reality that is not often represented in the historiography, and therefore

challenges notions of what South Asian women did, can do, and how they essentially acted to challenge historical formations that were reinforcing borders and ideas of nation states by occupying and moving between a range of spaces. Through the development of the public history project detailed in chapter 4 of this thesis, we see how their life stories can present alternative modes of understanding public history of these women whose stories are often summarised through dominant narratives, binaries and prominent male historical figures. Through these processes, it must be highlighted, the women interviewed are not *subjects* of history, but rather historical actors and people who navigate colonial realities even to this day, which is evident in their Oral Histories.

One of the main aims of this thesis has also been to engage with a community that is widely dispersed, living across continents, and document the lives of those ageing community members. This project has allowed for a democratisation to access to these historical reflections through use of digital platforms, and has provided the community with an external space of reflection. Indeed, a number of the participants throughout the project expressed their gratitude that their life stories were being recorded in this way, that young people wanted to listen to their stories, and that they were able to contribute to the formation of history in their own words. This aim is one that takes time, and so is difficult to fully achieve within the time span of a master's thesis. In a project with a wider scope, it would be preferable to spend more time with the participants, encounter more stories and carry out a greater quantity of interviews. However, considering the time span of the project, the interviews were carried out with a consideration for quality and ethics. In the future, we envision this project evolving, possibly to incorporate more audiovisual materials, potentially to turn the interviews into a documentary, exhibition or video series. This being said, it gains inspiration from the work of Portuguese anthropologist Inês Lourenço who works primarily with the Hindu community in Lisbon and their collective

remembering through objects.[144] Similarly, I would like to continue the upkeep of the digital Oral History project, relying of course on the continued consent of the participants.

Overall, this thesis concludes urging the reader to listen to the voices themselves, rather than relying solely on this project's interpretation of those voices. It asks for the reader to resist history that defines itself by borders and divisions between people, and instead argues for history writing that looks at historical actors through the lens of their surroundings and within the context of global movements of change, whether that be decolonisation, migration, or other types of historical entanglements.

[144] See Inês Lourenço and Rita Cachado. "Hindu Transnational Families: Transformation and Continuity in Diaspora Families." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 43, no. 1 (2012).

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7. Appendices

7.1 APPENDIX 1

Interview Structure:

Name/pseudonym of narrator

Name of interviewer

Date

Location of interview

Approximate length - 30 minutes to 1 hour

FOR YOUR INFORMATION! This interview will be used for my thesis project, I will use parts of it to quote, and then I will upload it onto a website which will be made public only for a period of 1 month so that I may share it with my professors, classmates and participants. I will share the interview with you as soon as I can after the date of its realisation. After 1 month (in July) the project will be taken down, and the interview will only be for you and your family to keep for your own use. If you are not happy with these terms, we can discuss another way to preserve the interview. I am open to suggestions!

You may remain completely anonymous

You do not need to answer all the questions

Note: I may ask follow up questions

After the interview, if you are not comfortable with it being used, just ask me and I will send you the interview, and I will immediately delete it and it will not be used for the project.

Consent?

Questions

Please introduce your background. Where were you born and what is your date of birth?

Where did you grow up? What can you remember about that time?

What do you remember about your young adulthood: Where did you work, study and socialise?

What places did you visit regularly? (Cinema, halls, shops, houses?)

What holidays did you celebrate and how?

What kinds of people were you regularly interacting with? What kinds of things did you used to talk about with your friends?

What religious/cultural backgrounds were your friends?

Where did you visit, (for holidays or work or travel) and why?

What did you know about India growing up?

Did you see yourself as Indian? What kinds of cultural reference points did you have?

What kinds of foods do you remember enjoying?

Do you have any stories or significant memories of your life there?

If you can provide any material objects/images/letters alongside your testimony, this would be valuable too. These will be looked after in accordance with the same practices detailed previously.

Are you happy with this interview being a part of my project?

7.2 APPENDIX 2 - Document for the Participant

PORTUGUESE TRANSLATION BELOW

TRADUÇÃO PORTUGUESA ABAIXO

Interview Structure:

Name/pseudonym of narrator:

Name of interviewer: Asha Trivedy

Date:

Location of interview:

Approximate length: 30 minutes to 1 hour

FOR YOUR INFORMATION! This interview will be used for my thesis project, I will use parts of it to quote, and then I will upload it onto a website which will be made public only for a period of 1 month so that I may share it with my professors, classmates and participants. I will share the interview with you as soon as I can after the date of its realisation. After 1 month (in July) the project will be taken down, and the interview will only be for you and your family to keep for your own use. If you are not happy with these terms, we can discuss another way to preserve the interview. I am open to suggestions!

You may remain completely anonymous

You do not need to answer all the questions

Note: I may ask follow up questions

After the interview, if you are not comfortable with it being used, just ask me and I will send you the interview, and I will immediately delete it and it will not be used for the project.

Consent?

Background to the project:

My name is Asha, I am an MA student at Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, carrying out a project about South Asian women's lives who lived in East Africa: mainly focused on Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique. I feel that hearing from the women first hand is the most effective way to understand these histories since they are not well documented. My research focuses on women's everyday lives: where they worked, studied, socialised and practised everyday life and their experiences. Now, I think it is important because a lot of the community is growing older. This will form a part of my capstone project for my masters thesis, which will aim to create a small community oral history archive.

Interviewees may remain anonymous and may share as much or as little as they would like. I would like to meet for a short chat for 30 minutes - 1 hour, but the timespan is flexible too. The interviews can be carried out in any language: English, Portuguese or Gujarati/Hindi.

Estrutura da entrevista:
Nome/pseudónimo do narrador:
Nome do entrevistador: Asha Trivedy
Data:
Local da entrevista:
Duração aproximada: 30 minutos a 1 hora

PARA VOSSA INFORMAÇÃO! Esta entrevista será utilizada para o meu projeto de tese, utilizarei partes dela para citar e, em seguida, colocá-la-ei num sítio Web que será tornado público apenas por um período de 1 mês, para que possa partilhá-la com os meus professores, colegas de turma e participantes. Partilharei a entrevista convosco logo que possível após a data da sua realização. Após 1 mês (em julho), o projeto será retirado e a entrevista será apenas para si e para a sua família, para seu uso pessoal. Se não estiver satisfeito com estas condições, podemos discutir outra forma de preservar a entrevista. Estou aberto a sugestões!

Pode manter-se completamente anónimo

Não precisa de responder a todas as perguntas

Nota: Posso fazer perguntas complementares

Após a entrevista, se não se sentir confortável com a sua utilização, basta pedir-me e eu enviar-lhe-ei a entrevista, que será imediatamente apagada e não será utilizada para o projeto.

Consentimento?

Contexto do projeto:

O meu nome é Asha, sou estudante de mestrado na Universidade NOVA de Lisboa e estou a desenvolver um projeto sobre a vida de mulheres sul-asiáticas que viveram na África Oriental: principalmente no Quénia, Tanzânia e Moçambique. Sinto que ouvir as mulheres em primeira mão é a forma mais eficaz de compreender estas histórias, uma vez que não estão bem documentadas. A minha investigação centra-se na vida quotidiana das mulheres: onde trabalham, estudam, socializam e praticam a vida quotidiana e as suas experiências. Atualmente, penso que é importante porque muitas pessoas da comunidade estão a envelhecer. Isto fará parte do meu projeto de conclusão da minha tese de mestrado, que terá como objetivo criar um arquivo de história oral da comunidade.

Os entrevistados podem permanecer anónimos e podem partilhar tanto ou tão pouco quanto desejarem. Gostaria de me encontrar para uma breve conversa de 30 minutos a 1 hora, mas o período de tempo também é flexível. As entrevistas podem ser efectuadas em qualquer língua: Inglês, Português ou Gujarati/Hindi ou outras.

7.3 APPENDIX 3 - link to recordings, summaries and transcripts

Link to recordings, summaries and transcripts in capstone project.