

# **Memory, Nostalgia and Reality: A Socio-historical Perspective of the Grey Street Complex**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **Title**

Memory, Nostalgia and Reality: A Socio-historical Perspective of the Grey Street Complex

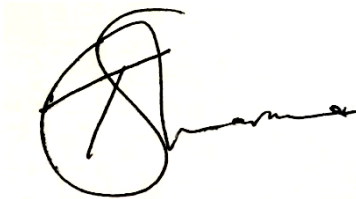
Urban restructuring has become a challenge experienced in every region, modifying both the fabric and forms of cities, and is driven by political and economic forces. Major consequences include socio-spatial, cultural, and economic variations in the urban landscape. Consequently, lived experiences in historic urban environments are lost, and can only be traced in the memories of its former residents. Although the identity of a city (with its urban morphology) is merely history once it is altered, the place-relationship remains perpetual and preserved in the emotional memories of citizens. The South African experience has been no different, especially with regard to forced displacement and relocation of established communities. The aim of this dissertation is to assess the rise and decline of the Grey Street Complex during the apartheid era. More specifically, the study presents an historical background to the Grey Street complex; assesses the impact of the Group Areas zoning on this precinct; and analyzes role of culture, memory and nostalgia in influencing the historical connection of former and current residents to this quarter. This research has employed a case study approach and a variety of qualitative methods, including interviews and documentary analysis. This precinct (currently renamed after Dr. Yusuf Dadoo, an anti-apartheid activist) formed the node where many indentured and passenger Indians, in Natal, established cultural bodies, educational institutions and commercial enterprises since the late nineteenth century. Often called “home away from home” for former Grey Street residents, this complex encapsulated a rich cultural ambience (religious, educational and recreational). Sadly, the uncertainty relating to Group Areas zoning, led to the decline of the Grey Street complex, which was perpetuated in the post-apartheid era. It is evident that the community of this precinct still share a spatial connection with the Grey Street Complex as they recall from memory common events, similar experiences at particular locations in the precinct, and a shared yearning and nostalgic sentiment based on their mnemonic attachments.

### **Keywords**

Memory, nostalgia, place, Grey Street, Durban

## **DECLARATION**

I, Tashmica Sharma (Registration Number: 211501420) hereby state that this dissertation, entitled: Memory, Nostalgia and Reality: A Socio-historical Perspective of the Grey Street Complex, is a reflection of my own research and has not been submitted in part or full for any other degree or to any other University. Any work utilized in this dissertation has been cited and acknowledged in text and in the list of references on page 142. I have not allowed any individual to copy or plagiarise my research and all field work was conducted alone.



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Miss Tashmica Sharma



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Professor Brij Maharaj

26 January 2017

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Date

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।

There is nothing in this world so purifying as knowledge

– Bhagavad Gita [4:38]

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Mata Pita **Guru** Deva. A Guru is one who selflessly guides others onto the right path.

Professor Brij Maharaj, I will spend many births balancing and trying hard to supersede your contributions towards my academic journey with my gratitude – to do this in one lifetime is impossible. Thank you for your invaluable insight and the time that you have put into this dissertation as well as your belief in me, and the various platforms that you have given me. Thank you for making this an intellectually enriching experience.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ANC</b>	African National Congress
<b>CBD</b>	Central Business District
<b>JMH</b>	Joint Medical Holdings
<b>LAC</b>	Local Affairs Committee
<b>NIC</b>	Natal Indian Congress
<b>SAI</b>	State-Aided Indian
<b>SAIC</b>	South African Indian Council

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **1. 1 PREAMBLE**

The globe is transfiguring into a progressively urban expanse with overwhelming population shifts from rural peripheries to urban environs (Ahmad *et al.*, 2014). Urban growth has become one of the most complex challenges encountered by every region – both developed and developing (Ahmad *et al.*, 2014). The fabric and form of every city is continually restructured to cater for the recurrent arrival of its new entrants and aspirants. Thus, the urban morphology is constantly modified. Such modifications are generally driven by a chain of events, which not only creates profound variations in the population size, but also alters the population profile of urban zones.

Worldwide, urban societies have either been favoured by such modifications or disadvantaged by them. Urban societies who endure such changes, whether good or bad, are inherently associated with their unique urban identity and its place-relationship (Lewicka, 2008). This is because what was once experienced in an urban environment is either forever lost, or has undergone a major transformation, subsequent to the chain of events. Consequently, the identity of a city (with its urban morphology) is merely history once it is altered; yet the place-relationship remains perpetual and preserved in the emotional memories of its urbanites (Hebbert, 2005). The mnemonic and emotional elements of a particular location have for long played essential roles in understanding the history of socio-demographic dimensions of urban environments (Hebbert, 2005; Lewicka, 2008). The South African experience has been no different.

The socio-spatial system of South African cities reflect the history of apartheid, and its plethora of consequences for the various disadvantaged groups (Maharaj, 1999). Thus South African urban history has been an important aspect when examining the contemporary shapes and forms of cities. The changing form of the central business district (CBD) of Durban, one of the South Africa's major urban nodes, for example, has captured the attention of scholars from various disciplines. It has become a focus for researchers due to its remarkably rich history and diverse culture.



The historic distinctive trait of the Durban city centre was that it contained two CBDs - a White at the core, adjacent to the Indian business sector (Rajah and Davis, 1965; Simon, 1989). This dissertation will provide a geographic historical analysis of the Indian CBD of Durban. In particular, this research will focus on the part of the Indian CBD known as the Grey Street Complex. It was from this precinct (currently renamed after Dr. Yusuf Dadoo, an anti-apartheid activist) that many indentured and passenger Indians, in Natal, inexorably engrained their footprints in the Durban CBD since the late nineteenth century (Hart and Padayachee, 2000; Hiralal, 2007; Stiebel, 2010).

Formerly a legislated Indian Group Area, this precinct formed a fundamental economic and commercial component to the Indian CBD, and served as an important contributor to the urban economy during the apartheid era (Rajah, 1981). It also served as an incubator and catalyst for numerous Indian entrepreneurs and business houses, many of which have still retained their operations to this day. The presence of multifarious Indian businesses not only brought about a sense of belonging, but also gave this complex a cultural vibrancy. Often called “home away from home” for the South African urban Indian population, this complex encapsulated a rich cultural ambience with great recreational and institutional significance (Stiebel, 2010: 1).

The post-apartheid era has seen the face of a changing townscape across the Durban CBD, and a transformation of all its precincts. The transformed Grey Street Complex displays socio-demographic patterns that exhibit less homogenization. However, this area still “survives as the old business and residential centre for the Indian community in Durban, and indisputably as its cultural heart” (Stiebel, 2010:1). Even after the demise of apartheid, the Grey Street residents still reminisce about the trials and triumphs of their making of the ‘mini-India’ and their unique socio-spatial identity (Mamet, 2007). Their mnemonic attachment to this complex reminds this community of a romanticized and sentimental microcosm of South African Indian traditionalism collectively lived and experienced (Mamet, 2007). Although rapidly transforming in demographics and cultures, this precinct is still associated with the sublime sentiments and nostalgia from its historical spatial reference as the Grey Street Complex.

## **1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

The CBDs genuinely form economic networks or nodalities which holistically function as generators of commercial activities, and thus financial progress for a community and their country. Historically, apartheid has influenced the form of the townscape for many of South Africa's urban nodes. The Grey Street Complex is a significant node to focus on particularly when considering its urban historiography. This precinct was a vital component to Durban's dual city structure, and contributed markedly to the urban economy. This study will analyse the past of this part of the city so that we may understand its existing form.

Prior to 1994, the Grey Street Complex was the allocated residential and trading area for Indians. Although this precinct was designed for specific structural urban activities, it served a far greater purpose than this for those who resided and interacted within it. As Rajah (1981: 3) has noted, the Indian CBD was "the place where Indian commercial life in South Africa first began and as such epitomises the progress made by that community in the face of great adversity".

The Grey Street Complex also symbolised the homeland for a population that had undergone translocation and a loss of this precinct meant a loss of home – the collective sentimentality associated with this area was immense. Additionally, this complex contained several important functionalities for the Indian community – mainly financial, cultural and recreational – which gave rise to the Indian CBD being the largest Indian tertiary centre in South Africa (Rajah, 1981). Finally, the Grey Street Complex symbolised the ancestral homeland (India) for South African Indians, and thus the collective sentimentality associated with this area still remains immense (Stiebel, 2010).

Thus the Grey Street Complex as the study site for this dissertation is one that encapsulates remarkable historiographic potential across the entirety of its landscape. Further, this part of the city has been under researched and, due to this, the topic of study is of great importance as this precinct played a crucial role in the development and form of Durban's city centre,

socio-culturally and economically (Rajah, 1981; Padayachee, 1988). In addition to this, it was also a point of succession and continuity for the South African Indian community.

### **1.3 AIM**

The aim of this dissertation is to assess the rise and decline of the Grey Street Complex during the apartheid era.

### **1.4 OBJECTIVES**

The objectives are as follows:

- i. To provide an historical background of the Grey Street Complex.
- ii. To evaluate the influence of business houses on the Grey Street Complex.
- iii. To assess the impact of the Group Areas zoning on this precinct.
- iv. To interpret the role of culture, memory and nostalgia in influencing the historical connection of former and current residents to place.

### **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study addresses the following questions:

- i. What were the main factors that contributed to the success and decline of the Grey Street Complex?

- ii. How did the role of commercial activities contribute to development in the Grey Street Complex?
- iii. How did the Group Areas zoning affect the built development in this precinct?
- iv. What was the role of culture, memory and nostalgia in influencing place connection?

## **1.6 CHAPTER SEQUENCE**

### ***1.6.1 Chapter One: Introduction***

This chapter provides a brief overview of this dissertation and the rationale for carrying research within this study site. The aims and objectives of the study are stated in this chapter.

### ***1.6.2 Chapter Two: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework***

This chapter discusses theoretical frameworks such as place concepts in relation to memory and nostalgia. Further, this chapter contextualizes the study within a body of research that is both national and global, with a similar thematic base. This chapter also delimits the research problem and thus shows the significance of such a study within literature. Chapter two has examined memory and nostalgia in relation to place connection, as well as other significantly influential factors such as national and local identities, commemoration and sites of memory.

### ***1.6.3 Chapter Three: Methodology***

The methodology employed for this dissertation is discussed in this chapter. Additionally, this chapter provides explanations for the use of such methods for the collection of data. Moreover, a description of the study area is also provided.

#### ***1.6.4 Chapter Four: Rise of Grey Street***

The factors that have led to the rise of the Grey Street Complex are analyzed and discussed in the context of the memory and nostalgia of former residents.

#### ***1.6.5 Chapter Five: Decline of Grey Street***

The factors influencing the decline of the precinct are analyzed and discussed in Chapter Five as well as the memory and nostalgia of former residents who still yearn for their lived experiences in the Grey Street Complex.

#### ***1.6.6 Chapter Six: Evaluation and Conclusion***

This chapter interpolates a discussion of the main findings of the study. In addition, this chapter thematically links such findings with the literature review and conceptual framework. The findings, together with the theory, have provided a systematic argument which are linked with the aim and objectives of this dissertation. Chapter Six provides a conclusion to this dissertation.

### **1.7 CONCLUSION**

While there has been a considerable number of studies and fictional literary work on the Grey Street Complex, few studies have given an all-inclusive historic analysis of this precinct and an even smaller number have given recognition to the memory and nostalgia of former Grey Street residents. Given the limited range of literature on this study site, there is enough scope for urban historiographic research on cultural aspects and its influence on the identities of the South African Indians in this area. Connections to place, together with its various concepts, are some of the main factors that have played a key role in influencing memory and nostalgia linked to this precinct. The mnemonic and nostalgic relationship endured by the community of the Grey Street Complex emanates from their contribution to this precinct as well as their ontological experiences from the functionalities that it served for them.

## **CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1.1 INTRODUCTION: MEMORY AND PLACE**

The study of memory has acquired popularity in both postmodern cultural and humanistic geography. Doss (2010:2) coined the term *memorial mania* to describe the burgeoning interest in the geography of memory and its profound impact, not only on scholarly studies, but also on societies as well. In particular, scholarly studies have been concerned with the development and configuration of mnemonic contents and how these are influenced by various factors, both internal and external. The breadth of geographical and social scientific literature is predominated by how both physical and ideological variations from the surrounding environment affects the socio-spatial relationship between a community and place (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001; Manzo, 2003; Manzo and Perkins, 2006; Brown and Raymond, 2007; Alderman *et al.*, 2008; Lewicka, 2008; Tighe and Opelt, 2014).

This chapter discusses the geographic elements to memory as well as the resultant nostalgia. The study will use place concepts in relation to memory and nostalgia as the basis to understand the emotion of the community of the Grey Street Complex. The geographic landscape has been recognised as an extraordinary mnemonic regime for historical reconstructions (Hebbert, 2005). Although such interest in these concepts has surfaced recently, there were predecessors who established frameworks that provided insight into the relationship between human memory connections, and its association with the geographical landscape.

A pioneer of this approach was Maurice Halbwachs (Hebbert, 2005; Hirst and Manier, 2008; Jones, 2011; Alderman and Inwood, 2013) who examined collective memory and its relationship with the physicality of space (Halbwachs, 1950). Halbwachs (1950) asserted that the substance of memory is developed through shared social interactions as well as by physiological and psychological faculties of the human mind. Following Halbwachs, Pierre Nora proclaimed that societal remembrances of the past are preserved through the creation of memorial sites in specific locations (Nora 1989; Alderman and Inwood, 2013). This revealed

the landscape as a narrative with which a community could associate their social identities (Alderman and Inwood, 2013).

Drawing on the frameworks from preceptors in this field, the landscape can be seen as a mnemonic device, with all the memories of the past as roots embedded within it. What various scholars have exposed is that the memory is no ordinary element – it is one dimension ahead. Whilst the face of any landscape changes, memory does not. It records not only the physical changes in a specific period of time, but also the social and emotional connection. Thus memory delves into every dimension possible – that which can and cannot be seen as well as both the social and physical. Such dimensions provide a personal and spatial reference to a specific period of time. This concept, the geography of memory, is what captured the attention of scholars from various disciplines.

### **2.1.2 THE GEOGRAPHY OF MEMORY**

The human memory is a spatio-temporal faculty – it spans across space and time (Hebbert, 2005). Interwoven within this faculty, are emotions or sentimentalities that are developed from lived experiences and responses (Hebbert, 2005). These experiences become a spatio-temporal anchor for a community which generally has sentimental value (Huyssen, 1995 cited in Alderman *et al.*, 2008). Such experiences are also influenced by personal ideological interests (Alderman and Inwood, 2013) that shape a memory – one reads memory through one's personal context of events.

It is a social construction within a social frame of reference and its capacity to impact a person or community is phenomenal (Murray, 2013). Within this capacitation, memory has both ephemerality and eternity. Between these two extremities, its elasticity can be manipulated by social, economic, political and environmental dynamics against any milieu. Evidently, the extent or power of any memory is influenced by the dynamisms of a setting.

Rushdie (1995: 211) describes the power of memory as that which “selects, eliminates, alters, exaggerates, minimizes, glorifies, and vilifies also; but in the end it creates its own reality, its heterogeneous but usually coherent version of events; and no sane human being ever trusts someone else’s version more than his own” (cited in Murray, 2013: 11). Still, memory is far more complex than this – it is a connective tool that we can use to link the past to the present, and this to the future (Murray, 2013). It is the faculty that maintains our present tradition while allowing us to appreciate the past, and preparing us to understand the future (Murray, 2013). Thus memory is both multidimensional and multifunctional.

### **2.1.2.1 COLLECTIVE MEMORY**

The Halbwachian approach to analyzing memory has illustrated the significance of collective remembrance when reconstructing historical events (Hebbert, 2005; Jones, 2011; Alderman and Inwood, 2013; Murray, 2013). Shared memories are absolutely critical for linking our past with the present – both socio-spatially and emotionally (Murray, 2013). Although every individual person has a memory, collective memory about a specific chain of events provides a well-constructed mnemonic regime with its own legitimacy (Olick, 1999; Alderman and Inwood, 2013). This legitimacy is accepted by all who remember their experiences in the moments of those events or spatial locations. Such collective remembrances, together with their validities, are acquired through social interactions where memories of thoughts, experiences and ideologies are shared by a group of individuals who belong to the same timeframe and thus chain of events (Halbwachs, 1950; Jones, 2011).

### **2.1.2.2 PLACE: THE MEMORY OF SPACE**

The concept of space, and its link to place memory, has to be understood before analyzing any social phenomena that emanate from human memory. If considered in totality, then space in itself can be considered as an object with finitude (Harvey, 1973). From fixed space, materializes place – a *space* is captured as *place* in the geography of memory.

Gieryn (2000: 465) defines space, and its transformation to place, in his introductory prologue as:



*A spot in the universe, with a gathering of physical stuff there, becomes a place only when it ensconces history or utopia, danger or security, identity or memory. In spite of its relatively enduring and imposing materiality, the meaning or value of the same place is labile – flexible in the hands of different people or cultures, malleable over time, and inevitably contested.*

Ideologies of ‘place’ form a fundamental aspect to geography as well as environmental psychology (Lewicka, 2008). What appears to be clear in the burgeoning literature, is that *space* becomes *place* when it acquires meaning through historical happenings; whereafter it attains a value (Gieryn, 2000; Lewicka, 2008). It is the value (through history) that endows a particular place with significance to both its previous and current inhabitants. This historically distinctive value, and thereby significance, is a symbol of an investment – be it economic, social, political or ecological (Gieryn, 2000; Manzo, 2003). From this investment, valued by history, arises an intrinsic or sentimental link that remains imprinted in the memory of inhabitants (Fried, 1966). Thus a place is a space with a history, and consequently, a memory.

### **2.1.2.3 PLACE IDENTITY**

Every continent, country and city encapsulates its own unique sequence of historical events which are represented in the physicality of a place, and the spatial organization of the elements contained within it (Manzo, 2003). Over time, contemporary development changes the physicality and spatial organization, as well as the population profiles of future generations in any place. The concept of place identity refers to the development of personal character and relationships both formed and impacted by a particular environment – one identifies oneself in relation to a place (Proshansky, 1978 cited in Manzo, 2003).

While spatial changes occur with time, place identities are preserved within memory and are often recalled with nostalgia (Manzo, 2003). Such place-relationship is based on the memory of a tradition inherited from a particular place. Thus place memory influences place identity,

which is particularly crucial when understanding the relocation or translocation of communities. When either relocation or translocation has occurred, the community or individual impacted by this change will generally seek emotional refuge with surrounding elements that are similar to their previous environment (Stiebel, 2010). The memory of a place (or what a place once was) impacts on identity of the self against a background that is different, or has transformed through time.

#### **2.1.2.4 PLACE DEPENDENCE**

Dependency on any geographical location is directly linked to the operational activities that take place within that area (Brown and Raymond, 2007). This relationship symbolises the significance of the setting in facilitating such activities – that is its capacity to cater for these activities, as well as its functionality for the communities that prosper from it (Brown and Raymond, 2007). The functionality and capacity of a place does not only allow for a community to thrive, but more importantly, for continuity and succession of that community. Phenomenological and ontological elements of a community are also influential to place dependence, particularly in terms of the emotive dynamics (Entrikin, 1976). This dependence on place is for emotional well-being, associating a place with intrinsic connotations. Thus place dependence is a concept that represents the strength of a relationship between a community and a geographical area (Brown *et al.*, 2003; Manzo, 2003).

#### **2.1.2.5 PLACE ATTACHMENT**

Place attachment emanates from both place dependence and place identity (Brown and Raymond, 2007). Such a concept symbolizes an emotional or sentimental connection where a sensitive and responsive bond develops in relation to a place (Manzo, 2003; Manzo and Perkins, 2006; Brown and Raymond, 2007). An emotional relationship with any place is drawn from memory and the prevailing phenomenological perceptions of a community, or an individual. The impact of an emotional connection is far greater on a mature community who have resided, or frequently interacted, in a specific place for most of their lives (Hernandez and Hidalgo, 2001).

The associative sentiments to a setting may originate from either a social or physical attachment (Hernandez and Hidalgo, 2001). Physical place attachment is the relationship one has with the landscape based on its value to oneself. In the geography of one's memory, the landscape becomes a narrative – this inevitably creates an attachment (Alderman and Inwood, 2013). Social place attachment is the relationship one has with a place based on social dimensions and phenomena acquired from continuous personal interactions (Hernandez and Hidalgo, 2001).

Both social and physical dimensions are significant components that influence the extent to which one has an attachment to a place. Brown *et al.* (2003: 259) have noted that “place attachments are nourished by daily encounters with the environment and neighbours, seasonal celebrations, continued physical personalization and upkeep, and affective feelings toward and beliefs about the home and neighbourhood”. Evidently, the attachment to a particular geographical location is stimulated by numerous ideological variables that associate an individual with a sense of belonging. If a community is displaced or relocated, place attachment generally develops from nostalgia and delves into subjective mnemonic sentimentalities acquired from the previous socio-spatial locale.

### **2.1.3 NOSTALGIA**

Etymologically, the term *nostalgia* previously meant one suffered from a disease that was psychological in nature which attributed to the yearning for home, and required a medical cure (Wilson, 2005). Nostalgia is considered a relentless emotion or yearning that emanates from the remembrance of what was once known as home (Wilson, 2005). It is the memories of a version of reality that our mind, soul and body crave to relive once more. The desire to re-experience a particular moment (or surrounding) can only be fulfilled if such a scene is reconstructed, though the possibility of this is not always great. In view of this, Wilson (2005: 22) has argued that “If nostalgia is a sickness, there is no cure. If it is a problem, there is no solution.”

Boym (2001) explains nostalgia and its impact on human well-being as follows:

*At first glance, nostalgia is a longing for a place, but actually it is a yearning for a different time – the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams. In a broader sense, nostalgia is rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress. The nostalgic desires to obliterate history and turn it into private or collective mythology, to revisit time like space, refusing to surrender to the irreversibility of time that plagues the human condition.*

An analysis of the geographical landscape, memory and nostalgia are all fundamental aspects to understanding the place-relationship of the community of the Grey Street Complex. This precinct was politically demarcated as an Indian Group Area, and from the onset, it became the niche in which the Indian community found belonging. This space became a place of opportunities with the traditionalism of the homeland (India) – and was well identified as such.

Hence, such a precinct was invested with an invaluable cultural history, and thereby unforgettable memories to generations who worked, interacted or resided in this space. It was also institutionally and recreationally important to the urban community in the Indian CBD. Space and place, in the geography of memory, will analyze how the community viewed the Grey Street Complex in relation to themselves, especially their triumphs during its rise, as well their trials during its decline. To this community, such a precinct was not just an Indian Group Area – it was a hub of economic prospects and cultural vivacity, and one which influenced their personal identities.

## **2.2 MEMORY, NOSTALGIA AND PLACE: A REVIEW**

### **2.2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This literature review will critically analyze the influence of memory on relationships between communities and their geographical locations in the context of urban spaces. Further, it will provide insight to memory studies in the South African context. The key research theme for this dissertation is memory, in particular, place memory.

The literary breadth of scholarly studies on memory has recently become increasingly voluminous. Such proliferating interest in this theme has become so prevalent in both the geographical and sociological contexts that it has led to what contemporary academics have referred to as the *memory boom* (Azaryahu *et al.*, 2008; Doss, 2012; Alderman and Inwood, 2013; Murray, 2013). Although considered to be a fairly recent academic field, the study of memory became a formal scholarly topic during the 1970s and the 1980s – more than two decades after the development of the collective memory framework by Maurice Halbwachs in 1950 (Hebbert, 2005; Till, 2008). Scholarly studies previously focused on heritage and memorial sites, museumification as well as post-industrialization, post-war and postmodern eras (Till, 2008).

Since then, academic writing has illustrated that memories can be found virtually anywhere – such a multifaceted area of study has provided a wide literary scope which is continually encouraging scholarship in this field. The burgeoning literature on memory, being both an interdisciplinary and a multidisciplinary field, has interested scholars so extensively that it materialized in a journal of its own field, *Memory Studies* in 2008 (Azaryahu *et al.*, 2008; Till, 2008). Memory studies have given insight to further analyze phenomena from an extensive range of topical subject matters, in addition to the geographical and sociological dimensions – namely political, ontological, historical, psychological and many more (Erll, 2008; Till, 2008). It has acquired the role of an instrumental tool in analyzing historic social phenomena in relation to the contemporary environment (Erll, 2008; Jones, 2011).

Mnemonic studies, together with its various concepts, has become way of understanding how communities have endured many of the political, spatial and social changes that have occurred through time (Manzo, 2003; Manzo and Perkins, 2006; Bailey and Dickinson, 2007; Brown and Raymond, 2007; Lewicka, 2008; Scannell and Gifford, 2010). This relationship between people and places, through memory in particular, has attracted the attention of scholars from various disciplines.

The connection between geographical locations and memory is so multilateral that it has given rise to a range of place concepts which broadly link a community to a specific area

(Manzo and Perkins, 2006; Bailey and Dickinson, 2007; Brown and Raymond, 2007; Lewicka, 2008). Place concepts and place memory have recently become widely recognized by scholars who have realized its thematic significance in interpreting emotional attachment, culture as well as social ideologies of a particular location (Manzo, 2003; Manzo and Perkins, 2006; Bailey and Dickinson, 2007; Brown and Raymond, 2007; Lewicka, 2008; Scannell and Gifford, 2010). In particular, the emotional connection to place and the associated mnemonic nostalgia of this, have also recently provoked academic interest and a range of scholarly studies on the functionality and historical development of socio-spatial systems (Mamet, 2007; Alderman *et al.*, 2008; King and Noparatnaraporn, 2008; Lewicka, 2008; Alderman and Inwood, 2013; Reddy, 2013).

Such studies have emphasized the significance of memory and its prevailing nostalgic sentiments experienced by communities specifically after translocation, dislocation and relocation (Mamet, 2007; Stiebel, 2010; Reddy, 2013). It is this spatio-temporal relationship that has revolutionized the interest in memory studies with reference to the connection between communities and place as well as their endearment from the socio-spatial effects of past events. The predominance of such scholarly material on the place connection linked to national and local identities as well as other socio-demographic elements have also illustrated how memory has a significant influence on the relationship between people and places.

## **2.2.2 LANDSCAPES AS MNEMONIC NARRATIVES**

### **2.2.2.1 CITIES: CHRONOTOPES OF MEMORY**

A growing thematic interest among scholars has been to analyze the relationship between memory and urban spaces (Azaryahu *et al.*, 2008). Memory, being metahistorical and metatheoretical, has always been entrenched in all elements of the urban physical world (Azaryahu *et al.*, 2008; Murray, 2013). The cityscape is an important source of history laden with a plethora of both collective and individual memories which are stored within urban structures – both physical and social (Jones, 2011; Alderman and Inwood, 2013; Murray, 2013).

The aspect that has interested scholars the most about urban landscapes is that the forms and fabrics are spatially and socially revolutionized through a historic chain of events (Elsaesser, 2009). Since history is created and recreated in every sect of all timeframes – hourly, daily, monthly and annually – our urban landscapes are recurrently reproduced (Elsaesser, 2009; Smith, 2009). Memories in different cities, similar to that of earth's geological strata, are also preserved through generations of ancestral lineages in urban communities from inception (Potter *et al.*, 2007; Smith, 2009). Urban memory can be extrapolated all the way to the most prehistoric epochs from primordial urban nodes such as Mosul in Mesopotamia all the way to Monte Alban in Mesoamerica (Smith, 2009). Emanating from this are forms of memories which are either physically preserved through archaeological artifacts or socially preserved through ancient tradition, the evidence of which is still very much present in our contemporary times across the world map (Smith, 2009).

Accordingly, every urban architectural structure, neighbourhood, memorial and monumental site as well as museum and other such urban built developments are all suffused with mnemonic tapestries which tell historic anecdotes to those who reside within the city and to those who visit it (Azaryahu *et al.*, 2008; Murray, 2013). Forays of memory are even known to contour the underlying structures of demographics and cultures present in urban spaces (Jones, 2011; Murray, 2013). Remembrances of history can even influence social practices and ideological backgrounds, societal philosophies if you will (Jones, 2011). Thus memories can simultaneously influence our lives internally and externally. Evidently in the cityscape, similar to that of many other spatial locations, both the physical and the abstract existential dimensions of memory are far more influential than estimated.

#### **2.2.2.2 HIDDEN MEMORIES IN URBAN STRUCTURES**

The significance of urban structure as well as location and its relationship with memory attracted academic interest when Aldo Rossi explored how history of urban built development shared a parallelism to memory (Rossi, 1982; Murray 2013). Scholars then began to take a closer look at each element of the city realizing that it became synonymous with memory (Elsaesser, 2009; Larkin, 2009; Murray, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2016). In addition to urban configurations, urban architectural structures were also revealed as essential assets to collective memory in the city as it was realized that such constructions contain valuable and

unique histories which were often overlooked (Rossi, 1982). Upon further inspection of cities, Rossi (1982) also emphasized the geostrategic positioning of metropolises in the classical world and illustrated how forays of the associated history were still evident in the contemporary world.

Following the work of Rossi (1982), more recent scholarly material has shifted academic attention to analyzing the role of urban architecture and city structure in influencing to public memory (Elsaesser, 2009; Larkin, 2009; Murray, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2016). Reflecting on this relationship, Murray (2013:25) encourages scholars to remember that “city streets, squares, monuments, and statuary are topographical markers that often contain not only the grand discourses on history but as also local stories that reflect the microhistories of local communities.” Hence, all parts of an urban space and its structural design exemplify mnemonic narratives – narratives that are hidden in between the temporalities of the city and form a fundamental historical constituent to the modern urban identity (Elsaesser, 2009; Murray, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2016).

The current structural designs of specific cities in the global south point towards the memories of colonial eras – this delineates the overall spatial outline of the city (Home, 2000; Elsaesser, 2009; King, 2009). King (2009) cited the example of French Algeria to illustrate how the concept of dual cities arose from the influences of European imperialism. These findings were extracted from the work of Fanon (1961) who viewed cities in Algeria as divided even in the aftermath of the colonial period – memories that will never be forgotten due to their inevitable presence in various Algerian cities. Fanon (1961: 37-39) describes the division:

*The colonial world is a world divided into compartments... of native quarters and European quarters, of schools for natives and schools for Europeans; in the same way we need not recall apartheid in South Africa... The dividing line, the frontiers, are shown by barracks and police stations... The settler's town is a strongly built town, all made of stone and steel... The town belonging to the colonized people, or at least the native town, the Negro*



*village, the medina, the reservation, is a place of ill fame... It is a world without spaciousness, men live on top of each other... The native town is a crouching village, a town on its knees, a town wallowing in the mire.*

Although Fanon (1961) critiques Algerian cities during an earlier period, King (2009) has emphasized that at present, many of the African, Asian and Middle Eastern cities still have memories of inequalities entrenched in them. King (2009) demonstrates how postcolonial cities have developed with very distinct patterns socio-culturally, economically and how this has created polarized societies, hence the emergence and evolution of dual cities. According to Larkin (2009) the neo-liberal model acts as a catalyst to further develop and facilitate dual city structures by transforming urban areas into market oriented zones for economic growth. Thus the implementation of neo-liberalism has still favoured former colonial counterparts more than it has its newly liberated aspirants. Thus the neo-liberal turn has also further entrenched memories of historic disparities (Larkin, 2009).

South African contemporary urban structures also have underlying inequalities from colonial times and apartheid – as pointed out in Fanon's (1961) comparison between Algeria and South Africa. The history of South Africa (both British imperialism and apartheid) has influenced the spatial structures and socio-demographies of its cities (Maharaj 1997; Govinden, 2008; Maharaj and Crosby, 2013). The dual city structure emerged far more evidently in cities such as the Durban CBD (divided into an Indian and White CBD) – as part of the Group Areas Act which enforced an apartheid-style city planning (Rajah, 1968; 1981; Maharaj, 1997; Bickford-Smith, 2008; Thomas, 2001; Govinden, 2008; Rosenberg, 2012).

Although more than two decades after the formal demise of apartheid, memories of spatial segregation still surface in the spatial structure of contemporary Durban when closely analyzing the development of townships such as KwaMashu, Ntuzuma and Inanda in relation to the locus of the Durban CBD (Pernegger and Godehart, 2007). These former black townships (which currently form part of Durban's structure) still remain distant from the city (Lea, 2007; Pernegger and Godehart, 2007). KwaMashu, Ntuzuma and Inanda, followed the urban structure of a Neighbourhood Unit, like that of the Cape Flats, which was set apart by

industrial sites, railway tracks, green areas and freeways – all with a concerted effort enforcing restriction, control and inaccessibility of the city (Lea, 2007; Pernegger and Godehart, 2007).

As pointed out by Pernegger and Godehart (2007), KwaMashu, Ntuzuma and Inanda, which currently remain only a freeway exit away from the Durban CBD, are lasting historic reminders of a city which has developed and redeveloped as one that is still segregated. Thus the positioning and structure of cities have placed various social groups at different temporalities in history – that which is still remembered, both in urban structure and the minds of its citizens (Lea, 2007). This difference in temporal position influences the identity of citizens.

### **2.2.3 MEMORY, IDENTITY AND DISPLACEMENT**

#### **2.2.3.1 TRANSLOCATION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY**

All forms of displacement are an extremely complex and multidimensional process particularly in the context of the realities of post-colonialism (Gabriel, 2009). Throughout global history, the impacts of forced removals and labour migration processes have engrained the contemporary urban landscapes with an idiosyncratic pattern – many of which still reflect the events of the past despite the attempts driven by global restructuring (Maharaj and Ramballi, 1998; Mitchell, 1998; Maharaj, 2003; Schensul, 2009). Since the historic shift towards capitalism, many parts of the world remain pervaded with the drawbacks of colonialism which has changed the fabrics of societies both socio-demographically and ideologically. Consequentially, this has also altered the identities of displaced populations (Gabriel, 2009).

In the global context, the relationship between memory and displacement has magnified on the issues of transnationalism, diaspora and migration – all of which have a direct link with personal and cultural identity (Vertovec, 1999; Gabriel, 2009; José-Pérez, 2010; Stiebel, 2010; Garret, 2011; Sudholm, 2011). The concern of being re-identified or even disidentified in a foreign landscape has raised questions as to whether or not cultural identities and connections

are being compromised in our postmodern environments (Gabriel, 2009; José-Pérez, 2010). According to Gabriel (2009), once a community is translocated, they inherently amend their personal and cultural histories in order to adapt to their new environment or city. This cultural adjustment becomes socially challenging as our identities exemplify the loyalty, tradition and various ideologies of our homeland and thus signifies an intrinsic and mnemonic attachment to that landscape of origin (Vertovec, 1999; Gabriel, 2009).

When considering population displacement, the best illustration of translocation is the system of indenture as it played a major role in changing the fabric of global society and their identities (Gabriel, 2009). This was a multi-networked transnational shift which was so profound that it translocated millions of labourers to various colonies worldwide – keystone examples being the Indian indentured system (the records of which are captured in the International Register of Memory of the World Programme) as well as indentured British servitude in colonial North America (Gabriel, 2009; NHC, 2009; Memory of the World Register, 2010). In both cases, it is evident that social and ethnic adjustments presented challenges for labourers in their respective newfound environments (Wood, 2008; Gabriel, 2009).

In the South African context, it was for a long period of time that the identities of indentured Indians became linked with the ships that transported them to the various colonies (Vahed and Desai, 2010). Although indentured labourers were differentiated in their historiographies, these ships were objects of mobilization that became common symbols of their homeland and thus their belonging (Vahed and Desai, 2010). Since then, Indians in the diaspora have shown a distinct interest in re-connecting with their homeland in the interest of their cultural identities within their transnationalism (Gabriel, 2009). This emotional attachment to the ‘original’ homeland provides a more precise and definitive character to the traditional identity with which a community is endowed with.

In a case study on the Malaysian population, by Gabriel (2009), she demonstrates how descendant immigrants of the indentured system from Trinidad, Fiji, Indonesia and Sri Lanka have reformed their identities across the space-time spectrum. Historically, translocating

these populations has exhibited that there is a negotiation between their identities transmitted through ancestral lineages and their adapted identities in Malaysia (Gabriel, 2009). Gabriel (2009) also provides a personal account of her identification as a Malaysian citizen of Indian origin who has not forgotten the mnemonic narratives of national history. What is made clear in this study is that although one may maintain a national identity, generational and traditional memory plays a very significant role in shaping cultural identity.

This gives individuals a sense of where they come from although they may adjust to, and assume, a transnational identity. Correspondingly, Garret (2011) has also asserted that translocated communities are no longer adopting national identities but instead a multi-cultural or cross-cultural identity in her study of a Macedonian community in the United States. This gives such communities the opportunity to maintain their attachment to their homeland while still remaining a part of their current environments (Garret 2011). This study shows that the concept of being identified in a city away from one's homeland has in fact proven to be a critical socio-spatial issue, not only for European communities but for populations globally (Garret 2011). Garret (2011) points out that for Western European communities, their nations embody political significance in terms of their identity and place attachment while contrastingly for Central and Eastern Europeans, ethnicity bears more importance.

Garret (2011) and Gabriel (2009) have given a deeper meaning to the concept and process of being identified which as pointed out by José-Pérez (2010) who emphasizes that communities should always guard against being misidentified and disidentified in any environment. Similarly to Gabriel (2009) and Garret (2011), many academic scholars have explored how national and socio-historical mnemonic narratives have influenced the identities of translocated communities (Wood, 2008; Bates and Carter, 2010; Desai and Vahed, 2012; Stiebel, 2010; Klein, 2012; Ocita, 2013; Vahed and Waetjen, 2013). Such scholarly material has created a new trajectory in memory studies, specifically in terms of the construction of identities in places away from the homeland and, in doing so, has provided insight to the socio-cultural challenges faced by various communities worldwide.

### **2.2.3.2 URBAN DISLOCATION AND RELOCATION**

In accordance with the focus on displacement and identity, specifically in the context of memory and nostalgia, there is also criticality on the ontological impacts of physical displacement and how this has influenced the emotional and environmental psychology of a community (Weeder, 2006; Lea, 2007; Lewicka, 2008; Tighe and Opelt, 2014; James, 2015). Mnemonic emotion and psychology bear a compounding significance in this sense because of how closely intertwined these aspects are with the development of one's identity in a different environment (Kuzmanić, 2008; Klein, 2012).

In his composition, "Grieving for a Lost Home", Fried (1966) raised significant sociological questions in relation to the austerity of psychological impacts associated with nostalgic sentiments after communities are forcibly removed and subsequently relocated. Fried (1966: 359) placed emphasis on the process of displacement as being "a highly disruptive and disturbing experience" which brings about a sense of disjointedness, emotional agony and vulnerability. Fried's (1966) conclusions were drawn from a previous study conducted by Fried and Gleicher (1961) which critically analyzed place attachment from a community that was evicted from a Boston neighbourhood as part of the city's plan for urban revitalization. Although their study was much earlier than the recent scholarly interest in this field, they pioneered a set of social, psychological and ontological findings which were later used by many scholars to interpret the endearment of communities after being translocated, dislocated and relocated.

Fried and Gleicher (1961) revealed that a place of residence symbolized an inextricable social linkage between people of the community, as well as between people and their homes. The study also asserted that a physical space in its entirety, such as a neighbourhood or district, was significant in that it represented an additional space to the familiarity of one's home. This rendered the community environment as a space that is interwoven with specific shared memories and socio-spatial relationships encompassed in a common area – it was therefore concluded that these fundamental elements exuded a sense of belonging (Fried and Gleicher, 1961).

Loss of the sense of belonging has been evaluated as detrimental to the emotional and psychological condition of the community – something which is overlooked and treated very inconsiderately when any form of displacement has occurred. Since the work of Fried and Gleicher (1961), there has been a wide range of scholarly material analytically assessing the impact of psychological and nostalgic memory of displacement in relation to urban spatial restructuring. In Fried's (1966) opinion, grieving for a lost home is not only a crisis worldwide but an extensive social and psychological phenomenon. Such crisis has a direct relation to identity.

Following the work of previous scholars, Mitchell (1998) illustrated that communities experience psychological trauma in his case study on a Maltese community that was evicted from their neighbourhood as part of an urban renewal initiative. As an expression of their fury for losing their homes, the community responded with aggressive protests in opposition to the initiatives of their political regime (Mitchell, 1998). This proved that their nostalgia was not just a collective sentimental mnemonic reconstruction; it was instead used as an effective political mechanism that signaled for better living conditions in the present and a more promising future for the development of their district or, as the community viewed it, their home (Mitchell, 1998).

Similarly, more recent studies have also demonstrated that the yearning for home and subsequent community protests were strategic representations to signal the political and psychological helplessness of communities in the face of adversity – particularly when assessing the shift towards neo-liberalism (Weeder, 2006; Lea, 2007; Lewicka, 2008; Tighe and Opelt, 2014; James, 2015). According to Tighe and Opelt (2014), the American experience has been no different. Their study illustrated the recent anger of an African American community in Asheville who were relocated as part of an urban revitalization project. This resulted in insurgencies against such action as this phenomenon had visited them previously during the implementation of the 1949 Housing Act in the United States of America. Upon further inspection of these representations of memory and nostalgia associated with urban forced removals, the dynamics of historical racial friction and social inequalities have surfaced as the foci of their study (Tighe and Opelt, 2014).

The South African experience very much coincides with the outcomes demonstrated in the study compiled by Tighe and Opelt (2014). The history of South Africa's socio-spatial geography displays a pattern where forced removals and racial segregation formed the cornerstones of the discredited apartheid system (Lea, 2007; Willemse, 2010; Sato, 2012; Till, 2012; Maharaj, 1994; 1997; Whande, 2015). Scholarly studies have indicated that the emotional agonies of being forcibly removed can dismantle communities, their institutions and daily practices to such an extent that they feel completely torn away from their cultural roots (Nyapokoto, 2014; Maharaj, 2013; Sibiya, 2012; Lea, 2007).

Maharaj (2013), in his case study on Hinduism in Chatsworth, highlighted the determination of the Indian community to transplant and sustain their cultural organizations in Chatsworth after being displaced from areas such as Riverside, Cator Manor and Clairwood. The communities still display place attachment to their previous locations where they once had close family bonds and enjoyed traditional settings of their home (Maharaj, 2013). In line with the findings of Maharaj (2013), Pohlandt-McCormick (2006) and Gilbert (2007) have illustrated the fragmentation of the African culture after black communities were displaced from Sophiatown, Martindale, Prospect and Newclare and subsequently relocated to agricultural areas in Doornkop, Klipriviersoog, Diepkloof and Vogelstruisfontein. In particular, Pohlandt-McCormick (2006) touches on the disconnection of the black community with their African culture once being evicted from their homes. Their memories of African cultural ambience, jazz theatres and community gatherings were destroyed – the memories of which still haunt this community at present (Pohlandt-McCormick, 2006).

The effects of racial segregation and displacement do not only affect communities emotionally but psychologically as well (Western, 1981; Trotter, 2009; Ström, 2014). One such example is the case of Cape Town where the coloured community was dislocated from Simonstown and subsequently relocated to remote areas such as Ocean View (Western, 1981; Trotter, 2009; Ström, 2014). Residents resorted to suicide as a harrowing cry for an important and valuable asset that had been taken away from them – their homes (Trotter, 2009). Ström (2014) reminds us that once being evicted, the new zone of relocation cannot hold the same sentimental value and social connectivity as one's own home. These are important elements which will be "missing in many senses: missing as an important part of a town's function,

and missing in terms of people's own experience of living within a community" (Ström, 2014)

Ström (2014) and Trotter (2009) have both demonstrated that being forcibly dislocated is not just about the frustration, nostalgia and the disappointment experienced by communities in the aftermath, it is about the traumatic memory and psychological damage of losing a home – which represents everything to that community. Earlier studies by Weeder (2006) and Lea (2007) have also demonstrated the trauma and nostalgia of Cape communities whose homes were demolished in District Six during apartheid – both studies reveal the nostalgic narratives of the dislocated communities who long for the previous heterogeneous setting in which they grew up. Evidently, scholars who have written in the South African context have made one thing quite clear – that a history of racial segregation, forced removals and emotional damage form a very fundamental part of South African identities.

Thus scholars have, in such cases, have viewed memory and nostalgia in a new dimension – as driving forces for an outreach or call for reclamation (Weeder, 2006; Lea, 2007; Lewicka, 2008; Tighe and Opelt, 2014; James, 2015). The resistance to dislocation or relocation is not only exclusively associated with the emotional attachment but also with the personal ontologies of that environment (Lewicka, 2008). Fried (1966: 365) reminds us that “we might say that a sense of spatial identity is fundamental to human functioning.” It is therefore evident that a place of residence functions as a complex integrated socio-spatial system closely intertwined with a social identity associated with that particular location (Fried and Gleicher, 1961; Fried, 1966; Lewicka, 2008; Alderman and Inwood, 2013). Thus memory cannot be viewed as an independent entity – it is responsible for the identity congenital to that community.

## **2.2.4 PUBLIC MEMORY**

### **2.2.4.1 COMMEMORATION OF THE PAST**

Public remembrance can be perceived as a spatio-temporal entity of memory. Such memory traverses the elements of space and time, both of which are seen to interact as independent



and reciprocal facets in which a community preserves their shared historical ontologies (Foote and Azaryahu, 2007; Jones, 2011). One of the most traditional components to public memory is the commemoration of occasions, societal figures and locations. The act of commemorating consigns a sacred meaning and value to all socio-spatial timelines of history (Foote and Azaryahu, 2007; Murray, 2013). Forms of commemorating the past are both social and physical.

In the physical form, Foote and Azaryahu, (2007) point out that the geography of public remembrance has largely been associated with landscape symbolism. Earlier scholars viewed the landscape and place as a reflection of our histories, socio-political identities, cultural tourism and nationalism (Tuan, 1974, 1979; Lowenthal, 1975, 1985; Harvey, 1979; Cosgrove, 1984; Nora, 1989). Thus the landscape has become associated with various socio-cultural and historical metanarratives where sites of recollection or representational memory have taken shape (Jones, 2011).

In the social form, honouring the past at the most general level has been expressed as celebratory and tributary events such as festivals, jubilees and various ceremonies (Foote and Azaryahu, 2007; Murray, 2013). These social expressions of commemoration allow for the public to merge the past with the present to be realized as one time juncture in a common space (Foote and Azaryahu, 2007; Murray, 2013). Such events radiate and preserve a feeling of perpetuity and longevity of that which is venerated (Foote and Azaryahu, 2007; Murray, 2013).

#### **2.2.4.2 POSTCOLONIAL RECOLLECTION IN URBAN SPACES**

Generally, the literature on commemorative representation has magnified the political dynamics of public memory – with emphasis on how elements of the past are recollected and recreated to display historic relationships of imperialism, supremacy and exploitation (Foote and Azaryahu, 2007). The focus on societal perception of the present, through lenses of past, has drawn attention to the effects of post-colonialism. Thus postcolonial and post-war impacts have transformed the trajectory of memory studies particularly in the context of urban environments (Murray, 2013). Through such focus, scholars have analyzed social

ontologies and phenomenologies in relation to a range of global political events which have influenced the development and socio-spatial structures of cities (Palmberger, 2006; Foote and Azaryahu, 2007; Kaelber, 2010; Lehr and Aponiuk, 2011; Bokova, 2012; Stephens, 2012; Ashe, 2014).

Commemorative ceremonies, festivals and anniversaries bestow a profound significance on memories of marked events in global history, particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Foote and Azaryahu, 2007). These forms of recollection become both national and international narratives in response to questions of identity, culture and nationality (Foote and Azaryahu, 2007). Such practices are organized to commemorate how such events bring about a sense of national and even global unity – that although communities across the globe are multilateral, there is a unilateral understanding at one particular moment in our contemporary environments (Ashplant *et al.*, 2000; Foote and Azaryahu, 2007). Hence, the commemorative festivals, ceremonies and anniversaries become symbolic of the struggles and sacrifices made by previous generations and former allies in a particular location (Ashplant *et al.*, 2000).

The remembrance of significant historical events is not only about the mnemonic links and sentiment but also the multilateral consequences and circumstances it has the ability to harness (Van Alstein, 2011). This demonstrates that memory remains within the temporalities of a country and its communities with both dimension and depth (Van Alstein, 2011; Murray, 2013). According to Van Alstein, (2011), commemorative mnemonic practices illustrate that the past is still very evident and entrenched in our present. This signifies that such events had a profound impact on the contemporary social and political development of a specific region.

Van Alstein (2011) illustrates that certain communities may have an attachment to a specific occurrence and experience of the past in his example of a Belgian community in Westhoek who are still impacted by the trauma of the First World War. The community of Westhoek felt that commemoration of the First World War also influenced the region's previous economic conditions and today still contributes to its present economic status in terms of

tourism. Thus commemorating the First World War for this community has a social, political and an economic dimension to its meaning (Van Alstein, 2011).

Similarly, Bokova (2012) also asserted that colonial impacts cannot be forgotten as they form a fundamental component to the countries that are affected, and influence the identities of their victims. In her example, Bokova (2012) analyzes the anti-Semitic ideologies of the Nazis and their tragic and traumatic impact that was passed on to minorities such as Sinti and Roma. The consequences of remembering the Holocaust also haunts Jewish communities, individuals with disabilities and those who are homosexuals which illustrates its undoubted mark on the psychology of humanity (Ashplant *et al.*, 2000; Foote and Azaryahu, 2007; Bokova, 2012).

Thus the historic genocide during the Second World War has proven to have left lingering pieces of “living history” within the minds and environments of communities linked to the Holocaust (Bokova, 2012:1). Bokova (2012) proclaimed that the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust is to honour the many lives that were sacrificed and a symbol of the bravery and nobility of the victims. Hence, commemoration is both mnemonic and psychological, causing irreparable emotional damage even some generations later.

Throughout a large period of the last two decades, there has been a considerable amount of attention placed on the beginning and ending of wars, particularly in relation to various cultural and political contexts (Ashplant *et al.*, 2000 Foote and Azaryahu, 2007; Bokova, 2012). Table 2.1 provides a few examples of commemorative practices related to significant historical events.

**Table 2.1: Commemorative Days of Significant Historical Events**

Commemorative Days	Significant Events
Battle of Britain and the Blitz; D-Day; VE-Day; VJ-Day	Progress of the Second World War
Armistice Day	Ending of the First World War
1999 Centenary Celebration	Anglo-Boer War
International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust	Nazi-Soviet Confrontation
Freedom Day (South Africa)	First Democratic Elections in South Africa
Youth Day (South Africa)	Soweto Uprising

(Adapted from Ashplant *et al.*, 2000; Van Alstein; 2011 Bokova, 2012; Murray, 2013)

#### **2.2.4.3 SITES OF MEMORY: MONUMENTS, MEMORIALS AND MUSEUMS**

A site of memory is the next form of commemorating – either an event or individual that bears great importance to a community, region and even the world. These sites are memory markers not only in temporality but also socio-spatially, they position a memory in space (Lea, 2007; Murray, 2013). In his prologue of *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, Pierre Nora revealed memory as a “perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present” (Nora, 1989: 8). A physical representation of this bond comes in the form of monuments, memorials and museums – crystallizations of memory that continuously lives with us and reminds us of historic occurrences in the contemporary environment (Nora, 1989; Foote and Azaryahu, 2007; Azaryahu *et al.*, 2008; Murray, 2013). Sites of memory become important sources of reflection that bring about a revived actuality of the past to gain life in the present – this allows the past and present to co-exist (Palmeberger, 2006).

Stephens (2012) indicates that certain sites of memory can also be therapeutic and satisfying in the types of memory that they convey. The example that Stephens (2012) analyzes is the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington which was constructed in 1988 and contains the inscribed names of all the victims whose lives were lost. This memorial was interpreted as therapeutic not only because of its symbolism to pay tribute to those who fought, but also to subdue the emotional agony of soldiers who were yearning to be emotionally comforted after the war (Stephens, 2012). The Vietnamese veterans who visit this memorial are honoured as it portrays the soldiers of the war as heroes, honours their names, and recognizes their patriotism and contribution to Vietnam (Stephens, 2012).

In line with the findings of Stephens (2012), Lee (2013) has also given considerable attention to the honour and satisfaction of memorialization however the traumatic memories and haunted heritage cannot be omitted from the ontological experiences endured by victims or the affected communities. The Korean War monument and museum are sites of memory that have captured the devastation and tragedies of the war as well as the terrifying experiences of the soldiers who so selflessly gave their lives (Lee, 2013). Additionally, it has also revealed and illustrated the fear of living at a time when the North Korean troops abruptly invaded and attacked South Korea without any declaration of war (Lee, 2013). Both the museum and monument have radiated feelings of horror, dread and agony – which still live on particularly with the spatial divide between North and South Korea remaining as two separate countries (Lee, 2013). Thus Lee (2013) utilizes the museum and monument to interpret the realities of traumascapes and memory as the unforgettable moments that shaped a divided region.

As with Lee (2013), the South African experiences run parallel to the fear and terror experienced by Korean communities. Murray (2013) extrapolates to the horrific events of South Africa's discredited apartheid system in his case study on the Hector Pieterse memorial and museum. These sites of memory still stir revolt among youth of South Africa today and remain as stark reminders of what was one of the most brutal events in South African history (Murray, 2013). The most significant component to these sites of memory was the photograph which captured Hector Pieterse's body being carried away by his cousin after he was shot in the notorious Soweto Uprising where black students protested against learning Afrikaans because it was the vernacular of their oppressors (Murray, 2013). As

Murray (2013) observed, Hector Pieterse's death will forever be memorialized in the black-and-white photograph displayed as a mnemonic symbol of his nobleness and attempt to take a stand against what was wrong.

### **2.2.5 EARLY GREY STREET SCHOLARSHIP**

This review provides a synopsis of the published scholarly material on the Grey Street Complex, from a geographical and historical perspective of the area. Many writers have based their understanding of the Grey Street Complex on their empirical research, while others have depicted the historical background of this precinct in fiction.

#### **2.2.5.1 THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE GREY STREET COMPLEX**

The Grey Street complex, a component of the Indian CBD, attracted scholarly interest since the mid-1960s. During this time, the Grey Street Complex was analyzed specifically in terms of socio-demographic structure and economic development – this was concerned with the evaluation of commercial potential of the area against the background of political challenges posed by apartheid. One of the first comprehensive analyses of this complex was compiled by Schlemmer *et al.* (1968) who examined the geographical profile of the area. Schlemmer *et al.* (1968) conducted several surveys in Durban which revealed the nature of urban structural characteristics as well as commercial potential of the Grey Street Complex.

Urban structural factors such as floor space; establishment type and expansion and potential were analyzed. It was evident from these findings that the space allocated to the Grey Street Complex was insufficient for the number of firms, as well as other trade and retail activities situated within it. Significantly, Schlemmer *et al.* (1968) also contended that the Grey Street Complex generated a turnover that was not much less to that generated by the White CBD. It was clear from this study that the Grey Street Complex had the potential for future expansion if the apartheid restrictions in the area were removed.

Another study carried out by Schlemmer *et al.* (1971) followed which gave an economic insight into the industrial and commercial value of this precinct. Since 1950, the Grey Street Complex was unproclaimed, in terms of the Group Areas Act, which raised uncertainty about the future of Indian establishments in this precinct. This study showed how critical the delay in proclamation, hindered the urban built environment at the time. Schlemmer *et al.* (1971) also noted that this precinct was the major Indian trading area in the Durban CBD and was vital to the stimulation of Indian economic life. In addition, the study exposed the diversity of activities present in the area and how this played a crucial role in terms of employment for the Indians during the apartheid era. Schlemmer *et al.* (1971) revealed the extent to which the urban Indian community would lose if the Grey Street Complex was to be proclaimed a White group area.

Following this, Rajah (1981) provided an extensive geographic analysis of Durban's Indian CBD during the apartheid era, wherein he critically analyzed the economic, social, political and spatial aspects of this area in detail. This study induced that the Indian CBD was socially and economically valuable to the Indian community and, thereby geo-strategically significant to the White CBD. Rajah's (1981) research exposed the depth of the political struggle of the Indian community, which hindered urban economic development and contained Indian capital against a backdrop of segregation and racial discrimination. Further, this investigation paid careful attention to socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the Indian CBD in an attempt to understand the patterns of development in relation to other western cities – and the Indian CBD displayed a contrast to these trends.

In particular, Rajah's (1981) representation of this CBD showed stagnation in the development of the area which affected Indians commercially and socio-economically. This decline was associated with the uncertainty of Group Areas proclamation for the Grey Street Complex. Rajah's (1981) work presented a comprehensive evaluation of a multitude of socio-geographic variables which illustrated the significance of this location to the Indian community. This research by Rajah (1981) is the most recent composition (captured in the literature) of a systematic geographic analysis presented for the Indian CBD.

Omar and Chetty (1983) also carried out several surveys in which they assessed the housing challenges in the Indian area of the Durban CBD. Due to the shortage of land in the Grey Street Complex, property value and thus rentals were exorbitantly high. Despite the enforcement of both the Group Areas Act and Provincial Ordinances, this survey indicated that the residents of the Grey Street Complex were content with residing in this precinct and that there were sentimental attachments to the area, specifically in terms of cultural symbolism.

The most recent work on the Grey Street Complex was the historical analysis presented by Rosenberg (2012). Although Rosenberg (2012) analyzed the history of the Warwick Junction precinct and emphasized the role of Curries Fountain, the study also included a section on the Grey Street Complex and prominent landmarks within it. The study captured the change in spatial development of what was colloquially referred to by its inhabitants as the “Casbah” (Rosenberg 2012). Rosenberg (2012) also provided insight in the political struggle and constraints in terms of the right to live and work in the city.

#### **2.2.5.2 GREY STREET COMPLEX IN FICTION**

In recent years, the social, cultural and political dynamics of the Grey Street Complex has been a theme in works of fiction. In contrast to the socio-spatial dynamics, the fictional analyses are able to express sentimentalities; memory and nostalgia associated with the Grey Street Complex. Some examples include Imraan Coovadia’s *The Wedding*; Aziz Hassim’s trilogy: *The Lotus People*; *Revenge of Kali*; *The Agony of Valiamma*; Phyllis Naidoo’s *Footprints in Grey Street* and Ravi Govender’s *Down Memory Lane*.

Mamet (2007) has explored the linkages between the selected writers, place and identity through their literary representations of the Grey Street Complex. Mamet’s (2007) study analytically explored the cultural representation of urban space in the Grey Street Complex (during South Africa’s apartheid) in fiction. The fictional literary representations examined in the study were drawn from the writings of Imraan Coovadia’s *The Wedding* as well as Aziz Hassim’s *The Lotus People*. The experiential journey for each character, in both novels, was



critically analyzed in relation to their surroundings. Both novels have captured the transformation of urban space into 'home' for the Indian community in Durban.

Similarly, Reddy (2013) also analyzes the fictional constructions of Aziz Hassim's trilogy on this precinct, *The Lotus People*, *Revenge of Kali* and *The Agony of Valliamma*. Reddy (2013) also examined the way in which Hassim described the experiences of the Grey Street Complex through his fictional simulacra and their surroundings. This research also delved into place-making, identity as well as nostalgia and collective memory rooted to the Indian subcontinent and the South African realities. In particular, Reddy (2013) views Hassim's work as reclamation of the historical memories in this precinct. This study is also a contribution to the cultural representation of urban space in South Africa.

This dissertation will provide a socio-historical analysis which will draw from lived experiences of residents; employees and employers in the community that once resided in the Grey Street Complex. The focus will be on mnemonic and emotional attachments that members of community still have to this precinct, as well as the nostalgia associated with memory and emotion of attachment to place. Specific mnemonic elements and experience from people who grew up; worked and served the area will allow this dissertation to capture the "life" of the historical Grey Street Complex. Interviews with businessmen (who have been ex-residents/ remaining residents) will show the experiences of entrepreneurship that they had in this area during apartheid. It will also give a sense of the customer base that they once served and how this has changed since that period. Interviews with employees and residents will provide details on recreational; cultural and commercial dynamics of this precinct. Experiences from these interviews will reveal the true sense nostalgia and what the community felt they have lost the most from what they once called 'home'.

Additionally, documentary analysis of data will also be used to understand the Grey Street Complex in terms of establishment types, developments and the associated restrictions imposed on this. The documentary analysis will give insight to both commercial and political dynamics of the development profile of the study area. It will further provide specific case studies thereby displaying a very detailed scene of the study area and add to the illustrative

nature that this study will attempt to present. Further, I wish to provide an in-depth analysis/description of cultural entities and institutions in this dissertation. This appears to be under-researched or unexamined in the Grey Street Complex and plays a crucial role to the traditionalism of the Indian community. Thus this research will provide commercial and cultural insight into the rise and fall of the Grey Street Complex and how the community was impacted by this.

## **2.2.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has provided a review of existing literature following a similar thematic base to this dissertation. It has also contextualized the study within a body of research and in doing so, has delimited the research problem. The conceptual framework for the study is based on memory, nostalgia and place concepts which have also been described in detail in this chapter. In particular, the literature on memory illustrates the significance of place-relationships for communities and former residents and demonstrates that place concepts play an essential role in influencing their historical connections to place.

## **CHAPTER THREE: STUDY AREA AND METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter Three provides a comprehensive description of the methodology employed in this dissertation. It also provides a detailed spatial and historic insight to the Grey Street Complex. This study employed a case study approach and used a variety of primary and secondary data sources. All sources of information that were utilized are described in detail in order to illustrate the wide range of data sources used in this study. This research was compiled with official and authentic Group Areas Memoranda, historic brochures, newspaper articles, journal articles, books and various internet sources. There is a justification provided for the use of each methodological technique adopted in this dissertation.

The study is largely qualitative and a mixed-methods approach has been utilized to compile the analysis. The sampling framework is non-random and, more specifically, includes purposive as well as snowball sampling techniques. These techniques have been explained and the rationalization for the selection of such sampling strategies in this study has been delineated. In order to compile an in-depth analysis, semi-structured interviews have been conducted using the oral histories of the selected interviewees as this draws on memory and nostalgia. The deployment of semi-structured interviews, extracting memory through oral history, has a very specific objective and has therefore allowed for the key research questions to be undertaken while not forfeiting the nature of the interview.

### **3.2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION**

This section of the chapter will provide details about the location of the site as well as a spatial profile. This study focuses on the Grey Street Complex, a precinct located in the central business district of Durban which is situated on the east coast of the KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa (see figure 3.1).

### **3.2.1 BRIEF GLIMPSE AT HISTORY**

In order to understand the location of the Grey Street Complex, it is necessary to have an understanding of urban structures in the context of South African history. Cities of the apartheid South Africa are considered to be distinctive beyond comparison (Simon, 1989). This emanates from a colonial history of European and British imperialism – both of which provided a prototype model of urban segregation which was later inherited and schematized by Afrikaner nationalists for their apartheid doctrine (Rajah, 1981; Simon, 1989; Hiralal, 2007). The apartheid city model was also encrypted by a series of restrictive legislation that garnered white domination in urban areas:

- i. Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act of 1923
- ii. Asiatic Land Tenure Act (Ghetto Act) of 1946
- iii. Population Registration Act of 1950
- iv. Group Areas Act of 1950; 1966
- v. Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act of 1952

It was against this backdrop that every South African city developed economically, socially and spatially. Black, Coloured and Indian communities were forcibly removed from cities under the Group Areas Act and relocated to distant group area zones or rural townships (Simon, 1989; Maharaj, 1997). Focusing particularly on the city of Durban, the concept of a dual CBD was evident from a very early stage where a minor Indian trading zone in Durban became an Indian CBD and the rest of the city was determined as the white CBD (Rajah, 1981; Simon, 1989; Rosenberg, 2012). Nevertheless, the entire city was still controlled by the white domination and in this regard, the development of the Indian CBD was both dependant on and subjected to the compromise of apartheid legislation (Rajah, 1981; Jithoo, 1985; Simon, 1989). The Indian CBD structure contained both the Grey Street Complex and part of the Warwick Junction Precinct – an extension of the Grey Street Complex (Rajah, 1981; Maharaj, 1999). This dissertation will focus on the Grey Street Complex only as this was the major Indian commercial and cultural hub in the Durban CBD.

### 3.2.2 SPATIAL PROFILE

The Grey Street Complex is a spatially modest precinct in terms of its size. Although it was geo-strategically positioned as a neighbouring secondary node to the White CBD, the Grey Street Complex still retains an unchanged spatial form in its contemporary environment. The land coverage of this precinct (eliminating roads) measures approximately 20 hectares in total (Rajah, 1981; 1968). From the north to south boundaries, the entire precinct is approximately 1 kilometre and from its east to west boundaries, it extends to approximately 700 metres at its greatest width. The locality map (see Figure 3.1) represents the spatial delineation of the Grey Street Complex. The main street, from north to south is Grey Street. It is enclosed by Derby Street and Dartnell Crescent as north boundaries as well as Commercial road as a south boundary. The east boundary is formed by Albert Street. The west boundary consists of two parts: Cross Street (which is intercepted by Short, Brook and Bond Streets) and Fishmarket Street (which includes the Cathedral road interception). Nine main intersecting streets parallel across Grey Street and form the inner matrix of this complex. The names of the parallel streets have changed in the post-apartheid era (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1: Apartheid and Post-apartheid Street Names in the Grey Street Complex**

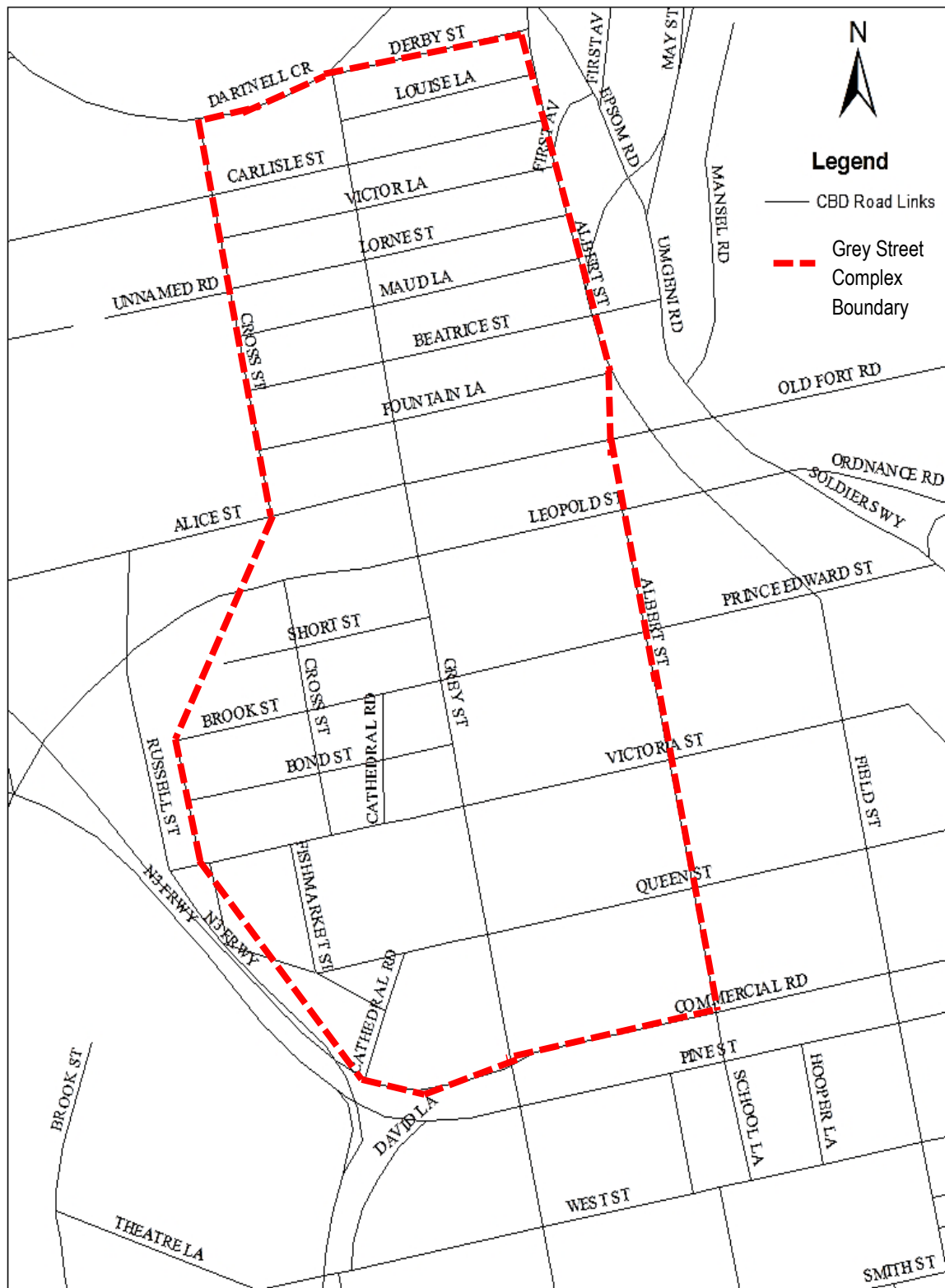
Street Names during apartheid	Post-apartheid Street Names
Alice	Johannes Nkosi
Beatrice	Charlotte Maxeke
Carlisle	Carlise
Commercial	Dr AB Xuma
Leopold	David Webster
Lorne	Ismail C Meer
Prince Edward	Dr Goonam
Queen	Denis Hurley
Victoria	Bertha Mkhize

(Source: <https://www.maps-streetview.com/South-Africa/Durban/roadmap.php> [accessed 14 May 2016])

Currently, the Durban CBD has new street names thus the abovementioned apartheid street names are no longer applicable to this precinct. However, the nature of this study is socio-historical and has utilized the previous street names as this precinct has been examined during

the apartheid era. Additionally, the study has drawn on memory and nostalgia of its previous residents who knew the previous names of all streets and have particular emotional attachments and sentimental connotations associated with the former name of this complex and all the streets within it.

**Figure 3.1: Grey Street Complex with Spatial Boundaries**



(Source: Map produced using ArcGIS software. Shapefiles obtained from the Geographical Information Systems Department, University of KwaZulu-Natal)

### **3.3 METHODOLOGY**

This section of chapter three will provide a detailed description of all the methodological approaches and techniques employed to carry out the study. It will also provide justifications and some of the limitations experienced during the course of data collection. Further, it describes how collected data was triangulated to compile the data analysis after utilizing this methodology.

#### **3.3.1 CASE STUDY APPROACH**

A case study approach has been utilized in this dissertation. This approach is most effective for the study as is explorative, explanatory and illustrative (CAPAM, 2010). As asserted by Hyett et al. (2014: 3), “case study research has been used as a catchall design to justify or add weight to fundamental qualitative descriptive studies”. By utilizing this approach, a critical analysis of the research problem can be presented in a particular location (CAPAM, 2010). This approach allows a researcher to represent a distinctive situation or a feature and the nature of its existence during a specific time period (CAPAM, 2010). It also describes situations in the real-world that challenges individuals with an improbable outcome (CAPAM, 2010). The study in question can be explained in the context of events as well as with people or phenomena that may influence it (CAPAM, 2010).

When compiling a case study, researchers are required to identify common and distinguishing factors about the case in question (Hyett *et al.*, 2014). This implies that a measured and diplomatic understanding of the type of case, its historical and political contextualization as well as other ideological factors need to be considered very carefully (Zainal, 2007; Hyett *et al.*, 2014). In addition to the aforementioned, this approach has been selected for the study based on the following criteria delineated by Yin (1984); Zainal (2007) and Hyett *et al.* (2014):

- i. Provides systematization and precision of the investigation on a unique situation where there are multiple variables of interest used to compose a common result
- ii. The outcome is dependent on the triangulation of multiple sources of information

- iii. Advantageous as it relies on various theoretical frameworks and paradigms as the underlying structures which provides a thematic base and structure for the analysis and collection of data

In qualitative research, the case study approach has various design frameworks. This dissertation follows the framework of a collective instrumental case study where there are analyses of multiple cases observed with a common set of objectives and is presented in a sequenced structure (Zainal, 2007; Hyett *et al.*, 2014). The collective instrumental case study is thus suitable for this dissertation as this study has utilized various data sources to coordinate and compile the data analysis.

This type of case study is also outlined by a social constructivist approach which is interpretative and allows the researcher to act as a personal interface in the study where a relationship is developed between the researcher and the interviewees (Hyett *et al.*, 2014). It has also allowed for this study to provide a comprehensive investigation and description of the various socio-historical aspects in the Grey Street Complex as well as for an analytical evaluation of the area to illustrate a holistic depiction of this precinct prior to 1994.

### **3.3.2 DATA SOURCES**

#### **3.3.2.1 HISTORICAL RECORDS**

This study has utilized various historical records to a very large extent therefore much of the data analysis includes documentary analysis of these records. The significance of these types of sources lies in its authenticity and credibility (Mogalakwe, 2006; Dooley, 2015). These sources of information have not been reproduced or re-interpreted by any other individual and therefore has not been exposed to any externalities, errors or uncertainties (Dooley, 2015). In addition to this, historical records are not subjected to any distortion, reformatting or manipulation – it is left as is by the individual or group who have compiled it during that specific time period and thus remains in its most original form which is indicative of the authenticity and accuracy of information contained in that data source (Mogalakwe, 2006; Dooley, 2015).



When using historical documents, it is imperative that the researcher exercises caution and a comprehensive understanding of this type of data source. The onus is on the researcher to use these data sources in the correct context recognizing that the historical records are obsolete in the contemporary environment however, it was applicable to a previous period of time (Shultz *et al.*, 2005). Moreover, historical records often serve as a foundational base in analyzing particular phenomena and provide a beginning to understand the case in question (Dooley, 2015). The purpose for and manner in which the information is extracted from historical records defines the validity of its use in the context of the study (Shultz *et al.*, 2005).

Historical records such as Group Areas memoranda, historical school documentation, and brochures/ pamphlets and letters of several cultural organizations have provided archival data which are very significant sources of information in the context of this dissertation due to the examination of the Grey Street Complex during apartheid. In addition, these sources of data also provide valuable information about the circumstances under which a community lived previously and their systems as well as principles adopted at that time. Such records have encapsulated a rich historical background of the study area – that is politically, socio-culturally and economically. A documentary analysis of the collected historical records allows for a critical evaluation of the data in order to obtain precise information about various socio-historical phenomena in the study.

### **3.3.2.2 QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS**

One of the most common forms of conducting qualitative research is through interviews (Mathers *et al.*, 2002; Yin, 2011; Edwards and Holland, 2013). A qualitative interview is an interactive meeting or dialogue that facilitates communication and is directed by the researcher with willing acceptance and participation by the interviewee (Mathers *et al.*, 2002; Edwards and Holland, 2013). As a researcher, it is imperative to conduct research in the most ethical manner to ensure transparency thus an informed consent document must be provided for the interviewee outlining the purpose and expectation of the interview, how the data provided by them will be used and that their participation is entirely on dependent on their choice (Mathers *et al.*, 2002; Yin, 2011). The interview must be conducted only after the

informed consent is signed by the interviewee (Mathers *et al.*, 2002). It is also important to make the interviewee aware that their identity will be protected and that they also have a choice as to whether or not their identification should be revealed – pseudonyms can be used to ensure anonymity and confidentiality if they wish to participate without their own identification (Mathers *et al.*, 2002; Yin, 2011).

The communication during an interview is guided by a particular thematic framework or narrative approach with an interactive structure that either has flexibility or not – the flexibility is dependent on the researcher (Edwards and Holland, 2013). The focus of the interview, for this dissertation, is on memory and nostalgia. There are several types of qualitative interview designs such as structured, semi-structured and unstructured – the selection of the type of interview is entirely dependent on the nature of the study and the detail required in composing the data analysis (Hancock, 2002; Mathers *et al.*, 2002; Edwards and Holland, 2013).

The strength in receiving information from a qualitative interview is that it has great significance in its reliability and validity – this is because it is answered personally and thus brings in elements from the actuality of the situation under examination (Hancock, 2002). However, it is also important to note that the information received may be biased as a result of the personal experience and perception of the interviewee (Hancock, 2002; Mathers *et al.*, 2002). Thus as a researcher, it is important to be objective with a thorough understanding of specific situations before accepting any information as the final outcome. Triangulation has been used between interviews and documentary sources to eliminate a skewed outcome resulting from either bias or emotion.

Semi-structured interviews have been conducted for this study with informed consent by the interviewee and data was obtained through open-ended questions. The deployment of semi-structured interviews, extracting information through memory, has a very specific objective and has therefore allowed for the key research questions to be undertaken while not forfeiting the nature of the interview. This has been selected as the qualitative interview design as the study is based on memory and nostalgia of the interviewee sample and is therefore more

reliant on their mnemonic phenomenology rather than the specificity of the question (Yin, 2011). The semi-structured interview is non-directive thus it allows for the interviewee to fully articulate their personal experiences, their priorities in the context of the study and reveal certain aspects about their perspectives which may differ from the expected outcome (Yin, 2011). This type of interview can even provide more information than planned for by the researcher, thus broadening the spectrum of the study (Yin 2011).

For this dissertation, several interviewees have been selected according to their profile and knowledge of as well as experiences in the area during apartheid and interviewed individually – most of the interviewees are at an advanced age. Data received from the interviews was recorded in written form. The interviewees are mainly residents of the Grey Street Complex and include various profiles: businessmen/ women, newspaper reporters, senior community leaders of socio-cultural and religious organizations that existed during the apartheid era. Such information will also form a significant component in understanding the historical background of the Grey Street Complex. A brief description of the profiles of interviewees is presented in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Profile of interviewee sample selected for the study**

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Profile</b>	<b>Date of Interview</b>
Mr. Karsandas T. Manjee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Former committee member of the Grey Street Indian Local Affairs Committee</li> <li>• Property development specialist – fixed property owner in the Grey Street Complex during apartheid</li> </ul>	5 March 2016
Growfin Property Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property experts and owners of several properties throughout the Durban CBD including the Grey Street Complex</li> </ul>	22 April 2016

Mr. Ashwin Trikamjee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President of the South African Hindu Maha Sabha</li> <li>• Former president of the Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj</li> <li>• Former President of the South African Soccer Federation</li> </ul>	4 May 2016
Mr. Mamoo Rajab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owner of former cinema and entertainment facilities in the Grey Street Complex</li> </ul>	19 May 2016
Mr. Ahmed Mahomad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairman of the Juma Musjid (Grey Street Mosque) Trust</li> <li>• Committee member of the KwaZulu, Natal Interfaith Committee</li> </ul>	19 May 2016
Mr. Manilal Patel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owner of Patel's Take-away Store</li> </ul>	21 May 2016
Dr. Ramesh Bhoola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founder and Chairperson of Joint Medical Holdings (JMH) Company</li> </ul>	27 May 2016
Mr. Arvind Roopanand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owner of Roopanands</li> </ul>	21 November 2016
Mr. Mahesh Ratanjee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owner of Manilal Ratanjee and Company</li> </ul>	26 November 2016
Mr. Buddy Govender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Manager of the Development and Environmental Planning Unit of the eThekweni Municipality</li> <li>• Co-founder and coordinator of "The Casbah and Surrounds" webpage and "Casbah edition".</li> </ul>	30 November 2016
Mr. Manecklal Gordhan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Former Owner of Bangalore Saree House</li> </ul>	2 December 2016
Mr Hoosen Moolla	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager of the Inner City Thekwini Regeneration and Urban Management Programme (iTrump)</li> </ul>	11 January 2017

(Source: Table compiled by the author, based on information received during the interview)

### **3.3.3 SAMPLING FRAMEWORK**

The sampling framework that has been applied to this study is non-random or non-probability. The type of sampling used from the non-probability framework is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling allows for the deliberate selection of individuals to produce a sample which is most characteristic of the population to be analyzed (Battaglia, 2008). The main intention with this type of sampling methodology lies in the assessment (by the researcher) as to which exact individuals can provide the most valuable information in order to meet the objectives of the investigation (Battaglia, 2008). This form of sampling is most beneficial when attempting to construct and understand a historical account of a situation in question, the comprehensive description of a particular phenomenon or construction of a sequence of events that has not been studied in great detail (Battaglia, 2008).

Additionally, purposive sampling is generally most suitable for samples which are limited in size and originating from a confined geographical location, or for a standardized population where conclusive insinuation is not the greatest priority to the investigation (Battaglia, 2008). The choice of selection for the sample is a very significant and influential element in the nature of the outcome for the study and researchers need to exercise caution in being biased in order to prevent skewed results. There are several sub-categories of purposive sampling, each of which applies to a certain type of investigation based on the researcher's interest. The two variants of purposive sampling have been employed for this study is expert and snowball.

Expert sampling allows for the selection of the most knowledgeable authorities, specialists and practitioners in a specific field (Garson, 2012). This type of sampling is pertinent to the study as experts have been selected to provide precise details on certain institutions. In addition to this, snowball sampling allows for the selection of individuals who display qualities that are most suitable to the investigation (Garson, 2012). It is also a way of selecting individual who may possess expert knowledge for the study and is employed when a researcher is sampling with a defined intension (Garson, 2012).

It was necessary to select only those interviewees who have the expertise to give a broader outlook and understanding of various overarching factors that were pertinent to this area during that specific time period. Furthermore, this preferred interviewee sample have drawn on their memory which has supplemented the historical records utilized in the data analysis, therefore this dissertation is not anecdotal or based on any of the lives of any particular interviewee. Expert and snowball sampling are therefore appropriate variants because experts have been selected to provide defined historical details such that a clear historical analysis of the Grey Street Complex is collated.

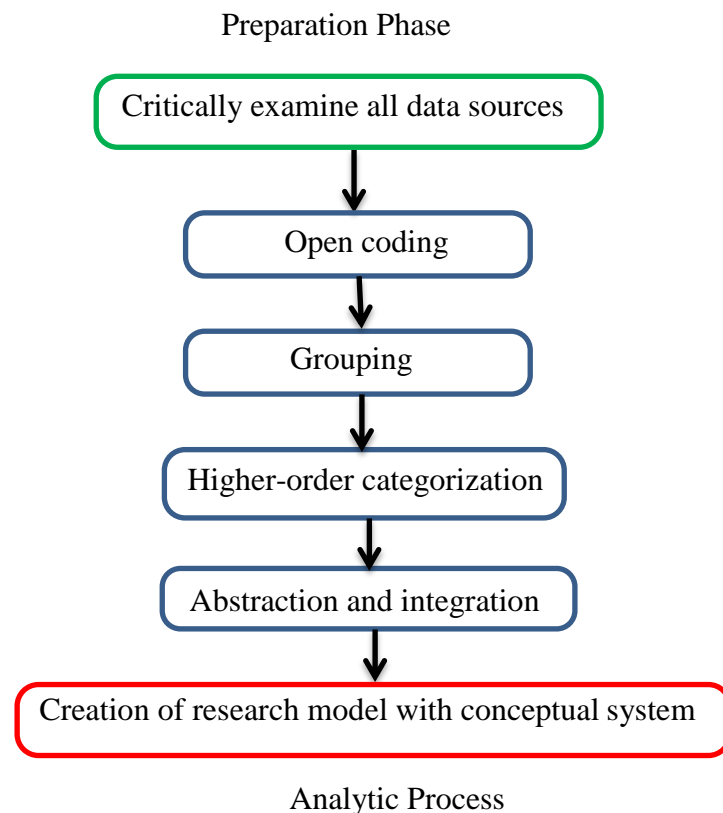
### **3.3.4 ANALYSIS OF DATA**

The analysis of data involves systematization, coding and interpretation as well as classification (Lacey and Luff, 2001; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Elo and Kyngas, 2007). Analyzing the content from collected data is a comprehensive process where the extracted information can be reproduced to infer validation from a particular data source into the context of the study (Elo and Kyngas, 2007). From the information, unique insights can be provided, a new body of knowledge and guidance on a particular area of research can be acquired (Elo and Kyngas, 2007). The main intention with analyzing data in this form is to ascertain a critical and an all-encompassing depiction of the phenomena examined in the study. The underlying structure of the analysis is delineated by the conceptual framework adopted in the study.

The data analysis was structured using an inductive content analysis approach. This involves open coding, identifying common themes as well as abstraction and integration (Lacey and Luff, 2001; Elo and Kyngas, 2007). The open coding was carried out by thoroughly examining the historical records and written notes from interviews in order to identify common themes or categories in line with the objectives of the study. Once the data was critically examined, structural categories were identified according to common themes emerging from the various data sources. The structural categories were then grouped and placed under higher order headings which are based on the content of the objectives of the dissertation. Grouping the data categorically allowed for similarities or dissimilarities to be

identified – these correspondences determined the selection of classification under a broader high-order category as displayed in the figure below.

**Figure 3.2: Schematic Flow Diagram of an Inductive Content Analysis**



(Source: Elo and Kyngas, 2007: 110)

Abstraction and integration involves compiling a broad depiction of the phenomena in question through the formulated categories (Elo and Kyngas, 2007). In this analysis, after grouping structural categories under higher-order categories, there was also the formulation of sub-categories which was based on similar events that occurred between structural categories. Once all the various categorical classifications were identified and integrated, a defined description of the research topic could be provided in the context of the conceptual framework. Classifying and integrating the information, with guidance of a conceptual system, has provided an all-encompassing data analysis to explain how various socio-

historical aspects of the Grey Street Complex have played a role in influencing memory and nostalgia of the community.

### **3.4 CONCLUSION**

This chapter three is formed on two parts – the selected study area as well as the methodology employed for this dissertation. The first part of this chapter provided a detailed description on the site location as well as a spatial profile of the Grey Street Complex. There are also several geospatial characteristics of the site given such as the size and area of the precinct as well as street names of the boundaries and matrix of the Grey Street Complex. A brief history on the urban structure of the study area has also been outlined as it gives insight into the form of the precinct, against the backdrop of the apartheid era.

The second section of chapter three provided an explanation of the methodological approaches and techniques utilized in the study. There is information on the various sources of data, qualitative interviews and sampling framework as well as the approach adopted to compile the data analysis for this dissertation. This study has utilized a range of qualitative methodologies for the collection, abstraction and integration of data to reveal information required. This variety demonstrates that this research has drawn on many different sources of information and various procedures to holistically construct a socio-historical perspective of the Grey Street Complex. This is discussed in the next chapter.



## **CHAPTER FOUR: RISE OF GREY STREET**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter four presents the rise of the Grey Street Complex, since the arrival of Indians in Durban, especially, the passenger, trader group. Thus the most necessary and pertinent elements of passenger and indenture advents will be discussed in relation to this precinct as it is these arrivals, both distinctively and collectively, that led to the beginning of the Grey Street Complex. This section of the analysis will provide an historical background to the Grey Street Complex and illustrate how this precinct became the major trading hub for Indians in the Durban CBD. It has interpolated discussions drawing on the memory and nostalgia of the community who have resided and functioned in this complex for decades.

Data utilized in this chapter have been obtained from interviews with several businessmen/women, municipality officials as well as senior community leaders in cultural organizations. Further, this was supplemented from information extracted from a variety of historical documents such as Group Areas memoranda, brochures/pamphlets, letters from business and cultural organisations.

### **4.2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **4.2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The year 1833 marked the end of slavery, however since then up until 1917 more than one million Indians were transported to various colonial territories to work on plantations. British imperialism and feudalism translocated Indians to many enclaves of the globe. Durban in, South Africa was one such region, where Indians arrived as indentured labourers between 1860 and 1911 (Rajah, 1981; Padayachee, 1988; Vahed, 1999).

In view of contemporary South Africa, the year 2017 marks the centenary of the abolition of the indenture system. What can be reflected from this exploitative system, a century after its termination, is that it was not only significant in that it contributed specifically to the historic urban and agricultural economies of South Africa, but it also enriched the social and cultural pluralism of this country (Rajah, 1981). In addition to these pioneers, the advent of passenger

Indians (traders who paid for their passage in 1874) also contributed influentially to the commercial and urban form of cities in the country, especially in Durban. Both these advents gave rise to a new dimension for the Indian Diaspora (Rajah, 1981). The history of the arrival of both indentured and passenger Indians in South Africa is so well known to society and in literature that it requires only a brief recitation in this section of this chapter. Nevertheless, it is important to understand that the history of the advent of Indians is directly linked to the foundation, evolution and functionality of the Grey Street Complex.

## **4.2.2 THE EVOLUTION OF THE GREY STREET COMPLEX**

### **4.2.2.1 THE INDENTURED CONNECTION**

The period between 1860 -1911 recorded more than 150 000 Indians indentured as labourers in the sugar estates of colonial South Africa (Rajah, 1981; Padayachee, 1988; Vahed, 1999). While the government of the Natal province regarded indentured Indians as a temporary migration, the Indian colonial authorities viewed this as a permanent move (Rajah, 1981). Rajah (1981) asserted that the profile of the first set of Indians who arrived in South Africa reflected a range of skills in various avenues of employment – priests, horticulturists, carpenters, weavers, domestic cleaners, tradesmen and atypically enough, a very small group of labourers (Singh, 1960; Rajah, 1981). Thus the quest to obtain post-indenture employment was not a very challenging one for ex-indentured Indians because, soon enough, they were incorporated into the South African economy as craft workers, fishermen, tailors, laundrymen and household servants (Singh, 1960; Rajah, 1981; Padayachee, 1988).

Some ex-indentured Indians also found employment at the railway station, in shipyards as well as in coal mines (Rajah, 1981; Padayachee, 1988). In addition to this, those who had a commercial background purchased land plots and became market gardeners while others found fortune in becoming businessmen (Rajah, 1981; Padayachee, 1988). The second set of indentured Indians arrived on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 1860 in South Africa with even more diversification in their employment profiles (Singh, 1960). Table 4.1 exhibits the diverse skills of part of this second group of Indians.

**Table 4.1: Occupational Profiles of Indians on the S.S Belvedere**

<b>Second Group of Indenture Indians (26/11/1860) - S.S Belvedere</b>	
<b>Initial Occupational Profile</b>	<b>Number</b>
Gardeners	69
Priests	61
Soldiers	25
Dairymen	18
Pig-rearers	16
Fruit producers	14
Salt-dealers	11
Porters	11
Clerks	9
Herdsmen	8
Boatmen	7
Leather-workers	6
Policemen	5
Messengers	5
Laundrymen	5
Oil-pressers	4
Ironmongers	4
Traders	4
Undertakers	3
Barbers	2
Hunters	2
Jewellers	2
Confectioners	1
Weavers	1
Enamelware dealers	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>294</b>

(Source: Singh, 1960: 23)

Many of the commercial activities of ex-indentured Indians became increasingly concentrated in the Durban CBD because of the urban economic prospects which were mainly accredited to the availability of employment opportunities (Rajah, 1981; Padayachee, 1988). Thus, the need for a renewal of the indentured contract became unnecessary as Indians had the background skills to obtain various types of employment in Durban. This was not only instrumental for their broad spectrum of occupational opportunities but it was also influential in facilitating their higher tiers of employment (Rajah, 1981; Padayachee, 1988).

In doing so, they transformed their occupational profiles rapidly. Brookes and Webb (1965) point out that such variation in post-indenture employment was initially encouraged by the white community who supported this diversification. This diversification was further intensified by the arrival of passenger Indians.

#### **4.2.2.2 THE ARRIVAL OF PASSENGER INDIANS**

Passenger Indians arrived in South Africa in 1874. Most passenger Indians came to Natal with occupational profiles as businessmen (Rajah, 1981). They also immediately became aware of the commercial opportunities in Durban, initially serving the indentured community, and subsequently the African and white groups as well, while also moving to other parts of the country (Rajah, 1981; Chetty and Omar, 1983).

A large part of the economic activities of passenger Indians also became concentrated in the Durban CBD because of the number of employment opportunities available in this location, thus many of them saw this as an ideal area to reside (Rajah, 1981; Chetty and Omar, 1983). They soon began to transform the consumer market by supplying both products and services that were not only appealing to Indian consumers but to black and white customers as well (Rajah, 1981; Jithoo, 1985). In addition to their influence on the urban consumer market, passenger Indians were also equally prosperous in the urban property market. They acquired several properties in the Durban CBD at a very early stage after their passage to South Africa (Rajah, 1981; Chetty and Omar, 1983; Jithoo, 1985). While their acquisition of property may have been more evident in Durban, it extended across various urban nodes in the Natal province (Rajah, 1981).

This subsequently led to competition and conflict between Indian and white businessmen. The latter viewed the former as a threat, and subsequently influenced local, provincial and national government to introduce legislation to restrict Indian ownership and occupation of property to certain zones. While passenger Indians were contributing markedly to the development and growth of the city, their presence concerned the apartheid government far more than they anticipated it would (Rajah, 1981). The apartheid government continued to

remain tolerant of indentured Indians entering the country due to their labour being a fundamental component to the South African economy.

#### **4.2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'INDIAN CBD'**

It is important to note that the development of the Grey Street Complex has to be considered in the context of the entire CBD. This is because the race-space delineation of this precinct was only legally determined at a very late stage in the apartheid era. The birth of the Grey Street Complex can be traced to the 1870s when the Durban CBD already had a large concentration of Indians who had started businesses and acquired residency in a north-western region of the city (Chetty and Omar, 1983). By the early 1880s, Durban retained more than 60 Indian shops and approximately 118 fixed properties that were owned by Indians (Rajah, 1981). Thus an 'Indian hub' began to emerge and geo-strategically position itself in the city centre. Due to the profile of the urban consumer market in this centralized and new-found Indian hub, services and products for this community expanded very rapidly and subsequently became known as the Indian CBD (Rajah, 1981).

The continuous success of Indian traders antagonized white merchants (Rajah, 1981; Chetty and Omar, 1983; Jithoo, 1985). Rajah (1981) asserted that the true potential of Indian traders was fully realized during the economic recession between 1882-1886, when quintessentially employment was limited, and trading volumes were restricted. It was during this specific period that most black and Indian consumers became avid customers to Indian traders (Rajah, 1981). Thus the so-called 'Indian CBD' acquired increased consumer popularity – such influence on the urban market attracted attention from the government (Rajah, 1981). It was at this point in South African history that the first expression of anti-Indian tendencies surfaced. Such anti-Indianism led to the establishment of the Wragg Commission in 1885, a document of the prevailing legislation governing Indian immigrants (Rajah, 1981; Jithoo, 1985; Vahed, 1999). Although the Commission stated that the dynamic role of Indian traders was significant to the urban economy, it also suggested that Indians should continue to remain in the colony, however, only as indentured labourers (Rajah, 1981; Jithoo, 1985). Subsequently, various laws were implemented in a concerted effort to destabilize and impede the growth of Indian capital as well as to impose limitations on their acquisition of properties (Table 4.1).

**Table 4.2: Restrictive legislation imposed on Indians in the Durban CBD**

Legislation	Description
Dealers Licenses Act (Natal) No. 18 of 1897	Required Indians to obtain trading licences in order to prevent them from competing with white merchants
Trading and Occupation of Land Restriction Act No. 35 (Pegging Act) of 1943	Prohibited Indians from occupying or purchasing properties which were previously occupied or acquired by the white community
Asiatic Land Tenure Act (Ghetto Act) of 1946	Restricted Asians from owning or occupying land in specific locations. Asians required a permit if the land was not occupied or purchased by Asians previously
Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950	Determined the spatial location of different race groups
Industrial Conciliation Act No. 28 of 1956	Racially separated trade union movements and prohibited mixed trade unions

(Adapted from: Chetty and Omar, 1983; Jithoo, 1985)

#### **4.2.3.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS**

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a large part of the Indian population was displaced from the Durban CBD and relocated to areas that came to be known as Railway and Magazine Barracks (Chetty and Omar, 1983). By 1911, the population of the Durban CBD was in excess of 115 000 (Memorandum to Group Areas Board, Central Durban Property Protection Committee, 1961; Chetty and Omar, 1983). Table 4.3 reflects that almost half of the population was made up of the Indian community in 1911.

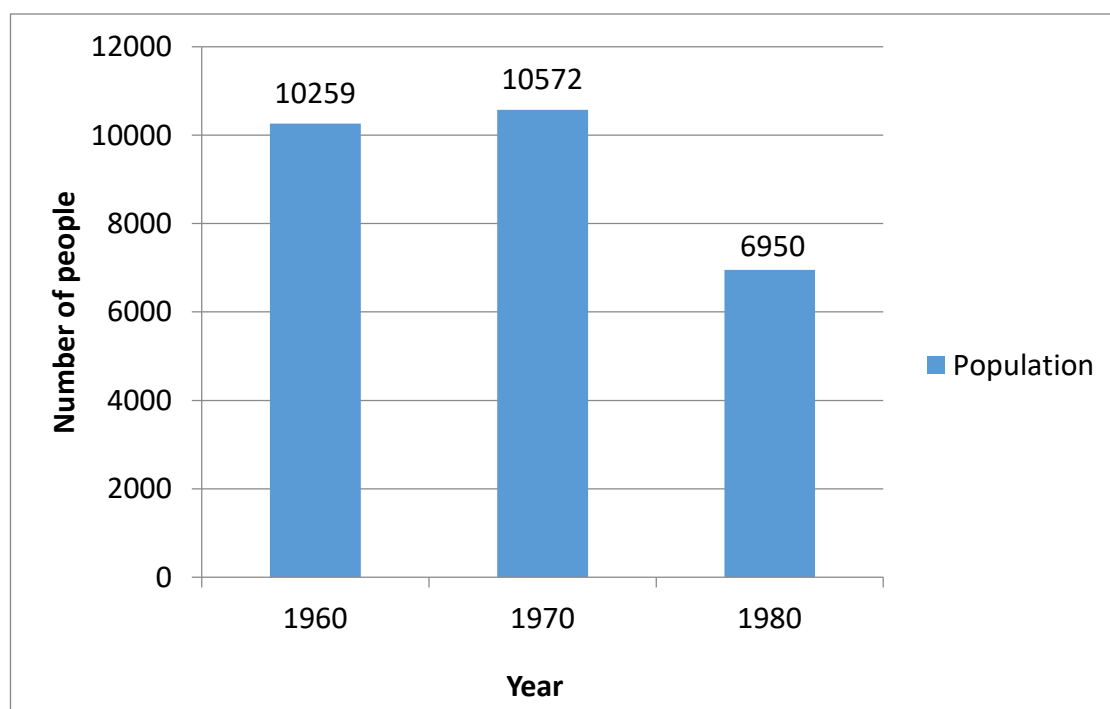
**Table 4.3: Reflection of the population percentage in Durban CBD for 1911**

Population Composition of Durban (1911)	
Race Group	Percentage (%)
African	19
European	34
Indian	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

(Adapted from: Schlemmer *et al.*, 1971; Chetty and Omar, 1983)

With the presence of a very large Indian population in the CBD, it was inherent for this community to settle at this particular location. The implementation of the Group Areas Act of 1950 further dislocated approximately 140 000 Indians from the CBD .The Indian population in this precinct remained fairly similar from 1960 – 1970 and a very significant decrease, by more than 30%, was evident by 1980 (Figure 4.1). This decrease was attributed to the political dynamics of uncertainty in terms of racial zoning of the area as per the Group Areas Act.

**Figure 4.1: Population of the Grey Street Complex from 1960 – 1980**



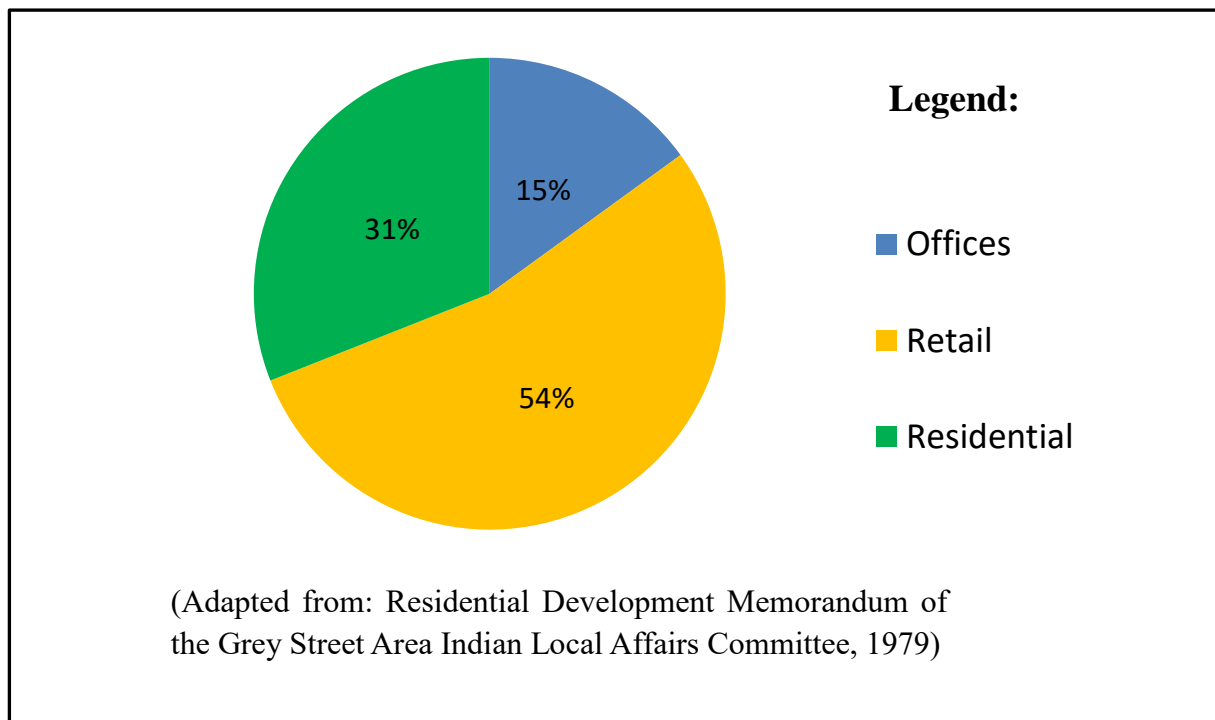
(Adapted from: Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1982)

#### **4.2.3.2 LAND ZONING AND USAGE**

Despite the brutality of the Group Areas Act, Indians who remained in the Grey Street precinct continued with purchasing and developing fixed properties for residential purposes until 1966 (Chetty and Omar, 1983). In 1966 all properties, land and premises could only be utilized or occupied for commercial purposes by Indians in terms of Section 19(1) of the Group Areas Act (Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1979). Hence a large part of floor space coverage (excluding road coverage) was composed of retail usage between 1966 – 1982, as illustrated in Figure 4.2. In 1979, retail was in far

greater demand as this complex was zoned for Indian commercial occupation and ownership (in 1973) and not for residential usage. Office space was utilized to a lesser extent as the retail was a more common form of commercial activity in the Grey Street Complex.

**Figure 4.2: Floor Space usage in the Grey Street Complex in 1979**



#### **4.2.4 SUMMARY**

The impact of the Group Areas zoning and the ultimate proclamation led to the decline of this precinct in terms of its traditional form and function. However, the Indian community in this precinct continued to persevere and maintain businesses, residences and cultural centres, which remained fully functioning throughout the apartheid era – a few of which are still operational today. Thus the determination of the community to preserve this precinct as their home signifies the place connection that they developed with the Grey Street Complex. Lingering memories and nostalgia of the vibrant social and cultural life persist, and this is the theme of the next section



#### 4.2.5 MEMORIES AND NOSTALGIA OF A CULTURAL CHRONOTOPE

The Grey Street Complex is a cultural chronotope on the socio-spatial timeline of South African history. The residents of this precinct still have a place connection to the cohesive flare of cultures that existed in this part of the city during apartheid. The cultural connectivity of the community in this precinct became integrated into their identities. Mr. Buddy Govender, senior manager of Development and Environmental Planning of the eThekweni Municipality, nostalgically recalls his cultural experiences in this precinct:

*This was the most brilliant place to grow up in. It was a cosmopolitan area and a cultural time warp where we lived with broad vision. I remember how our vernacular was thriving and how pigeons would be flying over us while the Cathedral bell was ringing. I remember visiting the mosque and temple, we were all there no matter what our religion was and everyone came together to form a perfect blend.*

*We always celebrated together, if someone was happy, we were all happy and if anyone of us was sad, we were all sad. We had very little but we always turned it into something beautiful. The Grey Street Complex was a melting pot of cultures and the lifeblood of the community, (Interview, 30/11/2016).*

Mr. Ahmed Mahomad, Chairman of the Juma Masjid Trust, reminisces about his cultural connection to this precinct, especially in terms of trust and religious tolerance:

*Early traders interacted, trusted and lived a communal life. We had respect for everyone and a mutual respect for each other's religion and prayers. I remember how I used to light fireworks with my friends during Diwali. My family also enjoyed celebrating Raksha Bandhan. The mosque had a great relationship with the church, even today.*

*We saw everyone in our community as family. There was an intertwining of religion and culture and it was beautiful,*  
(Interview, 19/05/2016)

This precinct became a microcosm of culture with cohesion and integration, one where the heritage of each of its residents existed in harmony. Evidently, what the community of the Grey Street Complex never failed to achieve was to educate their future generations about their rich religious and cultural heritage.

#### **4.2.5.1 THE ROLE OF CULTURE**

Religion, culture and education were essential to create the value system within which the Indians lived as a community. Being the pioneers that they were, they took it upon themselves to create associations, societies, samajs, sabhas, and madressas, not only to cater for the present but also to make certain that these will continue to persist for generations to come.

It must be emphasized that Indians held education and religion as paramount. Many adjustments were made at the dinner table just to accommodate funding would be available to purchase the necessary stationary for children's education – both western and eastern. The community built patshalas and madressas and all attended these after English classes. To this day, it is observed that the Indian community still considers education a fundamental component to their living. Historically, small vernacular units served as the catalyst for the creation of religious institutions and organizations (Interview with Mr. Ahmed Mahomad, 19/05/2016)

The people who arrived from India tried as hard as possible to remain together in their own district groups in which they had lived in their motherland, especially the traders (Interview with Mr. Ahmed Mahomad, 19/05/2016). Consequently, the traders who were confined to the then Indian CBD, were mainly Gujarati Hindu and Muslim groups predominantly from Surat and Gujarat. One remarkable trait of each of these trader groups was that they could live in very confined spaces. So the trader would either be living behind or in a small flat

above his retail shop. Their commitment to religion and education motivated them to quickly develop their cultural institutions by which they could promote their own ethos and value systems.

#### **4.2.5.1.1 FORMATION OF CULTURAL BODIES**

The three major religious groups that were present in the Grey Street complex were Muslims, Hindus and Christians. These religious groups worked in harmony to establish various organizations and institutions to preserve culture, religion and provide the community of this precinct with an opportunity to receive an education

A brief description of the origin and establishment of each religious group in the Grey Street Complex is provided in this section. The histories of each religious group are explained independently. Various distinctive factors influenced the presence of each of these groups in this precinct as well as the formation of their associated cultural and educational bodies.

##### **i) CHRISTIANITY**

The Christian community experienced very few difficulties in the formation of cultural organizations and institutions as these were established and developed by British and European missionaries, who also provided financial support for the maintenance and operations of their schools in the Grey Street Complex (Henning, 1993; Govender and Naidoo, 2010). In particular, Anglicans, Methodists, Roman Catholics and Wesleyan missions were actively involved in Christian schooling (Vahed and Waetjen, 2015). Many of the missionaries who established schools could speak the vernacular of the Indian community. Hence, they garnered support from Indians who were seeking education and cultural grounding in a foreign country. Table 4.4 provides a summary of the contributions made by early Christian leaders in this precinct.

**Table 4.4: Contributions made by Christian Religious Leaders**

<b>Religious Leaders</b>	<b>Contributions</b>
Bishop Jean François Allard	Founder of Saint Joseph's Church in 1852 (one of the first churches in South Africa), later established as Emmanuel Cathedral
Reverend Ralph Stott	Established Methodist Chapel in Durban in 1876
Father John Baptist Sabon	Established Emmanuel Cathedral in 1902 and Saint Anthony's School
Dr. Lancelot Booth	Established several mission educational facilities in 1887 which came to be known as 'booth schools' and built Saint Aidan's Church in 1887
Pastor J.F Rowlands	Founder of Bethesda Temple in 1931

(Adapted from St Aidan's Mission Centenary Brochure, 1983; Henning, 1993; Govender and Naidoo, 2010; Vahed, 2013; Vahed and Waetjen, 2015; Emmanuel Cathedral Historical Guide, 2016)

## **ii) ISLAM**

The origins of Islam in South Africa can be traced back to 1667 with the arrival of the Cape Malays, far earlier than the period of indenture (Sema, 1985). Although Islam was introduced to the country by Cape Malays, they prayed in Jamaat Khannas and not mosques (Sema, 1985). Islam in the Natal province dates back to the arrival of indentured Indians, and the arrival of traders who were predominantly Muslim (Sema, 1985). In particular, Muslim traders offered benefactions to those Muslims who were less fortunate and their symbiotic relationship allowed institutions such as the May Street Mosque, in Greyville, to develop (Vahed and Waetjen, 2015).

In terms of the Grey Street Complex, the Islamic faith and traditions are associated with one of the most well-known cultural and architectural hallmarks of Islam in this precinct, the Juma Masjid (Grey Street Mosque) which was the first mosque to be constructed in South Africa in 1884, and is also the largest in the southern hemisphere (Vahed and Waetjen, 2015; Sema, 1985). There were many prominent Islamic leaders in the Grey Street Complex who made contributions to culture in this precinct presented in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5 Contributions made by Islamic Leaders**

<b>Religious Leaders</b>	<b>Contributions</b>
Abubakr Amod Jhaveri	Arrived in 1874 and was considered to be the first trader in Natal, one of the first trustees of Juma Masjid
Dada Abdoola	Local leader, political representative and responsible for the arrival of Mohandas K. Gandhi to South Africa
Ahmed Mohammed Tilly and Hoosen Meeran	Trustees and financial contributors to the West Street Musjid
Hajee Ahmed Mohammed Lockhat Wakuff	Established the Hajee Ahmed Mohammed Lockhat Wakuff Trust and founder of madrassahs in various areas of Durban in 1922
Abdulla Ismail Kajee	Spokesman for the Orient Islamic Institute and member of the South African Indian Congress (SAIC)

(Adapted from Sema, 1985; Vahed, 2013; Vahed and Waetjen, 2015)

### iii) HINDUISM

Hinduism in the Natal province, as with Islam, can also be traced to the period of indenture. Hindus initially established places of worship on the plantations (Gopalan, 2012; Vahed, 2013). Hindus preserved their religion and culture with very few amenities (Desai and Vahed, 2012). Many Hindu families practiced daily rituals at home as this was a tradition that was inherited from their forebears from India. Community leaders noticed that there was a lack of central leadership and sent requests for Hindu missionaries to come from India to provide guidance and organizational foundation for Hindus in South Africa (Gopalan, 2012). Some of the Hindu missionaries that made contributions to the country, and more specifically to the Grey Street Complex are presented in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Contributions made by Hindu Missionaries in the precinct**

Religious Leaders	Contributions
Professor Bhai Parmanand	First Hindu missionary who visited South Africa in 1905 to provide central leadership for Hindus, established various Vedic institutions in the country
Swami Shakaranadji	Arrived in 1908, inspired the community to establish more cultural organizations and schools in the province. Provided guidance and understanding of the significances of Hindu rituals and philosophy. Established the South African Hindu Maha Sabha in 1912
Sir Srinivasa Sastri	Established Hindu Tamil Institute as well as Sastri College in 1929
Bramha Sri Siva Guruswamigal	Established Saiva Sithantha Sungum in 1937 and encouraged the community to form more South Indian organizations

(Adapted from Saiva Sithantha Sungum Brochure, 2003; Govender and Naidoo, 2010; Desai and Vahed, 2012; Gopalan, 2012; Vahed, 2013)

#### 4.2.5.1.2 THE SUCCESS OF CULTURE IN GREY STREET

##### i) CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The various religious groups established the cultural organizations presented in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Cultural Organizations in the Grey Street Complex**

Religion	Organization	Year of establishment	Location
Islam	Juma Masjid Trust	1881	Corner of Grey and Queen Streets
	West Street Mosque Trust	1885	478 West Street
	Madressa Anjuman Islam Trust	1889	101 Field Street
Christianity	Saint Aidan's Anglican Mission	1883	49 Cross Street
	Saint Anthony's Catholic Mission	1890	Corner of Centenary and Carlisle Streets
	Emmanuel Cathedral	1902	48 Cathedral street
	Bethesda Temple Society	1931	29 Carlisle Street
Hinduism	Surat Hindu Association	1907	127 Victoria Street
	South African Hindu Maha Sabha	1912	280 Grey Street
	Arya Prathindhi Sabha	1925	21 Carlisle Street
	Andhra Maha Sabha	1931	43 Leopold Street
	Saiva Sithantha Sungum	1937	37 Derby Street
	Shree Sanathan Dharma Sabha	1941	9a Crabbe Street
	Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj	1943	52 Lorne Street
	Natal Tamil Vedic Society	1951	Corner of Cross and Carlisle Street
	Gujarati Hindu Sanskruti Kendra	1992	5 Sydenham road

(Adapted from Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj Souvenir Brochure, 1956; Surat Hindu Association Diamond Jubilee Brochure, 1975; Residential Development Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1979; Schedule of Community Facilities<sup>64</sup> - of the Central Durban Ratepayers Association, 1982; Gopalan, 2012; Rosenberg, 2012; Vahed, 2010; Vahed, 2013; Vahed and Waetjen, 2015)

The entire Indian community valued religion and cultural teachings to such an extent that they created the organizations displayed in Table 4.7 for their cultural needs. These organizations had sub-committees that engaged in various welfare, recreational and socio-religious projects which brought all elements of community life to the precinct. There was also a harmonization among all cultural bodies or groups despite their distinctive ideologies. However, these bodies did not only fulfil the religious and cultural needs of the Indian community, but also in terms of formal education which was a dire need during this time. Mr. Ashwin Trkamjee, President of the South African Hindu Maha Sabha, recalls his experiences:

*The community ensured that cultural practices were sustained with great intensity. I remember when I started off in the South African Hindu Maha Sabha, we didn't even have decent offices or a proper premise but we still continued.*

*The community worked in harmony because we knew culture was important. If the Gujarati community built an institution, it was for everyone regardless of religion or linguistic group, (Interview, 04/05/2016).*

The most significant role of most organizations was centred on raising funds and providing personal donations to acquire fixed properties in the Grey Street Complex so that they could meet the demands of the growing population, especially for formal and vernacular education. (Interview with Mr. Ashwin Trikamjee, 04/05/2016)

One of the most important markers of cultural identity was the vernacular. Learning and speaking in the 'mother-tongue' was the closest link to their ancestral lineage, and therefore to their motherland, India. This integrated schooling not only gave a sense of identity to children but also inculcated a cultural grounding and traditional value system.



Mr. Ahmed Mahomed reminisces about the importance of education and religion:

*Our community progressed under very harsh conditions during the apartheid era. We had to build our institutions entirely on our own. In spite of this, we knew that we had to educate our children and preserve our traditions so that the legacy of our ancestors would live across generations. This was because our forefathers always taught us two things: that a place of worship was important to preserve our culture and that education was a very valuable component in our lives, (Interview, 19/05/2016).*

Many of the schools established by the community were state-aided Indian (SAI) schools – these were predominantly vernacular schools (Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969). It is important to be cognisant of the fact that in order to receive any financial aid from the government, the community had to adhere to certain criteria to qualify. More specifically, as pointed out by Govender and Naidoo (2010), the community had to provide the following:

- Schools site (fully purchased and developed)
- Classroom facilities and teacher
- Principal's accommodation
- Regular attendance with a viable student roll

Once the government determined that these requirements were met, only then was financial aid provided (Govender and Naidoo, 2010). It is worthy to record that all the SAI schools listed in Table 4.8 supplied all the educational facilities for the community that the apartheid government failed to provide because of the prejudice and discrimination (Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969). It must be noted that Table 4.8 displays those schools that were in existence in the Grey Street Complex during the apartheid era – more specifically, during the period when this precinct was declared a zone for Indian commercial usage (1973). Table 4.8 also indicates that the formal schools established were

state-owned, where administration was managed by provincial authorities (Residential Development Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1979).

**Table 4.8: Primary and Secondary Education Institutions (formal and vernacular)  
present in the Grey Street Complex during the apartheid era**

School Level	School Type	Name
Primary	Vernacular	Juma Masjid SAI for girls
		Anjuman Islam SAI
		Orient Islamic SAI
		Surat Hindu SAI
		Hindu Tamil SAI
		Manilal Valjee SAI
	Formal	Dartnell Crescent Girls' State-owned
		Saint Anthony's Catholic
		Durban Girl's State-owned
Secondary	Vernacular	Orient Islamic SAI
		Gandhi-Desai SAI
	Formal	Durban Girl's State-owned
		Sastri College State-owned for boys
		Saint Anthony's Catholic

(Adapted from Residential Development Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1979; Schedule of Community Facilities of the Central Durban Ratepayers Association, 1982)

The platoon schooling system was implemented to accommodate for the large number of students without which many generations of Indians would not have received an education (Interview with Mr. Karsandas Manjee, 05/03/2016).

There were not many tertiary education institutions in this precinct as exhibited in Table 4.9. The Saint Aidan's Provincial Training College, established by Saint Aidan's Mission in 1904, provided an opportunity for students to obtain a teaching qualification (St Aidan's Mission Centenary Brochure, 1983). Although the success of the college was short-lived with its closure in 1920, it did produce many qualified educators which alleviated the shortage of teachers in schools at the time, particularly for the descendants of indentured Indians (St Aidan's Mission Centenary Brochure, 1983).

No analysis of education in the Grey Street Complex will be complete without the mention of Hajee Malukmahomed Lappa Sultan. The M.L Sultan Charity Trust made its mark in educating the Indian community via schools in various districts and the establishment of the first Indian technical college that trained many and awarded certificates to successful graduates (Interview with Growfin Property Group, 22/04/2016). A singular note of distinction is that the M.L Sultan institutions were open to all regardless of creed, race and ethnicity.

**Table 4.9: Tertiary Educational Institutions**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Type</b>
M.L Sultan Technical College	Technical and commercial training
Saint Aidan's Provincial Training College	Teacher training

(Adapted from Residential Development Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1979; Schedule of Community Facilities of the Central Durban Ratepayers Association, 1982; St Aidan's Mission centenary brochure, 1983)

## ii) RECREATIONAL AND SPORTING FACILITIES

The recreational and sporting facilities were important to the community. These facilities were mainly situated at schools built by the community with the exception of Curries Fountain Sports Stadium which was provided by the Durban City Council. Mr. Buddy Govender recalled the shortage of sporting facilities and how improvisation was necessary:

*We had no grounds or facilities to play cricket or football openly. I remember playing sports behind Goodhope Centre (Queen Street) where I would kick the ball to the wall and wait for it to bounce back. Eventually a few of us got together and played with each other. Just playing behind Goodhope Centre produced sports figures that later went on to be recognized internationally. From this complex came many big sports players, (Interview, 30/11/2016)*

Rosenberg *et al.* (2013: 33) captures the captivating sporting experiences of Curries Fountain:

‘During the 1960s and 1970s, Curries Fountain, was the undoubted “MECCA” of nonracial sports and many athletic championships were hosted at the ground by the Amateur Athletics Association of Natal, the Natal High Schools Athletics Association and Natal Primary Schools Board...Old timers recall that the signature tune from ‘The Bridge on the River Kwai’ was heard regularly during athletics competitions, and made for exciting athletics as it sent shivers down athletes’ spines’

The sporting and recreational facilities available to the community are presented in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10: Sporting and Recreational Facilities in the Grey Street Complex**

<b>Sport</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number of Facilities</b>
Tennis	Sastri SAI High School	2
	Orient Islamic SAI High School	1
	Durban Girls SAI High School	2
	M.L Sultan Technical College	3
Badminton	M.L Sultan Technical College Hall	2
Squash	Rennies Squash Centre in Queen Street	14
Soccer and Athletics	Curries Fountain Sports Stadium	1 (field)

(Source: Schedule of Community Facilities of the Central Durban Ratepayers Association, 1982: 2)

### **iii) COMMUNITY WELFARE**

The community of this precinct always ensured that there were structures in place to attend to those who were either underprivileged or with disabilities. The symbiotic relationship between those who were fortunate and those who were less fortunate was always evident. The community established welfare organizations and facilities for the respective groups in need providing both social workers and clerical staff (Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969). Further organizations, such as the Natal Indian Blind Society, also provided workshops to give blind adults various vocational opportunities in society. Table 4.11 presents the welfare organizations in this precinct.

**Table 4.11: Welfare Organizations in the Grey Street Complex**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Group in Need</b>	<b>Location</b>
Arthur Blaxall School for the Blind	Blind children (primary and high school)	29 Lorne Street
Natal Indian Blind Society	Blind adults	23 Lorne Street
Durban Indian Child and Family Welfare Society	Abused families and children and orphaned children	Corner of Albert and Beatrice Street (Natal Indian Teacher's Society Building)

(Adapted from Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969; Schedule of Community Facilities of the Central Durban Ratepayers Association, 1982)

#### **iv) COMMUNITY HALLS AND PLACES OF WORSHIP**

Table 4.12 demonstrates that there were a significant number of places of worship for all religious sects inside and outside of this precinct. All places of worship were established and developed by the community and each one of them was sacred to the entire precinct regardless of religious differences (Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969). Each place of worship also conducted social and welfare programmes to cater for any of the basic needs of those who resided in the precinct, as well as those who were not from the city (Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969).

Churches had large congregations, mosques attracted thousands of worshippers for the Muslim Sabbath and Hindu temples were always crowded with many Hindu worshippers as

religion was a fundamental component to life in this precinct (Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969). In particular, mosques and temples had both historic and spiritual links with India, and were therefore seen as sacred parts of the heritage of Indians (Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969). All religious groups had respect for each other – it was common to find followers of one religion visiting a place of worship of another faith.

The role of worship sites and halls were intertwined – both accommodated significant cultural events such as weddings or religious festivals, and also served as centres for community service (Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969). Places of worship were also the meeting place of political organizations, such as the African National Congress (ANC), as explained by Mr. Ahmed Mahomed:

*The Juma Masjid was convenient for the ANC and Muslim stalwarts. This was because it had eight exit points which was valuable because these political figures could exit quickly if the police came, (Interview, 19/05/2016)*

However, religious sites were not adequate in size to cater for large-scale events and the number of attendees for such occasions. Thus community halls, as with schools and places of worship, were also established by the cultural organizations. The name of the hall usually represented either the organization or individual involved in its development. In addition to matrimonial ceremonies and prayer, halls were also utilized for school and socio-cultural events, grand receptions, seminars, lectures and meetings by various bodies as well as political organizations like the Natal Indian Congress (NIC). The halls in this precinct are presented in Table 4.13.

**Table 4.12: Places of Worship in the Grey Street Complex**

<b>Places of Worship</b>	<b>Name</b>
Mosques	Juma Masjid
	West Street Masjid
Churches	Wesleyan
	Saint Anthony's
	Saint Aidans
	Bethesda
	Emmanuel Cathedral
Temples	Saptah Mandir
	Vedic Temple
	Saiva Sithantha Sungum

(Adapted from Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969; Schedule of Community Facilities of the Central Durban Ratepayers Association, 1982; Commemorative Brochure of the Shree Gujarati Hindu Sanskruti Kendra, 2001; Brochure of the 50<sup>th</sup> Maha Samadhi of Saiva Sithantha Sungum, 2003; Rosenberg, 2012; Vahed and Waetjen, 2015)



**Table 4.13: Halls established by the community**

<b>Name of Community Halls established</b>
Orient Hall
Parsee Hall
Vedic Hall
Aryan Hall
Gandhi Hall
Kajee Hall
Bharat Hall
Anjuman Hall
Andhra Hall

(Source: Schedule of Community Facilities of the Central Durban Ratepayers Association, 1982: 1)

Mr. Buddy Govender remembers how such halls served the community:

*We had very grand and large community halls which were provided by the community themselves. I remember seeing beautiful Tamil weddings taking place with elaborate decorations and how people would dress up to attend such events. These halls facilitated conferences, seminars and were even used as places of study. Although during apartheid there were many things that we couldn't do, there was a very significant amount that we managed to achieve, (Interview, 30/11/2016)*

This was attributed to community self-help strategies, where those who were wealthy shared facilities and opportunities, with those who were less fortunate, and leaders served selflessly, without expectation of reward. However, it was not all work and no play – different forms of entertainment featured prominently in the precinct.

#### **v) CULTURAL ENTERTAINMENT**

The main form of entertainment in the Grey Street Complex was cinema, while a minority of the community enjoyed live theatre at the Little Abbey (Table 4.14). Cinemas, established and owned by Indian businessmen, provided a variety of both western and Indian films. In particular, films from north and south India revived ephemeral connections with the motherland, for the majority for whom a trip there was unaffordable. The combination of cultural apparel, song and dance all gave cinemagoers a momentary connection with their motherland which left a lasting impression in the minds of those who watched it. It also provided momentary escapism from the harsh realities apartheid.

Cinemas and Little Abbey acquired great popularity in a very short period of time, with people coming in droves to book their shows of interest. Visiting either the cinema or theatre was not just a casual event, it was an occasion for families to wear their Sunday best as Mr. Buddy Govender reflects:

*This precinct was comparable to a first-world city during apartheid. I believe the Grey Street Complex was equivalent to Poland in 1939, it was really smart. Men attended in full formal attire with collared shirts and a blazer while women wore smart dresses or sarees to the cinemas and theatre. Going to watch any entertainment was definitely no ordinary occasion.*

*I think something important to know about cultural entertainment was that it was a form of escapism.*

*In those days, we didn't have psychologists or specialists available for us to talk to, you went to the movies or the theatre to forget about your problems. Cultural entertainment was our psychological therapy, (Interview, 30/11/2016)*

**Table 4.14: Entertainment facilities for Indians in the Grey Street Complex**

Entertainment Facilities	Name
Cinema	Topaz
	Sabena
	Avalon
	Raj
	Dreamland
	Liberty
	Shah Jehan
	Shiraaz
	Isfahan
	Naaz
Theatre	Little Abbey

(Source: Residential Development Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1979: 2)

#### **4.2.6 SUMMARY**

The role and influence of culture in this precinct was evident in various forms for the community formal organisations, education institutions, community halls and sites of worship, as well as entertainment. Evidently, the community bears a mnemonic attachment to the Grey Street Complex through the role of culture in its various forms. In particular, religion and education were fundamental components to community life in this precinct, and great sacrifices were made to establish such institutions as this was an essential part of the value system for these residents. It is also evident that there was cultural connectivity in the community and harmony among all religious groups.

Each of these organizations and institutions independently reinforced cultural identity and contributed to the personal and cultural profile of former and current residents. Thus the memory and nostalgia of culture has played a significant role in historically connecting both former and current residents to this precinct.

## **4.2.7 MEMORY AND NOSTALGIA OF BUSINESS HOUSES**

### **4.2.7.1 ‘THE GOOD OLD DAYS’**

The Grey Street Complex was the ‘mini-India’ of Durban and offered any of its passersby a sense of the eastern world. The late 1950s to early 1960s (approximately a century after the arrival of Indians) saw the Grey Street Complex bloom into a very beautiful and vibrant trading centre. Visiting this precinct was one of the most exciting and invigorating experiences for all. Hindu women adorned beautiful sarees whilst Muslim women displayed exquisite punjabis and graced this eastern shopping precinct, with a higher concentration being in the west end of Prince Edward Street.

At about this time, mass production of suits, trousers and coats was still in its infancy. However, tailoring for a fairly large Indian community had boomed and some tailors have continued to remain this precinct. To this day, Daya and Sons is still situated at 52B Lorne Street. The Victoria Heights, a 10-storey building situated in 106 Victoria Street was almost entirely occupied by tailors offering different styles to meet the great demand. Victoria Street was also the entertainment hub of the Grey Street Complex.

It must be noted that at this early stage, bottle stores, bars and night clubs were few and far between, and it was almost sinful to be found entering these abodes (Interview with Growfin Property Group, 22/04/2016). Over the years, Himalaya Hotel in Beatrice Street, Club Lotus in Prince Edward Street, Goodwill Lounge in Victoria Street and Delhi Restaurant in Queen Street catered for those customers who required their services. These outlets introduced western and jazz music and local bands which flourished.

There was a ‘fun-fair’ atmosphere with street photographers capturing a picture of passersby, whilst melodious Indian tunes from the house of Roopanands filled the air. It was therefore so unusual to find the Victoria Street Municipal Library situated in the centre of the cacophony of noises created by shop staff, pamphlet distributors and loud hailers trying to lure customers to purchase. Many retailers such as Bangalore Saree House, S.K Naidoo and Shreemati’s were located on Prince Edward Street, offering clothing apparel and haberdashery with a

focus on female wear (Interview with Mr. Manecklal Gordhan, 02/12/2016). Popatlal Kara, located in Grey Street, amazed customers with their very large variety of eastern wear situated on two floors. The stock of all these retailers were entirely imported from India and offered a large and attractive variety with all such shops being very well stocked. Interspersed in this section were street traders offering all types of fruit and vegetables in small quantities. Two stores adjacent to each other namely Bargain centre and Manilal Ratanjee offered prayer goods and all types of lentils (Interview with Mr. Mahesh Ratanjee, 26/11/2016).

The other streets had a variety of traders, specialising in men's and ladies shoes, men's clothing, hardware stores, jewellers and stationery. Victoria Cycle Works, a shop in Victoria Street was unique in that it stocked all parts of bicycles an important mode of transport for many men. There was an assortment of eating houses offering tasty dishes appealing to the Indian taste – Victory Lounge, Kapitan's Vegetarian Restaurant and Patel's Take-away were the most popular ones. These business houses not only offered Indian cuisine but also a wide variety of sweet meats which were bought mainly to celebrate religious festivals (Interview with Mr Manilal Patel, 21/05/2016).

#### **4.2.7.2 THE BUSINESSMEN OF GREY STREET**

The community members had a family-like relationship with businessmen. Moreover, most businesses were operated by members of the extended family. Mr. Ahmed Mahomed nostalgically recalls his relationship with the businessmen as he walked down Grey Street:

*I miss, very greatly, the brotherhood we had in the Grey Street Complex. I remember walking down the streets of this precinct and I knew the name and face of every shopkeeper there, I really miss that whole atmosphere. Indian businessmen had integrity and respect for each other. Today when I walk in the streets I don't even know anyone there. I really miss what we had before, (Interview, 19/05/2016).*

Former residents of the Grey Street Complex still recall how they would receive further discounts from low-priced goods and how they would purchase items on credit. Mr. Buddy Govender remembers how he would purchase clothing on credit from Ginger Bhagwandas:

*I would walk into the Ginger Bhagwandas store and pick out all the clothes that I wanted. When I was at the till, Mr. Bhagwandas would cross off the price on every item and give it to me for a lower price. Even after doing that, I would still take it on credit. He didn't even keep any records of my account or bother to check whether or not I was paying accordingly, we had such great trust.*

*When I saw him later in my life, I apologized to Mr. Bhagwandas for purchasing so many items on credit and taking such a long time to pay. He then looked at me and said 'You don't have to be sorry at all Buddy, we're family' and that trust and bond is something that doesn't exist between businessmen and their customers today. That is what I truly miss about business in Grey Street, (Interview, 30/11/2016)*

Indian businessmen were very understanding with their customers and developed a personal relationship with them. Business became a pleasurable activity rather than a stressful one. A large number of traders were predominantly Muslim or Gujarati Hindus, whilst a few originated from other northern and southern regions of India (Vahed, 2013). It must be mentioned that Muslim and Gujarati traders worked in absolute harmony and understanding whilst competing for consumers. This was partly linked to the challenge of dealing with a common enemy – apartheid. However, politically, this business group was conservative and prepared to negotiate and engage in dialogue with the apartheid state for concessions (Maharaj, 2003). The profiles of business activities in this precinct were quite diverse – ranging from retail and restaurants to cinemas and service stations. The bulk of business houses were owned by Indians with a few under white ownership as presented in Table 4.15.

**Table 4.15: Profile of businessmen in Grey Street Complex in 1960**

Commercial Profile	Race Group of Ownership	
	Indian	White
Retailers	567	7
Wholesalers	82	2
Light Industry	119	3
Professionals	125	2
Scrap Dealer	2	0
Butcheries	10	0
Restaurants (Tea rooms)	43	1
Offices	28	0
Cinemas	6	0
Building Society Offices	1	1
Timber Yards	1	0
Clinics	0	2
Undertakers	2	0
Lodging Houses	1	0
Service Station and Motor Spares	4	0
Ship Chandlers	0	1
Service Station and Garages	7	1
Warehouses	4	1
Hotel – Bar	0	1

(Adapted from Memorandum of the Central Durban Property Protection Committee, 1961)



The markets in this precinct, a significant feature of the urban economy, played an essential role in the livelihoods of many Indian fresh produce growers and entrepreneurs, as well as in serving the community with fresh produce. This was particularly important for the lower-income classes of all races as the Indian and Squatter Markets provided various goods at affordable prices. There was also the Municipal Auction Market which provided a space where bulk sellers could sell to wholesalers, who would then sell to the retailers of the Indian Market (in an auction format). Table 4.16 presents the markets that were present in the Grey Street Complex.

**Table 4.16: Markets present in the Grey Street Complex**

<b>Markets</b>	<b>Goods/ Services</b>
Municipal-owned Indian Market	Various food items, apparel, prayer and household items
Municipal Bulk Market	To conduct auctions
Squatters Market	Food items, mainly fresh produce

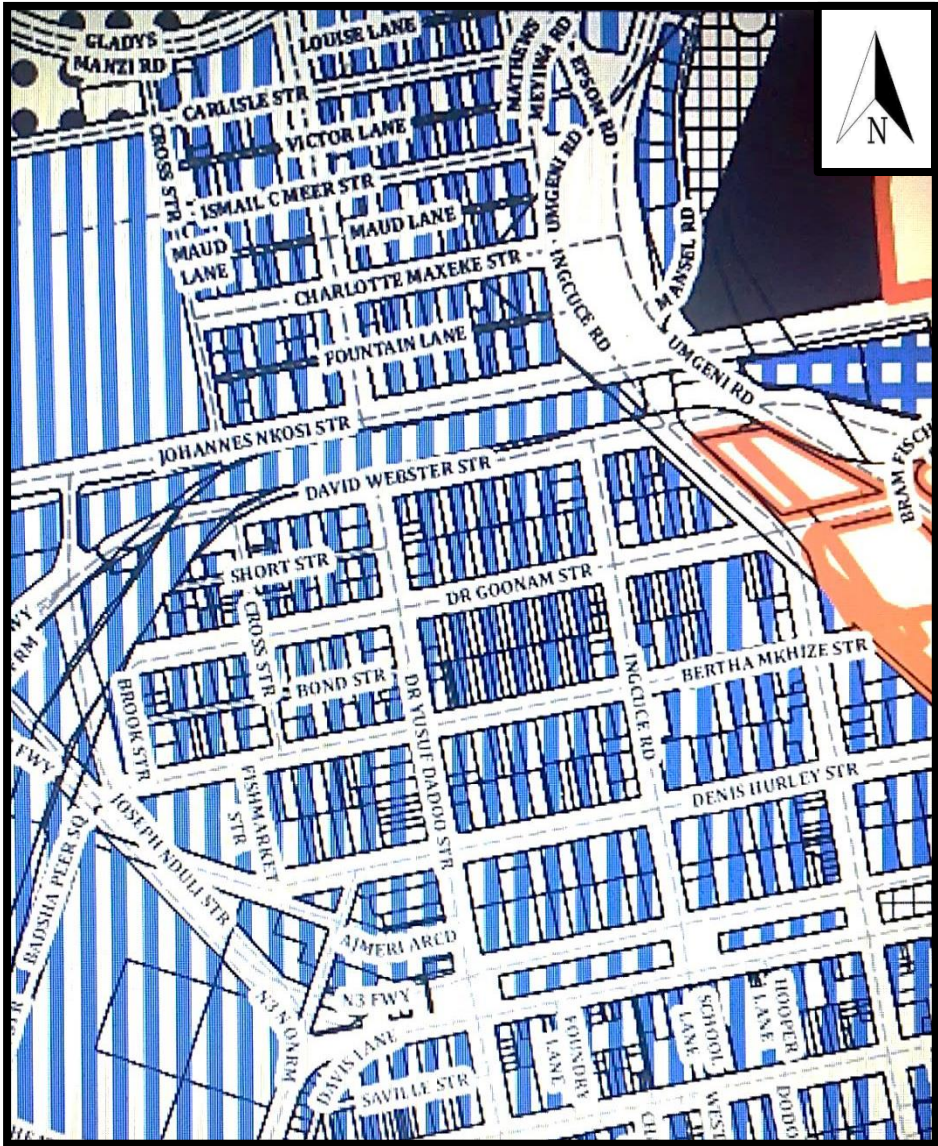
(Adapted from Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee)

Mr. Buddy Govender reminisces about his visits to the Indian Market at a child:

*You can't ever forget the markets in this precinct, I would go so often when I was a child and we would buy goods for ridiculously low prices. These markets served the economic needs of so many who would do almost all their shopping there. I remember seeing sugar, spices, sarees, sweetmeats, hearing songs and so much more. It was a wonderful experience and something I always looked forward to, (Interview, 30/11/2016).*

Restrictive legislation such as the Dealers Licences Act of 1897 and the 1973 Group Areas proclamation did present challenges. However, such laws did not prevent the businessmen from using their unique talents, entrepreneurial skills and ingenuity to succeed against all odds.

**Figure 4.3: Land Zoning Map of the Grey Street Complex<sup>1</sup>**



**Legend:**



## General Business



## General Business 3



## Special Zone



Indeterminate



## Government and Municipal



## Transport Zone

(Source: City Engineers, eThekweni Municipality)

<sup>1</sup>The new street names have been utilized in this map as the eThekweni Municipality do not have Geographical Information System shapefiles with old street names.

The Grey Street Complex was zoned for General Business as demonstrated in Figure 4.3. Thus any activity that was commercial in nature was permitted – the 1973 Group Areas proclamation made this the ultimate purpose of this precinct in the 1970s, hence the presence of a variety of business houses.

#### **4.2.7.3 PROMINENT BUSINESSES IN THE GREY STREET COMPLEX**

This entire precinct gave birth to businessmen, institutions, and societies that went on to make their mark not only in South Africa, but also globally.

The following case studies are on businesses, where the owners had begun their companies in the Grey Street Complex during the apartheid era, and still remain in this precinct presently:

- Case Study 1:           Rajab Group (Entertainment)
- 
- Case Study 2:           City Hospital Medical Group (Medical)
- 
- Case Study 3:           Patel’s Take-away (Retail)

Many of the prominent businesses have decentralized from this declining precinct. Thus there were only a few large-scale businesses available for analysis. The selection of the above businesses was based on the availability of the businesspersons, the contributions made by the business to the community, and the profile of the businesspeople involved. Further, these case studies illustrate the diversification of commercial groups, and entrepreneurial skills of the business owners in this precinct.

#### **4.2.7.3.1 CASE STUDY 1: THE RAJAB GROUP**

The history of commerce for the Rajab family in the Durban CBD dates back to 1935 when the Group began Century Upholstery Works. This was the largest upholstery business in the province which supplied almost 80% of industry requirements (Celebrating 150 Years of Durban Brochure, 1974). Diversification of their business took place in 1955 with the construction of Shah Jehan which was the largest cinema entertainment facility in South Africa, with the brand slogan, “Showplace of the Nation”. This cinema opened in 1956 with a seating capacity of approximately 2100.

All seven Rajab brothers stood at the entrance of the cinema to greet every cinemagoer and welcome them with a handshake. A brief description in the Brochure for the opening of Shah Jehan Cinema (1956: 18-21) below provides detail on its magnificence:

“The skilful blending of the old and new finds expression in the rich and multi-coloured mosaics covering circular columns and curved walls leading to the main entrance doors of sheer armourplate glass framed in gleaming chrome. The scimitar-shaped door pulls, embellished with embossed crowns, add further to the masterly blending of the old and new... The golden floral sprays on the soft panels surmounting the louvred windows are reminiscent of the chaste period decorations of the Taj... The Circle seats over 800 people... Private Boxes, three on either side – red, silver, blue, gold, pink and green – tastefully finished both inside and out.”

The Rajab Group went on to establish the Shiraaz in 1968. The development of this cinema resulted from the earlier acquisition of a cinema in 1960 called the Sherazade. This cinema had operated for a period 6 years until the area was proclaimed for white occupation. Subsequently, the Sherazade cinema was closed, however the license was later transferred to establish the Shiraaz in 1968. As with Shah Jehan, the 700-seater Shiraaz was also strikingly impressive in its Persian architectural style and appeal, with world-class features. ‘Bioscope’ goers would come just to watch the curtains open before the movie began.

In addition to Shah Jehan and Shiraaz, the Rajab Group opened the doors of their third cinematic establishment, Isfahan, in 1976. Isfahan had a seating capacity of approximately 750 and, like the first 2 cinemas, was designed decoratively to give audiences an eastern atmosphere (Brochure for the opening of Isfahan, 1976).

Although all cinemas owned and managed by the Rajab Group were of an international standard, the price of a ticket was very affordable for the Indian community. Mr. Mamoo Rajab, owner of cinemas in the Grey Street Complex, recalls how the crowds at the cinema would exceed its capacity:

*The number of people in the queues was always more than the number of available seats in the cinema auditoriums. We made the price of tickets affordable for the community because at that time, the cinemas were the only sources of entertainment for them. It was a very large attraction during apartheid, (Interview, 19/05/2016)*

This large attraction was due to the variety of international movies endorsed by the franchise rights to the major English, American and Indian films held by the Rajab Group during this period. Moreover, these cinema auditoriums were also used for hosting shows by international artists brought to South Africa by the Rajab family. Major Indian artists such as Mohammed Rafi, Jani Babhu, Manna Dey, Sabri Brothers, Mahendra Kapoor, various Quawali singers and many more enticed the audience with the cultural tunes of their Indian motherland<sup>2</sup>. There were concerts by Percy Sledge and African artist, Mariam Makeba who also captivated audiences with their solo performances (Interview with Mr. Mamoo Rajab, 19/05/2016). The Rajab Group thereafter purchased the Naaz cinema – they owned 4 cinematic establishments during the apartheid era. The rise of television and videos led to the closure of these cinemas. However, the Rajab Group further diversified their business and began New National Assurance in Field Street in the 1970s. This company still remains there today.

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<sup>2</sup> This cultural embargo resulted in boycotts and should be subjected to further research.



**Figure 4.4: Shiraaz Cinema**



(Source: Celebrating 150 years of Durban Brochure, 1974: 749)

**Figure 4.5: Auditorium of Isfahan Cinema**



(Source: Brochure for the opening of Shiraaz Cinema, 1976: 25)

**Figure 4.6: Shah Jehan Cinema**



(Source Brochure for the opening of Shah Jehan Cinema, 1956: 16)

#### 4.2.7.3.2 CASE STUDY 2: JOINT MEDICAL HOLDINGS

Joint Medical Holdings (JMH) consists of two hospitals which are still present in the CBD – namely City and Ascot Park Hospitals. During the apartheid era, St Aidans Mission Hospital was the only provincial hospital available for citizens in KwaZulu-Natal. With the increasing population growth across the province (and in the Durban city centre), the medical facilities at St Aidan’s Mission Hospital were becoming severely overcrowded, and critical patients were not guaranteed medical treatment immediately. Dr. Ramesh Bhoola, founder and chairperson of JMH Company, provides his recollection of the difficulties experienced during the late 1960s:

*During apartheid, Indian doctors were prohibited from admitting patients to private hospitals. These difficulties became life-threatening for some patients who were in dire need of medical treatment so a group of Indian medical doctors came together to address this need. We started off on the third floor of the Durban Nedbank Centre in Queen Street and converted the office space into a medical centre.*

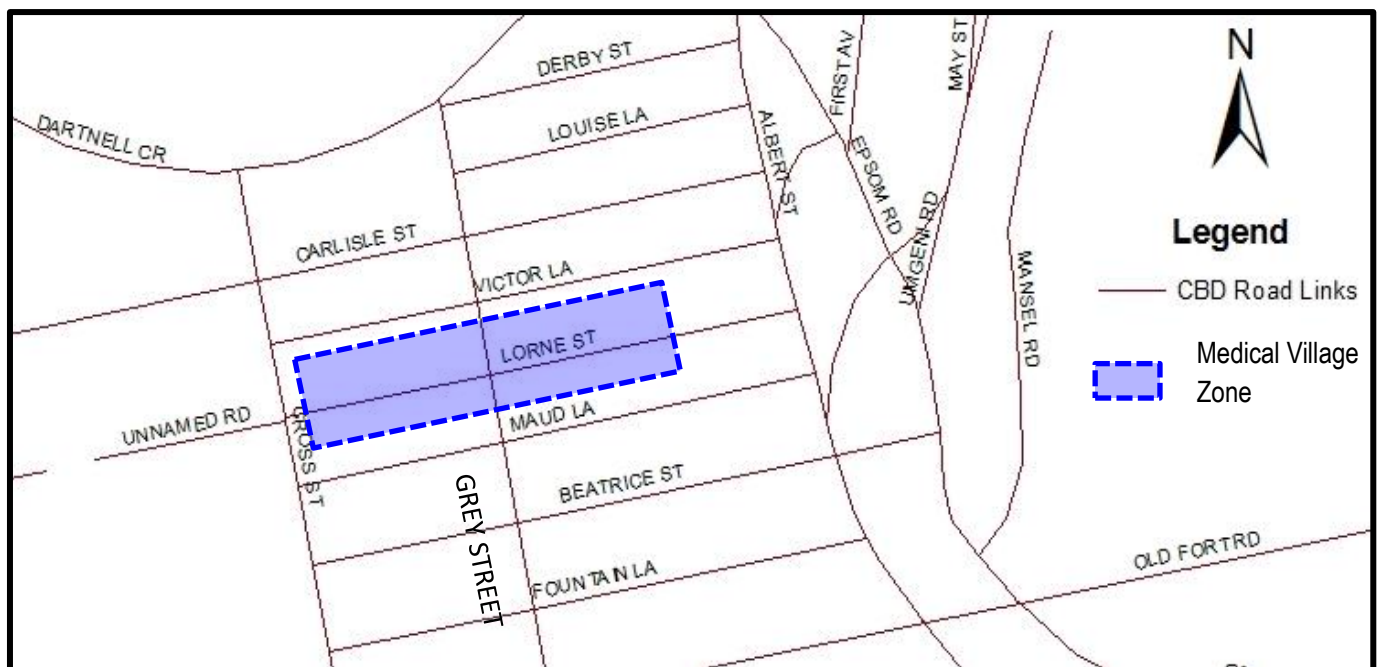
*At that time, in the same building, Doctor Meer and Doctor Hansen also started a day clinic, and Doctor Rawat established Maxwell Clinic which later became a surgery in the Grey Street Complex. Every stage of establishing these medical facilities presented many challenges for all of us.*

These difficulties were mainly attributed to the inflation of rates for fixed properties. Further, the government of that time was not prepared to subsidise any of the large-scale efforts made by those doctors to open clinics and surgeries. Nevertheless, this did not suppress the determination of the aforementioned doctors. Dr. Ramesh Bhoola went on to develop Medical Towers at 83 Lorne Street during the late 1970s. This became a lucrative opportunity to treat the communities who either visited or resided in the city, while also becoming a profitable business as this precinct lacked the presence of many medical services.

Dr. Ramesh Bhoola and partners then decided to start the Joint Medical Holdings Company in the 1970s after purchasing three properties in Lorne Street. These fixed properties were consolidated to establish City Hospital. After full expansion capacity, City Hospital contained 600 beds. At a later stage, this group purchased 3 fixed properties adjacent to each other in Carlisle Street from the Arya Prathinidhi Sabha as well as Gandhi Hall to establish a nursing college (Interview with Dr. Ramesh Bhoola, 27/08/2016).

This company enjoyed the advantages of its spatial position to the Beatrice Street clinic; Medi Centre; Maxell Centre; Durban Medical Centre and Lorne-Grey Medical Centre all of which housed medical practioners, specialists, pathology laboratories and radiologists – all of who found it convenient to partner with the City Hospital. The JMH changed that entire area to become one of a health zone with medical practioners and medical service suppliers setting up all around it. These spatial changes of JMH Company prevented this end of the Grey Street Complex from falling into decay, whilst being able to provide health facilities. This part of the precinct is referred to as the ‘medical village’ which is presented in Figure 4.7.

**Figure 4.7: Medical Village in the Grey Street Complex**



(Adapted from <http://www.jmh.co.za/cityhospital/> [accessed 14 September 2016])



#### 4.2.7.3.3 CASE STUDY 3: PATEL'S VEGETARIAN REFRESHMENT ROOM

The Patel's Vegetarian Refreshment Room shown in Figure 4.8, is still present in 202 Grey Street (now Dr. Yusuf Dadoo Street), and is more than 100 years old. This business was first established in 1911 by a group of passenger Indians with the surname 'Patel'. More than two decades later, in 1932, another passenger Indian arrived with the same surname (the father of Mr. Manilal Patel) and was employed by the owners of the store. The original owner handed the ownership to the employee who by then knew how to prepare all the products offered by the refreshment room – without having to change the name (Interview with Mr. Manilal Patel, 21/05/2016).

The Patel's Vegetarian Refreshment Room was an attraction to the entire community, and today, it is even recognized internationally. This restaurant offered a variety of Indian vegetarian food items, ranging from savouries and curries all the way to sweetmeats which were and still are very affordable to all who were working and living in the Durban CBD. Sweetmeats were always in high demand among members of the Indian community for various prayers, events and especially for festivals such as Diwali. It was in this refreshment room that the infamous 'bunny chow' first emerged in South Africa. Mr. Manilal Patel, owner of Patel's Vegetarian Refreshment Room, remembers how the name 'bunny chow' emerged:

*It was initially named the 'Bhanya chow' which referred to a cuisine of a particular group of north Indians with a vernacularized name. The mispronunciation of this name resulted in this popular meal being called the 'bunny chow'. Although incorrect, it was catchy and the locals came to know about it very quickly. Around 12pm of every weekday, approximately 600 – 700 bunny chows were already sold for lunch to commuted workers as well as to those who resided in the city, (Interview, 21/05/2016).*

Mr. Manilal Patel reminisces about his experiences of cooking at the refreshment room:

*I always began braising all meals at 2am every weekday and opened at 5am with all prepared meals ready to be sold. The store always opened at this early hour as commuters who were completing their nightshift would stop by for a meal and many of the commuters beginning work would come in to have their breakfast at this time of morning, (Interview, 21/05/2016).*

Generally, at this particular refreshment room, all food items were almost sold out just after midday – which allowed for closure of the store at 3pm. Thus the chefs only cooked meals once in the morning. This was one of the only refreshment rooms that closed for an entire month (in May) and currently still does so in November as their generated profits permitted such closure even in the high season (Interview with Mr. Manilal Patel, 21/05/2016). Affordability was not the only factor that played a role in attracting a large customer base, the food itself was palatable to anyone who tried it regardless of those who were not accustomed to Indian cuisine.

The protein samples and fusion of various flavours was the most significant components to the marketing of food items, because satisfied customers would attract more patrons to this store. This was attributed to the fact that all spices and lentils were brought in from specific regions of India, Thailand, Australia and Malawi, where roots are specially grown under certain conditions and harvested at specific times (Interview with Mr. Manilal Patel, 21/05/2016). This gave all food items a unique and appetizing taste. The Patel's Vegetarian Refreshment Room currently sustains its original business model and still remains as a historic business of success in contemporary Durban.

**Figure 4.8: Patel's Vegetarian Refreshment Room with owner, Mr. Manilal Patel**



(Source: <http://scroll.in/article/812093/this-indian-restaurant-in-durban-may-have-invented-the-citys-street-food-delicacy-bunny-chow> [accessed 11 October 2016])

#### **4.2.8 SUMMARY**

The commercial potential of business houses in the Grey Street Complex became an economic catalyst for businessmen. Further, most of the Indian businesses were categorized under retail (with the exception of the markets). However, there was great diversification of economic activities particularly for a community who were subjected to restrictive legislation during apartheid. This is evident in the various case studies of this section. The diversification together with intensification of economic activities concentrated in this area, made this precinct a significant contributor to the urban economy of Durban. Additionally, the community benefitted from the various business houses for household and cultural items – those shops which sold cultural items or food items of Indian cuisine also gave the community a sense of their cultural identity. Thus business played a significant role both commercially and socio-culturally.

#### **4.2.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has analyzed the factors that have led to the rise of the Grey Street Complex, which established this precinct as the largest Indian tertiary centre in South Africa. The commercial activities of ex-indentured Indians and more especially passenger Indians, led to the development of this precinct as a major Indian trading hub in Durban. The businesses established in the Grey Street Complex provided both goods and services to the Indian, coloured, black and white communities. The Grey Street businessmen also had a relationship of trust and integrity with their customers as well as with their fellow traders.

Further, the role of culture was very significant to the Grey Street residents. Religion, cultural customs and education were pivotal cultural components to the Indian community of this precinct, and led them to establish various cultural bodies, educational institutions as well as places of worship. This chapter has illustrated that former residents still have a mnemonic connection with the Grey Street Complex, particularly in terms of its cultural symbolism and historical significance.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DECLINE OF THE GREY STREET COMPLEX

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will assess the decline of the Grey Street Complex. It is important to emphasize that the decay of this precinct began well before the demise of apartheid and, in particular, the inception of decline was attributed to the delay and uncertainty related to Group Areas zoning. The impact of the delayed proclamation of the Grey Street Complex led to a decline in culture and business, and subsequently to the flight of capital from this precinct.

### 5.2 HAUNTED MEMORIES: THE IMPACT OF GROUP AREAS ZONING

**Table 5.1: Group Areas Legislation implemented for zoning**

<b>Group Areas Zoning Legislation</b>	<b>Status of the Grey Street Complex Zoning</b>	<b>Legal Restrictions</b>
Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950	Open trading area	Development not permitted
Group Areas Act No. 36 of 1966	Indian ownership and occupation	
Group Areas Proclamation No. 106 of 1973	Indian commercial ownership and occupation	Commercial development permitted with restrictions on residential development
Group Areas Proclamation No. 115 of 1983	Indian Group Area	Residential development permitted

(Adapted from the Tees Committee of Enquiry Report, 1994)

The Grey Street Complex was zoned an Indian Group Area incrementally (Table 5.1). Between the implementation of the act in 1950 until proclamation of the precinct for Indian residency in 1983, development in this complex was stagnant for more than three decades. The impact of the Group Areas zoning did not only hinder the development of the built environment, it also instilled anxiety and insecurity in the entire community – these haunted memories are still hidden in the Grey Street Complex even today.

The Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950 was effected in the Natal province on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March in 1951 (Tees Committee of Enquiry Report, 1994). At this point, the Grey Street Complex was not allocated for a specific race group and remained an open trading area under this legislation. More than a decade later, every fixed property under ownership or occupation of Indians was then controlled in terms of the act in 1966, with legal restrictions prohibiting expansion or construction of fixed properties in this precinct, unless applications were made to obtain a permit (Tees Committee of Enquiry Report, 1994).

This restriction on development continued until 1973 when this precinct was zoned for Indian commercial development, with legal restrictions imposed to prohibit residential development. During the period 1951 – 1973, very little development occurred and a large number of the applications made to obtain permits were not successful (Tees Committee of Enquiry Report, 1994). The restriction on residential development was only lifted on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August 1983 under proclamation No. 115 of the Group Areas Act (Tees Committee of Enquiry Report, 1994). This concession was a sop to gain support from the Indian community for the largely discredited Tricameral Parliament which was introduced in 1984. The South African Indian Council (SAIC) was the precursor to the Tricameral Parliament.

Local Affairs Committees (LACs) “were created by the apartheid state in 1963 to make Africans, Indians and Coloureds responsible for advising local government on matters pertaining to their ‘own affairs’” (Gopalan, 2013:142). One such LAC was established in the Grey Street Complex – the Grey Street Indian LAC, which protected the capitalistic intentions of Indians in this precinct.

When the possibility of the proclamation of this precinct as White Group Area became evident, a group of Indian businessmen formed several civil society organizations, in the early 1960s, which aimed to protect the commercial and socio-cultural interests of the Indian community (Interview with Growfin Property Group, 22/04/2016). They established the following organizations in the Grey Street Complex:

- Central Durban Indian Ratepayers Association
- Central Durban Property Protection Committee
- Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee

Further, the Durban City Council also appointed a committee, in Pietermaritzburg on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November in 1983, as an external body to assess the level payable rates for property owners in the Grey Street Complex and to determine if rates rebates were to be granted (Tees Committee of Enquiry Report, 1994). The Tees Committee of Enquiry was chaired by the former Town Clerk of Pinetown and City Treasurer of Bloemfontein, Mr. D.G. Tees. All members of this committee were residents of Pietermaritzburg and were all independent of the Durban City Council (Tees Committee of Enquiry Report, 1994). This committee acted as an intermediary body between the Durban City Council and the Central Durban Property Protection Committee (Tees Committee of Enquiry Report, 1994).

## 5.2.1 'THE UGLY TRUTH'

### 5.2.1.1 FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY

The uncertainty between 1950 – 1965, still remains in the minds of land and property owners as haunted memories even today. For many businessmen in particular, this experience was regarded as a traumatic one. The impact of the prolonged delay related to zoning caused both psychological fear, uncertainty and financial uncertainty in this precinct. Such fear emanated from the apartheid government's proclivity to zone the Grey Street Complex as a white Group. Every day that passed without the proclamation of the precinct as a white Group Area was a relief to this community. Mr. Karsandas Manjee, former committee member of the Grey Street Indian LAC and a property developer, still recalls waking up every morning bearing in mind that the possibility of losing his business could become a reality:

*We lived in constant fear because of an unknown future. The uncertainty scared everyone because if the government declared the Grey Street Complex a white Group Area, we knew that we would lose everything in this precinct. We stood to lose our fixed properties, our businesses and our homes. It was a very difficult period for our entire community*  
(Interview, 05/03/2016).

Even when this precinct was zoned for Indian occupation and ownership in 1966, the relief was short term. The apartheid government aimed to spatially contain Indian economic development during this period and therefore legally restricted any development under the Group Areas Act No. 36 of 1966. Although this complex was declared for Indian ownership and occupation in 1966, shortly after, the Group Areas Board had other plans in mind.



### **5.2.1.2 A DIVIDED PRECINCT: GREY STREET NORTH AND SOUTH**

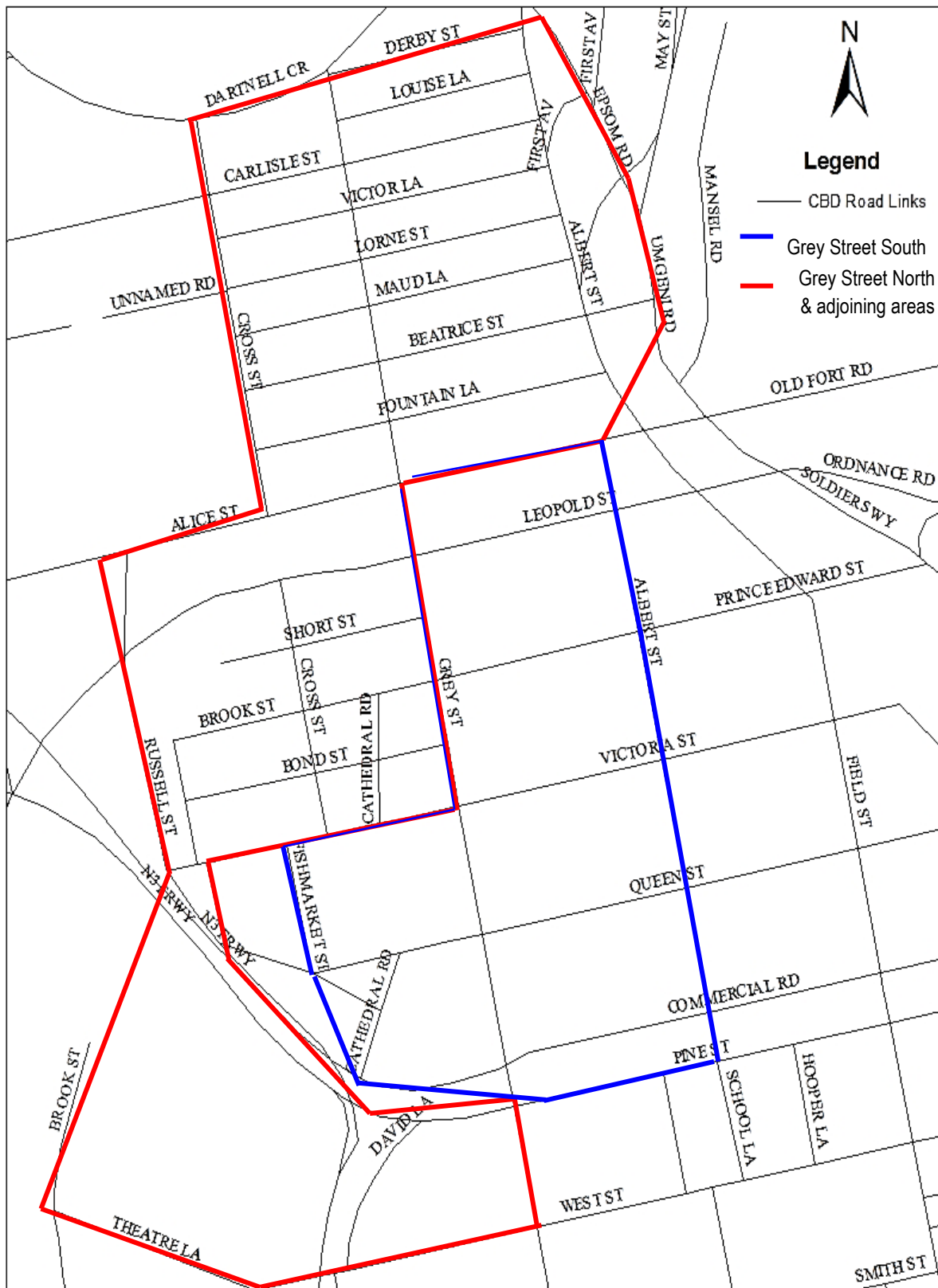
In spite of the Group Areas Act proclamation of 1966, the Group Areas Board published a notice the *Natal Mercury* on 21<sup>st</sup> February in 1969 indicating plans to divide this precinct into two separate subdivisions – Grey Street North and Grey Street South as illustrated in Figure 5.1. This meant that the homes, businesses and other financial assets of the Grey Street community were still at risk as this precinct, after being declared for Indian occupation and ownership in 1966, could still be proclaimed a white Group Area. The future of each subdivision was not legally determined by this stage – but the community’s outrage, trauma and untold angst was documented in the Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee (1969: 3):

“Our alarm at the implications in the Notice fastens first upon the description of the Grey Street Complex, and, what has never been indicated before, its division for the purposes of the proposed enquiry, into two parts, Grey Street North and Grey Street South; and the intention inferred by the notice that these two areas are now to be treated as two distinct units, apparently for separate treatment, almost as if they were separated at a distance from each other.

At no stage in the past, has the Grey Street Complex been so described, and indeed this separation of the Grey Street Complex is in itself a contradiction of what in the past has been defined as the Grey Street Complex by Ministers of the Government and the Department of Community Development.

Support for our view that the area known as the Grey Street Complex, that is Grey Street North and Grey Street South together, has in the past been looked upon as a single and indivisible territorial unit is to be found in ministerial and Department of Community Development statement.”

**Figure 5.1: Demarcations for Grey Street North with adjoining areas and Grey Street South**



(Adapted from Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, 1969)

Mr. Karsandas Manjee still remembers how the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee made several attempts to repeal these legalities and motivate for the Grey Street Complex to become an Indian Group Area in totality, in order to avoid further displacement and trauma:

*When the Group Areas Act was first implemented, Indians were thrown out of West Street. Indians just had to get up and leave after paying for their premises. Those were very traumatic times for the community. Can you imagine what it is like for someone to just ask you to leave your home because of your skin colour? We didn't want a repeat of that. We always approached the Group Areas Board very diplomatically to let them know that the loss of the Grey Street Complex would be detrimental to us (Interview, 05/03/2016).*

The further spatial containment of Indians in this precinct meant that the future was uncertain for Indian schools which were necessary not only for the community of the Grey Street Complex, but also for pupils who attended from various parts of Durban. Additionally, there was the possibility that cultural organizations as well as places of worship would be lost (Interview with Mr. Karsandas Manjee, 05/03/2016).

Due to the significance and value of this precinct to the community, it was imperative for Indian businessmen to appeal for their socio-cultural interests to be protected. This was documented in the Memorandum of the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee (1969: 37):

“In such a situation, it is difficult for us to know what can be said that has not already been said many times in support of our case. But what is inevitable for us in any proclamations arising out of the enquiry other than proclamations in favour of the Indian Group is a great degree of hardship to thousands from which they will never recover, and the encompassing of the economic ruin of many of them.

Nor do the consequences end there. There are intangible effects no less hurtful to thousands of decent people, in the prospect of being compulsorily uprooted from their businesses and their homes to which they have devoted their life time. There is, too, the psychological effect in the scattering of a well-knit community which has been built up in these areas over a century of time, with all the benefits it has brought to so many.”

The intention to subdivide this precinct remained until 1972 and the legal restrictions to restrict development were lifted in 1973.

#### **5.2.1.3 ARTIFICIAL INFLATION IN LAND VALUES AND RATES**

In 1973, the Group Areas Proclamation No. 106 permitted development and Indian occupation for commercial purposes only in the entire Grey Street Complex. Although this proclamation relieved the community of the fear that part of the precinct maybe zone for white occupation, it did have consequences – particularly regarding property and land rates. Since the economics of land and fixed property was historically systematized from the British, the apartheid government saw that an important source of revenue for the city was based on the value of developed land. If urban land remained undeveloped, it was seen as economically unprofitable. The Group Areas Act created an artificial shortage of land for the Indian community, resulting in inflated property and rateable values.

Table 5.2 illustrates the extent to which rates on land were inflated, and the skewed differences in rates on vacant land under Indian and white ownership for the year 1978. The average land rates for Indians were at the very least 30% higher in comparison to those for white land owners. Average land rates for Indians in the case of Prince Edward and Leopold Streets, as compared to rates for white land owners, exceeded 100 percent.

**Table 5.2: Percentage difference in rates on vacant land between Indian and white ownership for 1978**

<b>Streets names</b>	<b>Average rates for Indian ownership (Rands)</b>	<b>Average rates for white ownership (Rands)</b>	<b>Difference (%)</b>
Commercial	492	378	30
Queen	430	308	40
Victoria	498	265	88
Prince Edward	448	205	118
Leopold	288	137	110

(Source: Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1981: 4)

This inflation made ownership of land very challenging. Moreover, Indians who owned vacant land were charged rates that were far higher than property rates by the Durban City Council because of their lack of development. Mr. Karsandas Manjee reflects on the difficulties experienced by Indians land owners during this period:

*Indians who owned vacant land were required to develop but we could not afford to because of the heavily inflated rates. Those who could afford development required a permit in order to be in accordance with Provincial No. 25 of 1974, however non-whites were not granted permits by the apartheid government. This system did not allow us to develop and we were penalized very harshly for this, (Interview, 05/03/2016).*

*Some brave businessmen took the chance and developed without a permit and they were fortunate enough not to get caught by the apartheid government. This was quite courageous at that time but many Indian owners chose to remain within the parameters of legislation because if they were caught, the repercussions would have been very severe, (Interview, 05/03/2016).*

This further froze development in the Grey Street Complex and embedded memories of distress and discrimination in the precinct – that which is still evident today.

#### 5.2.1.4 HIDDEN MEMORIES: A PRECINCT FROZEN IN TIME

**Figure 5.2: Low-rise properties in the Grey Street Complex**



(Source: Picture taken by author)

The Tees Committee of Enquiry Report (1994: 28) noted that “the economy of the Grey Street area has been severely restricted by the virtual freezing of all development without permit from 1951 to 1973”. The difficulty with obtaining permits, coupled with inflated land rates, created a precinct that very much mimicked the setting displayed in Figure 5.2 – the predominant presence of double-storey fixed properties. Most businessmen could only afford development of a ground floor, which generally accommodated their business, as well as a first floor which was usually utilized for their residential occupation. This pattern also became common among all Indian traders in the precinct (Interview with Mr. Karsandas Manjee, 05/03/2016).

The delayed proclamation of the Group Areas zoning compounded by exorbitantly high rates (after the 1973 proclamation) compromised development and stifled the economic potential of the Grey Street Complex. This was not only a challenge to the community who lived in the precinct, but also for those employees that came from outside the city. As shown in Table 5.3 for the year 1979, the capacity of this complex to accommodate commercial and residential expansion was far greater.

**Table 5.3: Comparison of the amount of floor space utilized to the amount of floor space available in the Grey Street Complex in 1979**

<b>Land use</b>	<b>Floor space usage (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Full potential of floor space usage (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>
Office	56 200	912 000
Shops	210 000	456 000
Flats	121 800	456 000

(Source: Residential Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1979: 36)

Table 5.3 reflects that only 6.2% of the entire office space was utilized. If the full potential of office space was utilized, it had the capacity to increase the number of professional employees in the area from 1 200 to 43 000 (Residential Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1979). The floor space utilized for shops had the capacity to more than double its floor space usage for businessmen by 53%. Additionally, approximately 73% of the floor space available for flats was unutilized.

If the floor space capacity for flats was utilized to its full potential, it had the capacity to increase the number of residents from 6 500 to 23 000 (Residential Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1979). Further, approximately 33 000 Indian

workers from outside the city had employment in this precinct – this unused capacity would have served many of them (Residential Memorandum of the Grey Street Area Indian Local Affairs Committee, 1979).

### **5.2.2 MEMORIES OF THE ULTIMATE PROCLAMATION**

In 1983, the restriction on residential development was lifted by the government, making this precinct an Indian Group Area for both commercial and residential purposes. However, more than three decades of legislative restrictions still left bitter sentiments with many. Mr. Karsandas Manjee recalls:

*We motivated and fought for a very long time. We were 33 years behind on built development, we were 33 years behind with our economic development and for some there was very little that could be done between the period 1983 to 1994. All our efforts were enjoyed for a very short period and perhaps it may have been too late. Nonetheless, we had the opportunity to finally enjoy the full status of being an Indian Group Area in totality without the threat of losing our homes and businesses (Interview, 05/03/2016).*

Although the restriction on residential development was removed, the inflated rates still did not allow for a large influx of residents (Interview with Mr. Karsandas Manjee, 05/03/2016). The Growfin Property Group remembers the impact of this very harsh reality for Indian investors:

*Between 1983 and 1990, nothing more happened in this precinct. By this time the Indians who were previously removed had already utilized and invested their capital elsewhere, in places such as Effingham heights, Newlands and in many other areas. Not many Indians rushed back to invest their capital in the Grey Street Complex because the cost had become so high and other*



*more affordable Indian areas were developed by then to accommodate them (Interview, 05/03/2016).*

*This 1983 proclamation was a ploy of the apartheid government to prevent Indians from investing in the city. Eventually, especially towards 1990, this complex almost became a mini 'ghost town' for us. Nobody wanted to invest in it, (Interview, 05/03/2016).*

The cost of any development was also prohibitive. The Tees Committee of Enquiry Report (1994: 11) stated that:

“Costs of building construction escalated from an index of 100 in 1970 to 500 in 1982. The effects of the Group Areas Act since 1951 did not disappear by the printing of the proclamation in 1983, and the owners of property in the Grey Street area are at a grave disadvantage in competition with their White neighbours who have been building properties for some thirty-three years at rates of construction which are very low compared to present building costs”

The first major investment project which took place in this precinct was the development of the Manjee Centre in 1988 which provided flats for the elite class in the city. The Manjee Centre is a nine-storey building that is still situated on the corner of Grey and Derby Streets today. However, after this there were not many major developments for residential or commercial purposes. The delay in zoning, compounded by inflated rates, resulted in a community that was reluctant to invest in the Grey Street Complex.

### 5.2.3 SUMMARY

The organic development of the Grey Street Complex was curtailed by the Group Areas Act and severely hampered Indian economic development for more than thirty years in this precinct. Although these political dynamics presented various challenges for this community, many of these traders still managed to maintain their businesses and develop their land.

As a result of the uncertainty about the future zoning of the area, businessmen were reluctant to invest in improving and upgrading the precinct. Urban blight, decay and decline were inevitable. This also impacted adversely on the cultural amenities in the area.

### 5.3 THE LOSS OF A CULTURAL CHRONOTOPE

The period 1950 - 1982 there were many changes in the precinct – mainly resulting from the implementation of the Group Areas Act. Former residents were sentimental about their schools, organizations and other institutions, and how these bodies shaped their lives and even their identities. In particular, for former residents, the decline in the cultural aspect of the Grey Street Complex brought feelings of nostalgia, grief and disappointment. This is because of their sentimental connection with places, amenities and structures which were not traceable or no longer existed in the contemporary streetscape of the Grey Street precinct. Thus their only experience of their homes, social networks and cultural celebrations remains in their memory.

This was emphasised by Mr Buddy Governder:

*I remember going to the church and temples and wondering why when we left, we always had to go our separate ways. This was because of the Group Areas Act. I couldn't understand this. I miss that culture, those vernacular institutions and all the schools we had. I don't even see a trace of our cultural bodies in this precinct today ...*

*We had so much before, we had a community, a family but that is no longer there anymore. Sometimes, I try to take my son to show him where I grew up as child but there's nothing left to show him and he doesn't even want to go there (Interview, 30/11/2016).*

### **5.3.1 CHANGES IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE**

The impact of the Group Areas Act forcibly removed a very large number of residents, thus affecting the functioning of cultural organizations and education institutions developed by the community. This outward movement of residents led to the collapse of many of these cultural and formal organizations as well as institutions. Additionally, the legal restrictions imposed during the delayed proclamation further compounded the decrease in the number of residents in the Grey Street Complex.

Since the late 1980s, the gradual changes in the socio-demography of the Grey Street Complex, and ultimately the entire Durban CBD, led to a population that was heterogeneous both in culture and even nationality. The relocation of many Indian residents to suburbs and other precincts made the conditions in this precinct suitable for new immigrant groups to settle. This led to the decline of Indian cultural bodies and institutions in this complex. Table 5.4 and Table 5.5 present the impact of decline on the various cultural bodies and schools, respectively. The result of the decline in this precinct led these organizations either to close or relocate to the suburbs. Inevitably, many of the vernacular schools closed as these institutions were generally managed by the cultural organizations. Table 5.6 presents the relocation of the places of worship and Table 5.7 presents the post-1990 usage of former halls in the precinct.

Mr. Karsandas Manjee recalls the events that led to the closure of these various organizations and institutions:

*Towards the end of the 1980s to 1994, another set of influences came into the city. Attendance at schools dropped and cultural projects were no longer suitable to a changing population.*

*Well before the 1990s most of the organizations and schools were closing or already closed. Our temples also suffered greatly, (Interview, 05/03/2016).*

The fixed properties, in which these organizations and schools previously operated, were later converted into shop space, training institutions, etc.

**Table 5.4: Impact of Decline on Cultural organizations**

Impact of Decline	Name of organization	Previous Location	Post-1990 Location
Decentralization	Arya Prathindhi Sabha	21 Carlisle Street	Westville Hindu School at 45 Meerut Road
	Shree Sanathan Dharma Sabha of South Africa	9a Crabbe Street	24 Somtseu Road, Durban
Closure	Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj	52 Lorne Street	Amalgamated to form Gujarati Hindu Sanskruti Kendra at 5 Sydenham Road
	Surat Hindu Association	127 Victoria Street	

(Adapted from: Nowbath, 1960; Commemorative Brochure of the Shree Gujarati Hindu Sanskruti Kendra, 2001)

**Table 5.5: Closure of Education Institutions**

Impact of Decline	Type	Name of School	Period
Closure	Formal	Dartnell Crescent Primary	early 1960s
	Welfare	Arthur Blaxall School for the Blind	1967
	Vernacular	Durban Sanathan Dharma Sabha SAI	1954
		Kathiawad Hindu Seva Samaj SAI	1969
		Hindu Tamil SAI	late 1970s
		Surat Hindu SAI	mid-1980s
		Manilal-Valjee SAI Primary	1991
		Gandhi-Desai High	1991

(Adapted from: Commemorative Brochure of Shree Gujarati Hindu Sanskruti Kendra, 2001; Singh, 2013)

As the population declined, even recreational and sporting facilities became unviable. For example, the Rennies Squash Centre in 14 Queen Street. This facility was later utilized for shop space by new residents in the complex. Other sporting facilities such as tennis and badminton courts (Table 4.9) were located in the schools which continued to remain open in this complex and were therefore not affected. Welfare institutions such as the Arthur Blaxall School for the blind closed. However, other welfare organizations continued to operate. The Natal Indian Blind Society continued to function and the Durban Indian Child and Family Welfare Society (Table 4.10) still operated. In the post-apartheid era, the name changed to Durban Child and Family Welfare Society to assist abused families and children, as well as orphans of all races.

**Table 5.6: Decentralization of Places of Worship**

Impact of Decline	Place of Worship	Previous Location	Post-1990 Location
Decentralization	Saptah Mandir	114 – 116 Prince Edward Street	5 Whittaker Avenue (Reservoir Hills)
	Vedic Temple	21 Carlisle Street <sup>3</sup>	The Arya Samaj Movement of South Africa has established Vedic Temples in various areas of Durban

(Adapted from: <http://aryasamajsouthafrica.org/history/> [accessed 9 October 2016]; <http://www.saptahmandir.org/> [accessed 29 October 2016])

**Table 5.7: Post-1990 Land usage of former Community Halls**

Community Halls	Post-1990 Usage
Aryan	Purchased by JMH for medical training
Vedic	
Gandhi	
Andra	Utilized for shop space
Bharat	
Parsee	

(Adapted from: Commemorative Brochure of Shree Gujarati Hindu Sanskruti Kendra, 2001; <http://www.jmh.co.za/gmna/> [accessed 29 October, 2016])

<sup>3</sup> The Vedic Temple site still remained at its previous location however, this place of worship became dormant.

Significantly, the first cultural investment project in the precinct was the Kendra Hall and Ekta Mandir (temple) in 1993 by a group of businessmen of the Gujarati community who prevented this part of the precinct from falling into decay (Commemorative Brochure of Ekta Mandir and Sanskruti Kendra, 2001). The Kendra Hall and Ekta Mandir was established on the former site of the Manilal-Valjee primary and Gandhi-Desai high schools which closed in 1992 (Commemorative Brochure of Ekta Mandir and Sanskruti Kendra, 2001; Vahed, 2010). This was part of cultural revitalization where the Gujarati and broader Hindu community could come together for socio-cultural and religious occasions in the Grey Street Complex.

### **. 5.3.2 SUMMARY**

The delay in the Group Areas proclamation of this precinct had already affected the functioning of cultural organizations and institutions. Additionally, the gradual socio-demographic changes in the city, in the late 1980s to early 1990s, resulted in the decline of many cultural bodies as Indian residents began moving out of the city centre.

Sadly the decline of the Grey Street Complex during the apartheid era was perpetuated in the democratic era when there were expectations of redressing physical deterioration of fixed properties, service delivery and crime. The reluctance to invest capital in the Grey Street Complex stopped any further expansion from taking place in this precinct. Many prominent businesses moved to the suburbs – a form of decentralisation.

## **5.4 DECLINE OF BUSINESS HOUSES**

The changing townscape of Durban saw small gazebos set up at different corners as barber shops whilst affordable goods offered in the informal street stalls by foreign traders competed with formal shops. The range of products offered by Indian traders in the Grey Street Complex no longer attracted the majority of the new immigrants into the city. Those businessmen who were able to diversify their business models, adjust their systems-approach to management and product ranges to suit the new market, inherently remained successful and thus still operate from the same premises even today.

However, for those businessmen whose products were particularly targeted for Indian consumers, such business models became less suitable to an area that had now become heterogeneous and cosmopolitan, reflecting the diverse cultures of Africa and South East Asia. In addition, crime compounded the declining customer base. As profits became marginal, capital flight was inevitable. The following case studies are examples of businesses that have either decentralized or closed:

Case study 1: Roopanands and Brothers (Music and booksellers)

Case study 2: Manilal Ratanjee and Company (prayer and household items)

Case study 3: Modern Saree Centre (Indian female apparel)

The case studies of business houses were selected based on the profile and availability of the businessmen, as well as the specificity of the products which were marketed, particularly to the Indian community.



#### 5.4.1 CASE STUDY 1: ROOPANANDS AND BROTHERS

The Roopanands store was first established in 1932 by Mr. Seebran Roopanand, father of Mr. Arvind Roopanand, and his brother, in Victoria Street. This business was the largest importer of India films, books and music during the apartheid era. Mr Arvind Roopanand, owner of Roopanands and Brothers, recollects on his experiences:

*I started helping my father in the early 1960s. We started small with stationary and books first. We imported largely vernacular books because this was so important to our community at that time. We were the biggest sellers of Indian musical instruments such as the veena, sitar, santoor and mridhangum and also vinyl records in both 78 and 45 rpm which for many years carried the label of His Masters Voice (HMV) with the picture of a dog as the symbol (Interview, 21/11/2016).*

The main business attraction to this store was the vinyl records of which Mr. Roopanand imported approximately 50 000. The various sale items at the store changed based on the interests of the consumer market. In the 1980s when Hindu organisations began to diminish in the precinct, there was no longer a need to import vernacular books as there was a bigger demand for English textbooks and stationery (Interview with Mr. Arvind Roopanand, 21/11/2016).

In the 1990s, the arrival of foreigners changed everything in this precinct. In particular, foreigners from Pakistan, who found a niche market in Durban, became a threat to the Indian businesses in the Grey Street Complex. Mr. Arvind Roopanand recalls how this affected his store:

*When people from overseas came into the country, they introduced pirated DVDs and CDs. This took approximately ninety percent of our sales because it was uncontrolled. Since Indian films and music was our main source of sales for us, this had a huge knock on our business.*

*In addition to the foreigners was what we called 'bag aunties', who were ladies that bought huge bags of clothes and accessories from India and sold them here for a very low price. This also compounded the problem. I then decided it was best for me to move out in the late 1970s and so I purchased a property in Springfield Park and began my business there (Interview, 21/11/2016).*

The business in Springfield Park did not experience the piracy of foreigners and or the trouble of any vendors of cheap goods. Further, as many Indians began to decentralize from the early 1980s – 1990s, it became more lucrative for most Indian businessmen to relocate their businesses either to the suburbs or to places where the consumer market was more suitable to their products (Interview with Mr. Arvind Roopananad, 21/11/2016). Figure 4.11 is the Roopanands and Brothers Store in the early 1930s.

**Figure 5.3: Roopanands Store in Victoria Street in 1932**



(Source: Album of Mr. Arvind Roopananad)

#### 5.4.2 CASE STUDY 2: MANILAL RATANJEE AND COMPANY

In 1942, Mr. Manilal Ratanjee, an Indian trader from Gujarat, started his business at 136 Prince Edward Street. This store remained in Durban for more than 50 years and supplied approximately 1500 different types of goods which all appealed to the Indian consumer market in the Grey Street Complex. Goods were imported from various different countries in Europe as well as certain regions in China. However running such a store was not an easy process in apartheid era. Mr. Mahesh Ratanjee, owner of Manilal Ratanjee and Company, reflects on some of the challenges experienced by his grandfather:

*During apartheid, the sanctions imposed on South Africa presented many challenges for those who did international trading. My grandfather had to order goods from India which then had to be shipped to another country, either Europe or China, and subsequently, this was then shipped to South Africa for us to collect. This transshipment process was an obstacle to us because we had to deal with agents from India as well as other countries in order to receive our goods. There was an inevitable increase in costs.*

*These various products that we imported were of the best quality. I remember meeting some of my grandfather's customers some thirty years later and they would show me an item which they purchased from our shop in Prince Edward street, (Interview, 26/11/2016).*

With the change in socio-demographics of the city in the early 1990s, the Ratanjee family decided to establish a branch of their store in an area that had a larger Indian customer base (Interview with Mr. Mahesh Ratanjee, 26/11/2016). Due to the nature of their sale items being specifically targeted at Indians, the most lucrative decision was to decentralize to Chatsworth, an Indian township, where the demand for these prayer and household goods had a growing market. Increasing crime also influenced the decision to decentralize business from the Durban CBD.

Mr. Mahesh Manilal reflects on his family's experiences:

*The crime in the city centre got out of hand, it became really difficult to do business in the Grey Street Complex. Our neighbour, a shopkeeper next door, was held at gunpoint. Many of the shops around us had similar experiences. We were all in fear. Most of the businesses in this area moved out and many people suggested that the best option was to decentralise instead of running a business in fear. We decided to close our Durban branch and focus on our Chatsworth branch as being the main store(Interview, 26/11/2016).*

The emergence of shopping malls in Indian townships provided the Ratanjee family with a prospective opportunity to continue their business with a suitable consumer market. In 1995, Mr. Mahesh Ratanjee's father opened their first external branch in the Chatsworth Centre. This branch saw success very quickly as the demands for Indian prayer and household goods in this area were very great. There were minor differences – in the Grey Street Complex there was a predominant Gujarati Hindu/Muslim presence. However, in Chatsworth, there were various subgroups of both north Indian and south Indian descent, offering a more diverse market. The Durban branch closed in 2003.

**Figure 5.4: Manilal Ratanjee Store in Prince Edward Street during the 1950s**



(Source: Govender, 2011: 11)

### 5.4.3 CASE STUDY 3: BANGALORE SAREE HOUSE

In 1927, Mr. Jamnadas Gordhan, a Gujarati trader, arrived in South Africa as a jewellery manufacturer and began his own business in 1935. More than two decades later, Mr. Gordhan and his son, Mr. Manecklal Gordhan, began to diversify their business and in 1959 established the Bangalore Saree House at 114 – 116 Prince Edward Street. This store sold Indian traditional female apparel, mainly sarees as well as female accessories which were in great demand from women in the community. Mr. Manecklal Gordhan, owner of Bangalore Saree House, reflected nostalgically on his business experiences in the Grey Street Complex:

*In the early 1950s, my father and I would visit India regularly to bring sarees and accessories. We became interested in this because the profit margins were huge. Sarees, embroidery, cotton, beads and sequins were so popular among our customers.*

*We rented in the building owned by the V.N Naik family and started off small, but the demand for sarees was always growing. My brother became more involved in politics but I was more interested in business because doing business in this area was such a pleasure. We were amid the Choonilal Brothers, Enens, Popatlal Kara and Shreemathi's but all traders were never competitive, commercial activity in this area was so leisurely in the old days.*

*Everything we did was based on trust. If someone needed to buy on credit, I didn't even issue an invoice. Some small-time vendors from Sezela and the North Coast would take goods to the value of R500 – R1000 to sell and if they could not sell it, they would return it. We had a good understanding of business relationships. It was not cut-throat like today (Interview, 02/12/2016).*

Although Mr. Manecklal Gordhan found pleasure in managing his family business, there were also many challenges faced in receiving the stock required due to the sanctions imposed

on South Africa by India. This was because the Gordhan family had to deal with agents from the ports of Singapore and the city of Aidan in Yemen, in order to receive their goods (Interview with Mr. Manecklal Gordhan, 02/12/2016). However, this did not hinder the success of the Bangalore Saree House.

The socio-demographic changes in the early 1990s in the CBD inherently changed the form of the Grey Street Complex. This affected many Indian businesses in the precinct. Mr Manecklal Gordhan recalls some of the changes he observed in the early 1990s:

*I remember during the 1960s and 1970s how the streets were regularly swept, this happened at least once a week in the city. In the early 1990s, the behaviour of citizens had changed, the place was no longer clean and the crime and grime slowly crept in. There were many things in the city being neglected.*

*I had also noticed that closer to our political transition and even after 1994, the demand for our sale items began dropping. With all these changes such as the crime, the filth and smaller consumer market in this area, I decided it was best for me to sell my business in the early 2000s because a lot had changed since the early days. The city was just not the same any more (Interview, 02/12/2016).*

The change in the consumer market coupled with the subsequent urban blight and decay made the changing streetscape of the Grey Street Complex an unprofitable area to continue with commercial activities.

## **5.5 SUMMARY**

The change in population profile inherently altered the urban consumer market from one that was homogenous to one that was heterogeneous – not only in race and culture but also in nationality. Many Indian businesses no longer saw the Grey Street Complex as a profitable area for commercial activity, particularly if their products were specific to the Indian consumer. The establishment of shopping malls in Indian townships, such as Chatsworth and Phoenix provided more lucrative opportunities for businessmen to relocate to these areas.

Evidently, the increase in crime, the arrival of foreigners (particularly from other parts of Africa, China and Pakistan) were the main factors that contributed to the flight of Indian commercial capital from this precinct. Many Indian businessmen made the decision to let out their shop space to the new profile of entrepreneurs who had entered. Although very few, some businessmen decided to sell their fixed properties and relocate.

## **5.6 A ZONE IN TRANSITION**

South Africa's peaceful democratic transition since the early 1990s created great expectations and hope for new beginnings for the disadvantaged, from rural areas as well as other parts of Africa and Asia (Luckan, 2014). Whilst many foreigners arrived in South Africa in the early 1990s from various different countries throughout the world, those who established themselves in the Grey Street Complex were mainly from other parts of Africa and Pakistan. Among the foreigners, there were refugees, asylum seekers, and many skilled artisans of various trades, and some who also had tertiary education qualifications. Although many of the foreigners were legal, some had compromised border regulations and barriers to enter South Africa as part of their opportunity to find new hope.

Those who came to the Durban CBD and in particular, to the Grey Street Complex, were primarily in search of employment – they came from all over South Africa, and Africa. Although they were mainly black communities who came to the CBD, they were from different tribes and linguistic groups, with various traditions and cultures. This socio-demographic change altered the population profile not only for the Grey Street Complex but for the entire city. The decentralization of businesses led to the Indian community in this precinct selling as quickly as they could, and relocating to areas where their target markets were more accessible. Those who did not or could not sell, rented their properties to the new urban residents who were in search of low-budget accommodation for business and residential purposes (Interview with Growfin Property Group, 22/04/2016).

Indian businessmen who retained ownership of their fixed properties let out their shop space to a number of entrants at low rentals, in particular, foreigners. Many of the foreigners who began their businesses failed as tenants to maintain the cleanliness, electrical switches and appliances as well as their relationships with their landlords as stipulated in their lease agreements (Interview with Growfin Property Group, 22/04/2016). Some foreigners would stay in their shops and invite others to join them – unbeknownst to the owner who did not regularly manage their fixed properties. It was also common for many Indian property owners to leave the ownership and management of their buildings to their children or even grandchildren. However, even future generations were reluctant to continue with the business



dynasty (Interview with Mr. Buddy Govender, 30/11/2016). Thus the buildings in the Grey Street Complex remained unattended and derelict.

Mr. Buddy Govender reflects on the reality of derelict buildings in this precinct:

*When new shopkeepers came in, property owners constantly had to check up whether or not they paid their rent. If you didn't check whether they've paid, they would blame you for it. Grey street shopkeepers paid their rent without the owners even asking or checking. So the style and management of businesses in this precinct changed.*

*Property owners were handing their buildings to their children and grandchildren but even the younger generations didn't want them because they have their own professions and they were no longer interested in buildings purchased by their great grandfathers. Some of the property owners are holding on to their buildings but not maintaining them. Although local government needs to address the conditions in this area, the community also needs to do something. Part of the decline of this precinct is due to the apathy of former residents (Interview, 30/11/2016).*

Mr. Hoosen Moolla, iTrump Manager, recalls how buildings in this precinct deteriorated:

*The problem is that owners haven't been taking responsibility for their buildings. They want to take money from their properties but they're not putting any money back into them. The general behaviour of people has also changed. Businessmen stopped cleaning up the litter outside their shops. There were also various social challenges in this area such as informal dwellers and traders. Some of the major problems that led to decline in this area in 1994 were illegal accommodation, overcrowding, and*

*slum landlords began converting warehouses into residential rooms (Interview, 11/01/2017).*

An unexpected challenge that the Durban faced in 1994 was hijacked buildings, often by criminal syndicates. Some were either slum landlords or foreigners who decided to take control over the management of a fixed property by overpowering the staff and inhabiting the property without payment of rent (Interview with Mr. Hoosen Moolla, 11/01/2017). Such a situation generally resulted from the nonappearance of the owner, thus it was not difficult to ‘hijack’ the building. Groups of ‘hijackers’ would then collect rentals paid by residents in the property and would use this money as their own income.

Buildings were predominantly hijacked in the Carlisle Street area of this precinct (Interview with Mr. Hoosen Moolla, 11/01/2017). Hijackers did not pay rates which resulted in the lack of water and electricity supplies in the building. In order to escape this barrier, they would turn to illegal connections of electricity and water, ultimately affecting the surrounding fixed properties (Interview with Growfin Property Group, 22/04/2016). Due to this ripple effect, the entire area declined as services were being compromised capital disinvestment in the Grey Street Complex escalated.

Another challenge was the increase in bars and taverns. Since 1994, the Liquor Licensing Board began to grant liquor licenses more frequently. Liquor outlets began to increase in the Grey Street Complex. This was particularly evident in Carlisle Street, Leopold Street and parts of Prince Edward Street – places where such outlets were previously not in existence. Property owners permitted such outlets as this allowed their vacant ground-floor shops to be occupied by tenants who were prepared to pay the above-market rental rates (Interview with Growfin Property Group, 22/04/2016). Although taverns, sportsbars, bottle stores and night clubs were not the best form or quality of commercial use, it generated large incomes to cover maintenance expenses and brought in a profitable income to property owners.

## **5.7 SUMMARY**

Various socio-demographic changes occurred in this precinct in the early 1990s. This led to a changing streetscape in the Grey Street Complex which ultimately changed the traditional form of the precinct as former residents knew it. The apathy and lack of accountability from property owners also became a major problem in this complex, resulting in buildings being hijacked or derelict.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has analyzed all the factors that have led to the decline and decay of the Grey Street Complex. The decline of the precinct was initiated by the delayed zoning of this precinct, which was declared an Indian Group Area only in 1983. The result was that the development potential of the Grey Street Complex was compromised and the built environment was one with predominantly low-rise buildings as rates and cost of development were financially unviable for property owners. This ultimate proclamation was a strategy for the apartheid government to garner the support of the Indians for the Tricameral Parliament.

Although this precinct was proclaimed for the Indian community, the success of the proclamation was short-lived as residents began to decentralize which led to the closure of schools and cultural bodies, and businessmen relocated or closed their businesses. In particular, the apathy and lack of accountability on the part of the property owners further exacerbated the decay and decline of this precinct leading to buildings being either derelict or hijacked. Inevitably, the flight of capital from the Grey Street Complex made this location suitable for a new immigrant group to settle in the late 1980s to early 1990s.

## **CHAPTER SIX: EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter has provided an evaluation of the main findings and theoretical framework utilized in the study, as well as a conclusion to this dissertation.

This dissertation has demonstrated that the contributions by passenger and ex-indentured Indians led to the evolution and development of the Grey Street Complex. Further, the formation of several cultural bodies and institutions and the establishment of prominent business houses, by Indian traders, contributed significantly to the rise of this precinct, making it the largest Indian tertiary centre in South Africa (Rajah, 1981). Former residents still nostalgically reminisce about their experiences of the cultural vibrancy and community solidarity shared in the Grey Street Complex.

Unfortunately, the uncertainty associated Group Areas zoning, between the period 1950 – 1982, led to the decline of cultural bodies as well as commercial activities in this precinct. The decline of business activities and the cultural landscape left this environment susceptible to various changes which altered the traditional form and functions of the Grey Street Complex. Former residents are nostalgic about their homes, and their only opportunities to re-experience this precinct remain in their memories.

This chapter presents summary of the main findings which are then evaluated in terms of the theoretical framework and literature review. To recap, the objectives of the study were to:

- v. Provide an historical background of the Grey Street Complex.
- vi. Evaluate the influence of business houses on the Grey Street Complex.
- vii. Assess the impact of the Group Areas zoning on this precinct.
- viii. Interpret the role of culture, memory and nostalgia in influencing the historical connection of former and current residents to place.

## **6.2 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS**

### **6.2.1 RISE OF GREY STREET**

There were various aspects that contributed to the rise of this precinct – the study has illustrated that the rise of the Grey Street Complex was influenced by the contribution made by both indentured and passenger Indians as well as the descendants of both groups. This led to the development and evolution of this precinct into an Indian CBD which served the community with essential functions.

#### **6.2.1.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

##### **i) EVOLUTION OF THE GREY STREET COMPLEX**

The expiry of indentured contracts allowed ex-indentured Indians, who were indentured as labourers in South Africa 1860, to be integrated into the economy, providing diverse employment opportunities. Post-indenture employment opportunities were mainly present in the Durban CBD, thus there was an increase in the presence of Indians in the city. This presence was further intensified by passenger Indians, who arrived in 1874, and came with the sole intention of engaging in commercial activities in the country. Both passenger and ex-indenture Indians settled in the Durban CBD, and this geo-strategic location was a catalyst for their commercial activities

The findings of this study are similar to that of Smart (2001) which demonstrated that both passenger and ex-indentured Indians were able to incorporate themselves into the Mauritian and Fijian economies, although there were many political challenges presented by British colonial rulers.

##### **ii) THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ‘INDIAN CBD’**

The Grey Street Complex developed into an ‘Indian CBD’, adjacent to the white CBD in Durban’s dual city, and attracted attention during the economic recession between the period 1882 – 1886 as this was when the true potential of Indian traders and entrepreneurs was first realized (Rajah, 1981). Indian traders in particular acquired

several fixed properties and attracted many black, Indian and some white consumers during the recession – this was the catalyst for the anti-Indian agitation and legislation which followed. Consequently, the government determined legislation to discourage and restrict Indians commercial interests in the Durban CBD.

Thus this ‘Indian CBD’, although a part of the Durban CBD, had its organic growth and expansion restricted by the apartheid government. Correspondingly, Pernegger and Godehart (2007) have asserted that the structure and development of Durban contains many underlying racial inequalities. In their analysis on black townships, such as KwaMashu, Ntuzuma and Inanda, Pernegger and Godehart (2007) illustrated how Durban was inaccessible to the black communities of such townships. Such experiences were also reflected in other African contexts by King (2009). This study also suggested that dual city structures are inevitably entrenched with historic inequalities leading to the polarization of communities, and are stark reminders of the differences between the European and non-European parts of the city (King, 2009).

Thus although the Grey Street Complex remained a part of the historical structure of the Durban CBD, the Indians were restricted spatially and subjected to the brutality of restrictive legislation such as the Group Areas Act.

#### **6.2.1.2 MEMORIES OF A CULTURAL CHRONOTOPE**

##### **6.2.1.2.1 THE ROLE OF CULTURE**

The Grey Street Complex served as an important cultural chronotope providing for the socio-cultural and religious needs of the community. The memories of cultural connectivity and interfaith harmony still remain with former residents, and as fundamental components of their identities. Moreover, religion, cultural customs and education were the key facets for the survival the Indian community in Grey Street and in other parts of the city and province. This led the Grey Street community to establish various bodies to educate their future generations while instilling cultural and religious values.

**i) FORMATION OF CULTURAL BODIES**

The role of culture was present in various forms, particularly through religion. There were three religions that were predominant in this precinct – namely Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. Each religious group successfully created organizations to meet its religious and cultural needs, as well for continuity and succession of their respective groups. Many of these organizations established vernacular and formal education institutions to educate their children.

All vernacular institutions were entirely developed by the cultural organizations. Furthermore, welfare, recreational and sporting facilities as well as entertainment facilities were also established. This contributed to a vibrant community life for the residents, and played a significant role in influencing their attachment and historical connection to this precinct. However, the implementation of the Group Areas Act, and the various delays about future race zoning, contributed to the inevitable decay and decline of this precinct.

This is in line with the findings of Maharaj (2013) which illustrated the determination and sacrifices of the Indian community in Chatsworth to create cultural organizations and sites of worship, in this township, in order to maintain their culture and faith. Although displaced from areas like Riverside, Clairwood and Cato Manor, the role of culture was so invaluable to this community that they transplanted various cultural and religious bodies to their new locations. Similarly, earlier studies by Gilbert (2007) and Pohlandt-McCormick (2006) have also demonstrated how black communities of Sophiatown also valued the role of culture by connecting with their cultural roots of Africa through jazz theatres and cultural community gatherings, prior to being evicted from what they once knew as home. Such studies illustrate, as with the Grey Street community, that culture was a very vital component to the life of such communities.

### **6.2.1.3 MEMORY AND NOSTALGIA OF BUSINESS HOUSES**

The Grey Street Complex was zoned as a General Business Zone, in 1973, by the apartheid government – that was the traditional form and function of this precinct as it was mainly associated with trading. The businesses that were situated in this district were predominantly retail. The various types of products offered by businessmen, from apparel to Indian food items, made this complex an eastern shopping precinct. Former residents of this precinct still have nostalgic memories about the Indian business houses which they visited regularly as well as the camaraderie among businessmen and their customers. Despite the challenges introduced by the Group Areas Act, the businessmen of the Grey Street Complex had diverse and unique business models which allowed them to establish prominent enterprises that served various needs of the community. The diversification of businesses in this precinct ranged from entertainment to medical companies.

Although there has not been extensive research examining the memory and nostalgia of migrant business houses in a particular city, scholarly material by Altinay and Basu (2002) has illustrated that ethnic minority immigrant groups, who established businesses in London, share historical memories of their countries of origin. Their findings suggested that immigrant groups, such as Turkish and Turkish Cypriots, Indians, Asians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, with family businesses have similar entrepreneurial behavioural patterns and develop a cultural bond and sense of cultural identity with each other. Thus they remain in a similar district in east London, creating an eastern ambience in the city, while also having the opportunity to experience elements that remind them of their homes. Similarly, the Grey Street businessmen offered various products for the Indian consumers, making this an eastern shopping precinct in Durban.

### **6.2.2 DECLINE OF GREY STREET**

The decline of the Grey Street Complex was mainly attributed to the impact of the delay in the Group Areas zoning. The consequences of this delay in Group Area zoning, and restrictions on residential development in this precinct, influenced the movement of many residents to the suburbs, resulting in the area becoming depopulated. In addition to this, the subsequent socio-demographic changes in the early 1990s also brought variation to the



cultural landscape as well as the profile of businessmen in this precinct. Thus the previous traditional form of the precinct was changed, leaving it as a zone in transition by the year 1994.

#### **6.2.2.1 HAUNTED MEMORIES: THE IMPACT OF GROUP AREAS ZONING**

The Grey Street Complex was zoned as an Indian Group Area in incremental stages during apartheid. Initially, this precinct was unproclaimed and remained an area for free trading. However, more than a decade after the Act was implemented, the Grey Street Complex was zoned for Indian occupation and ownership in 1966, with the prohibition of any development. Shortly this proclamation, this complex was declared for Indian commercial ownership and occupation in 1973 with development permitted for business activities only.

It was only on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August 1983 that the Grey Street Complex was declared an Indian Group Area with the restrictions on residential development lifted. The reality was that Indians could develop and reside in this precinct. However, more than three decades after the Group Areas Act was implemented, a significant proportion of the Grey Street population had relocated to the suburbs. There were various consequences resulting from this incremental proclamation, particularly for the community of this precinct, as well as for the form and function of the 'Indian' CBD.

The delay in Group Areas zoning of the Grey Street Complex can be compared to studies on District Six, which was only declared a white Group Area more than a decade after the Group Areas Act was implemented, in 1966 (Weeder, 2006; Lea, 2007). The apartheid government evicted residents of District Six and displaced them to remote townships in the Cape Flats – such memories of dislocation from their homes and racial separatism, still haunt former residents of this community today (Western, 1981; Lea, 2007).

**i) 'THE UGLY TRUTH'**

The impact of delayed proclamation caused fear and uncertainty for former residents. This anxiety was attributed to the possibility of losing this precinct to the white community, the memories of which still haunt former residents today. Additionally, the community underwent further traumatic experiences when the apartheid government tried to divide this precinct into Grey Street North and Grey Street South in 1969. Although proclaimed in 1966 for Indian occupation and ownership, the homes and businesses of the Grey Street community were still at a risk of being lost to the white community. This intention to subdivide this complex remained until 1972 and the legal restrictions to restrict commercial development were lifted in 1973, however, former residents still experienced challenges.

The Group Areas Act created an artificial shortage of land for Indians in the CBD, resulting in inflated rateable values of properties and land. This artificial inflation in land values and rates presented difficulties for Indian commercial development as this hampered development of the built environment in this precinct and left a large part of the floor space in this precinct under-utilized. The rates charged on Indian-owned land were 30 – 110% higher than white-owned land in the CBD. Consequently, many of the Indian property owners could only afford to develop double-storey buildings.

The fear of the Grey Street community of losing a home is comparable to South African studies on Cape communities by Trotter (2009) and Ström (2014), which have both illustrated how the Group Areas Act has caused emotional and psychological trauma of being displaced from areas such as Simonstown to Ocean View. Some of the individuals of these communities suffered trauma to such an extent, that they resorted to suicide to end their memories of grief and agony (Trotter, 2009; Ström, 2014).

A study of Tighe and Opelt (2014) also revealed that the international experience runs parallel to the South African one, in their analysis of an African American community in Asheville who were traumatized by the experience of the Housing Act in 1949, in the

United States, and thus resisted the forced removals encouraged by such legislation. The collective memory of the Asheville community demonstrated the extent to which residents were attached to this particular spatial location.

## **ii) MEMORIES OF THE ULTIMATE PROCLAMATION**

The Grey Street Complex was declared an Indian Group Area in 1983 with the restriction on residential development lifted. Although former residents were relieved, the precinct was more than three decades behind on development, leaving many of them with bitter sentiments. By 1983, the cost of development had risen immensely and very few Indian businessmen could afford such high expenditure. The impact of delayed zoning resulted in many residents moving out of this complex and very few investing in it. The reluctance to invest capital coupled with a population moving out of the city impacted severely on cultural bodies as well as business houses in the precinct. Decay, decline and blight were inevitable.

### **6.2.2.2 THE LOSS OF A CULTURAL CHRONOTOPE**

#### **i) CHANGES IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE**

The zoning of the Grey Street Complex as late as 1983 was one of the main factors contributing to the decline of culture and thus the loss of a cultural chronotope. The movement of Grey Street residents outside of this precinct throughout the 1980s to early 1990s, made the conditions in this environment appropriate for a new immigrant group to settle. Thus the presence of a new socio-demographic group changed the cultural landscape of the Grey Street Complex. As a result of this, many of the Indian cultural organizations and institutions either closed or relocated to areas where such bodies could be sustained in the suburbs.

The closure or relocation of cultural bodies thus affected halls and sites of worship. Consequentially, halls were either closed or utilized for different land usage purposes in the 1990s, and some of the religious sites either decentralized or became dormant as residents were no longer present to sustain facilities. Inherently, it was no longer viable to

have certain sporting and recreational facilities open. Furthermore, welfare institutions were either closed or modified their post-1990 structures to serve the changing population of the city. The first investment project, which was established as part of cultural revitalization in this precinct, was the Ekta Mandir and Kendra Hall in 1993 – this retained Hindu culture for the broader Hindu community in this part of the city.

In the context of South Africa, Pillay (2014) has demonstrated the nostalgic attachment to places of worship by former residents of Cato Manor. Although interpreted fictionally, the findings of cultural loss for the Grey Street community resembles those pointed out by Pillay (2014) which assessed how the Cato Manor community still reminisces about learning their vernacular at a Tamil School and how they enjoyed cultural festivals at the Lockhat Masjid as well as the Shree Gengaiammen Temple, which recently celebrated its centenary in 2009. Such places of worship became less active with a changing cultural landscape in this area, similar to the Grey Street experience.

### **6.2.2.3 DECLINE OF BUSINESS HOUSES**

The changing townscape of Durban changed the business profile of shopkeepers in this precinct where foreign traders competed with formal shops and the type of products offered, was suitable to a new urban consumer market. Businessmen of Grey Street still reminisce about their experience of trading in this precinct and how they developed a relationship of trust with former residents as well as the sacrifices they made to import goods from India (in violation of the cultural boycott) to satisfy the cultural needs of the community.

Two main factors contributed to the decline of business houses in the Grey Street Complex. First, those entrepreneurs who sold products which were specifically targeted to Indian consumers and were therefore unable to diversify their business models, either closed their businesses or decentralized to an area where there was presence of a suitable consumer market. In particular, the establishment of shopping malls in Indian townships provided businessmen in this precinct with a profitable opportunity. Second, the increase in crime was a major factor that caused businesses to either close or decentralize. Such circumstances

diminished economic profits for former Grey Street businessmen. The impact of this was capital flight from this part of the city. This disinvestment of capital resulted in the deterioration of the Grey Street Complex.

The change in the profile of businessmen in the Grey Street Complex corresponds with the changes in other South African precincts such as Fordsburg, in Johannesburg. Mayat (2013) has demonstrated that Fordsburg, which previously encapsulated an Indian heritage, attracted new immigrants with the intention of establishing new enterprises, from various parts of Bangladesh, Pakistan, Indian and North Africa, in the same way that the Grey Street precinct has attracted new immigrants from the same countries. Mayat (2013) also highlights that the urban memory of the history of Fordsburg was one that was multicultural during apartheid, and still remains cosmopolitan in the post-apartheid, although the types of enterprises have changed.

In the international context, Lam *et al.* (2009) have suggested that the experiences of a changing business landscape in the United Kingdom are similar with the emergence of a 'Chinatown' in London, attracting urban immigrants from Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and the mainland, China. The Chinatown establishment adds a cultural flare to the anonymity of the city in the same way that the Grey Street precinct reflects the diverse cultures of Africa and South East Asia, bringing in a sense of hybrid urbanism.

#### **6.2.2.4 A ZONE IN TRANSITION**

South Africa's change in political regime in the early 1990s created new opportunities for the disadvantaged communities in rural areas as well as from other parts of Africa and Asia – this altered the population not only in the Grey Street Complex, but for the entire Durban CBD. The new urban immigrants came mainly in search of employment. Many of the new shopkeepers rented in properties owned by former Indian residents or businessmen of this precinct. However, not all followed the terms of their lease agreement causing the physical deterioration of fixed properties. Furthermore, the lack of accountability and responsibility from property owners also led to buildings being neglected and hijacked by either slum

landlords or foreigners, which caused further deterioration, attracting syndicates who engaged in various types of criminal activities. In addition to these challenges, the granting of liquor licences more frequently by the Liquor Licensing Board also led to the decline of this precinct.

The changes in the traditional form and functions in this precinct left it as a zone in transition closer to, and at the beginning of, 1994. Mahomed (2006) has also pointed out that areas such as Fordsburg, in South Africa, and Chinatown in San Francisco, California, are also zones in transition or twilight zones which display both multiculturalism and urban hybridity in such cities. Scholars such as Carothers (2002) and Satterthwaite (2005) have also argued that political changes are important components in influencing the spatial characteristics and cultural signatures of zones in transition. Accordingly, it is evident that the political, commercial and cultural changes in the Grey Street Complex are similar to various South African and international cities.

## **6.3 THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS: THE GEOGRAPHY OF MEMORY**

### **6.3.1 COLLECTIVE MEMORY**

The Halbwachian approach to analyzing memory has demonstrated the importance of collective remembrance when reconstructing the historical background of a particular place or location. Collective or social remembrance illustrates the common phenomenologies shared by people in a specific environment and how they relate to that milieu through their ontologies. This type of recollection is significant in that it consolidates thoughts, experiences and ideologies which provide validity to the place memory of the community associated with the same timeframe, and thus a common chain of events (Hebbert, 2005; Jones, 2011; Alderman and Inwood, 2013; Murray, 2013). Collective memory is particularly important when understanding social phenomena in a spatial location.

Thus the study has drawn on the memories of various former residents to demonstrate the historical and affective connections of the community to the Grey Street Complex. These memories have collectively configured a mnemonic regime that provides a reconstruction of

this precinct in its traditional form (Hebbert, 2005; Murray, 2013). The former residents demonstrated an intrinsic and emotional connection to this complex through cultural organizations and institutions developed by the community, as well as business houses that they had previously supported. Further, the collective memory resulting from the delay of the Group Areas zoning instilled fear, uncertainty and anxiety in the lived experiences of the residents.

It is evident that the community of this precinct still share a spatial connection with the Grey Street Complex as they recall from memory common events, similar experiences at particular locations in the precinct, and a shared yearning and nostalgic sentiment based on their mnemonic attachments. This was demonstrated in their reflections of celebrating festivals with each other, visiting particular Indian business houses as well as with the trials they underwent during the decline of this precinct. Thus the collective memory framework has been critical to the study as it has illustrated how this community functioned in this precinct, their collective memories and nostalgia of their experiences as well as their historical connection to it.

### **6.3.2 PLACE: THE MEMORY OF SPACE**

Gieryn (2000) asserts that space becomes place when it is endowed with a rich social, economic and political history. In the case of the Grey Street Complex, the former residents have an emotional and historical link to this precinct, and evokes immense sentimental value.

This can be attributed to this precinct being the former 'home' of ex-indentured and passenger Indians who contributed to its growth, both economically and socio-culturally. The intensification of trading activities by Indians directly contributed to the formation and evolution of this former Indian Group Area and the major Indian trading hub in Durban. Therefore this space became a place known as the 'mini-India' of Durban – it was symbolic of their motherland and cultural identity (Stiebel, 2010). Further, this was the place where Indians began their commercial life, received an education, engaged in socio-cultural and religious activities which created a microcosm of Indian traditionalism. It was evident from

this study that the former residents of this complex made many sacrifices to establish their various cultural organizations and educational institutions, which entrenched their legacies in this precinct.

The Grey Street Complex was also an area of cultural representation for Indian diaspora in the South African context as pointed out by Mamet (2007) and Reddy (2013) – this transformed this urban space to a representational geographical entity of its former residents (Jones, 2011). The decay and blight associated with the apartheid era, and the post-1990 changes to the city reproduced the urban streetscape of Durban and this community is left with memories of a bygone era to which it clings. The nostalgic sentiments displayed by the community illustrates that such mnemonic emotions are influenced by the historical background of place and the lived experiences of its residents.

### **6.3.3 PLACE IDENTITY**

The temporal trajectories of a city are represented by the physicality of urban space and the social-spatial organization of its structures. This spatial organization of the city influences the development of personal character. Thus, as pointed out by Proshansky (1978) and Manzo (2003), individuals identify themselves in relation to a specific place as their memories of such a place are etched in their minds. Similarly, former residents of the Grey Street Complex have identified themselves in relation to this precinct. In particular, Grey Street residents reminisce about their cultural connectivity, their relationship with entrepreneurs and how this shaped their identities.

Moreover, Stiebel (2010) asserted that translocated communities search for emotional refuge in creating an environment that embodies the similarities of their previous one. Thus as with the residents of the Grey Street Complex, their ancestors created an environment that was traditionally similar to the one in which they lived in India in order for their future generations to attain a cultural identity and core value system (Vahed, 2013). Hence, the Grey Street residents still identify themselves with this precinct in terms of their nostalgic memories of its historic past, despite the changes in Durban.



This historical hub was a symbol the cultural identity of these residents as it represented their motherland and was significant for the continuity and transmission of the associated value systems to succeeding generation in South Africa. The establishment of a large number of vernacular and formal schools and religious organizations demonstrate that education, religion and tradition were integral components of the identity of this community. Hence, the Grey Street Complex was a cultural chronotope of memory. In the global context, Gabriel (2009) has asserted that translocated communities maintain their cultural identities as they do not forget their mnemonic narratives of their previous homes – this was the case with ex-indentured and passenger Indians who saw the importance of maintaining their cultural identities, which also reflected a subliminal connection with India. In many ways, the Grey Street complex reflected “Little India”.

#### **6.3.4 PLACE DEPENDENCE**

Dependency by residents on a spatial location is directly associated with the various activities that take place within it – that is for both physical and social survival (Brown *et al.*, 2003; Manzo, 2003). Place dependence signifies the personal relationship that residents develop with their surrounding environment – this was evident with residents of the Grey Street Complex as they relied on this precinct for their social, economic and physical well-being.

The residents of this precinct made many sacrifices to build all elements of a community – cultural and education institutions, welfare organizations and recreational facilities, businesses and housing units. Many of the residents of this complex received their first education in this complex, engaged in socio-cultural and religious activities and many depended on this precinct for their economic livelihoods. More specifically, the Grey Street Complex was a vital economic urban node because this was the area that gave birth to the first traces of Indian commercial life in South Africa (Rajah, 1981).

In particular, this precinct was a home to a population whose social and economic developed was restricted under the legislation of the discredited apartheid system. Their dependence on

this precinct was particularly evident when the apartheid government delayed the proclamation of the Group Areas zoning of the precinct, leaving residents in a state of fear and uncertainty between the period 1950 – 1982. Further, the civil society organizations formed by Indian businessmen, to protect the socio-cultural needs and capitalistic interests of the Indian community in this area, also indicates the extent to which this community was concerned that this precinct could be declared for the white race group. This illustrated their dependency on the Grey Street Complex as served the community with their essential needs socio-culturally, economically and even emotionally.

Various studies have highlighted that the sentimentality related to place dependence also influences both emotional and environmental psychologies of populations which depend on place for their fundamental life functions (Fried, 1966; Weeder, 2006; Lea, 2007; Lewicka, 2008; James, 2015). Similarly, the former residents of the Grey Street Complex depended on this precinct for their essential components of life.

### **6.3.5 PLACE ATTACHMENT**

There are both physical and social dimensions of place attachment which influence the emotional experience of the community (Hernandez and Hidalgo, 2001; Alderman and Inwood, 2013). The attachment to a specific locality arises from both place dependence and place identity, which influence the emotional relationships of a community with the essentiality of place (Manzo, 2003; Manzo and Perkins, 2006; Brown and Raymond, 2007). The former residents of the Grey Street Complex have demonstrated their historic, emotional and sentimental connection to this precinct. Inherently, this connection of former residents to place, is drawn from a responsive bond which develops from mnemonic phenomenologies and ontologies of their surrounding environment and the community with which they have interacted (Brown and Raymond, 2007; Lewicka, 2008).

This study illustrated that the community of the Grey Street Complex celebrated multiculturalism, which cut across religion and language, and created a social interconnectedness in the community. In the geography of memory of this community,

various topographical markers, events and spatial locations also became symbols of place attachment. Residents collectively remember how they would celebrate religious festival together such as Diwali or Eid, or how they would listen to Quawali singers at the Shah Jehan Cinema auditorium.

In addition to this, they also reminisce about the trust and respect that they had with shopkeepers and businessmen in the precinct or how they enjoyed a visit to the Indian Market. For example, goods were offered on credit, without any records being kept. These mnemonic regimes imprinted in their minds illustrate that their place attachment can be associated with the social relationships and specific spatial locations in the Grey Street Complex. In this study, the social and cultural landscape of this precinct has become a significant mnemonic narrative to this community and their attachment to this place.

#### **6.3.6 NOSTALGIA**

Nostalgia is an unrelenting emotion or yearning to re-experience a particular moment or place that emanates from memory. Nostalgic emotion can also be derived from psychological trauma which prevails when an individual has experienced a loss of something valuable to them (Wilson, 2005). The study has illustrated that the former residents of the Grey Street Complex have nostalgic memories about their experiences of a precinct which was once known as a home to them. There are also scars from the psychological trauma associated with the uncertainty of Group Areas zoning.

The former residents remain nostalgic about the religious harmony and tolerance in this precinct as well as their social interconnectivity with each other. This was illustrated by former residents who regularly visited places of worship of a religion which was different to their own – this was very behaviour common among Grey Street residents. Additionally, nostalgia was evident when residents reflected on their experiences of the cinemas and halls where they reminisced about unforgettable cultural memories, and yearning to relive such experiences.

Further residents also nostalgically recollected their relationships with the shopkeepers of Indian business houses as well as their involvements in sporting activities in the precinct. Ultimately, the community's nostalgic sentiments arose from the entire ambience of the Grey Street Complex – that is the social, commercial and cultural landscape which made this an eastern precinct imprinted with their heritage. To former residents, this complex was not just an Indian Group Area – it was a niche of economic prospects, cultural vibrancy and one which carefully configured their cultural identities.

## **6.4 CONCLUSION**

This dissertation has assessed the rise and decline of the Grey Street Complex in the apartheid era. The study has illustrated that the Grey Street Complex was vital to the Indian community and their broader life functions, since the arrival of indentured and passenger Indians in Natal, until the late twentieth century. The rise of this precinct was attributed to the sacrifices made by the Grey Street community which demonstrated their innate ability and determination to live a successful life through the establishment of their cultural organizations, community-built institutions and business acumen, under the harsh realities of the apartheid system. Through such experiences, they maintained their cultural identities while still providing the essential components of a community life for their future generations.

Sadly, the decline of the precinct was the direct result of the delayed Group Areas zoning, and was further perpetuated in 1994 when there were expectations of the new South African political regime to improve the urban management of this precinct did not materialise. The result of this was one of capital disinvestment, leading to further urban decay. Evidently, this dissertation has revealed that the former residents still have an historical connection to the Grey Street Complex and an inextricable sentimental link to their experiences in this precinct. This was common in their collective memories. Further, the Grey Street community still have nostalgic memories of their cultural connectivity and camaraderie in this complex. Their memories and sentimental attachment symbolizes their intrinsic place attachment to the Grey Street Complex and how this became a home for which they still yearn in the post-apartheid era.

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