

© Kamla-Raj 2010

J Sociology Soc Anth, 1 (1-2): 91-99 (2010)

DOI: 10.31901/24566764.2010/01.1-2.09

Making Home in a Hostile Land: Understanding Somali Identity, Integration, Livelihood and Risks in Johannesburg

Zaheera Jinnah

School of Anthropology, Gender and Historical Studies, University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban, 4000, South Africa

Telephone: +27 31 260 2915, E-mail: singhan@ukzn.ac.za

KEYWORDS Migration. South Africa. Belonging. Migrant Entrepreneurship. Xenophobia. Social Networks.

ABSTRACT This paper seeks to understand Somali migration to South Africa and the lives of Somalis living and working in Johannesburg, a city that has provided economic opportunities and risks to life and livelihoods. Based on interviews with Somali leaders in Johannesburg, participant observation, a desktop study and secondary analysis of migration surveys, this paper is part of a doctoral thesis on livelihoods and empowerment amongst these migrants. It explores concepts of identity and integration within and amongst these migrants. Evidence suggests that national and religious identity is central to Somali settlement and integration, spawned out of social networks that play an important role in migrating, settling and maintaining connections with home.