

The changing faces of the *klopse*: performing the rainbow nation
during the Cape Town carnival



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Abstract

This thesis explores the embodied aesthetics of performance in the making of belonging in post-apartheid South Africa, through an investigation of the *klopse*, also known as Cape Minstrel and the ‘Coons’, which are part of the annual New Year’s carnival in Cape Town. For this thesis I use the word *klopse* to refer to the carnival troupes. I map how from its inception the carnival aesthetics changed and came to represent something new and different as the participants engaged with the changing South African and Cape Town society. These changes are explored in connection with both coloured identity politics in the context of the “rainbow nation” discourse and the efforts to represent carnival in Cape Town as a colourful event in a global city to international and national visitors. I argue that at the core of it is the issue of belonging which is embodied through the aesthetics.

Through socio-historical analysis proposed by Cohen (1993) I show that participation became framed as working class coloured. Yet at the same time, the changing aesthetics developed in a process of creolization, which I discuss in relation to coloured identity as a product and continuous process of creolization, (Martin, 1999) drawing on the notion of becoming in performance. I show how in recent years where diversity is celebrated representations of the carnival has moved more into an expression of embodying ‘local’ culture and our ‘culture’ whereas before it was seen as a ‘working class affair’. It further shows how ‘the Rainbow Nation’ is performed in the carnival and that at the core of this is performing a sense of belonging which I explore as well through the carnival body re-mapping the spaces on the Cape Flats, a vast area to which many people were forcibly moved to during apartheid.

This thesis is based on ethnographic research done with the *klopse* troupe Las Vegas based in Lentegeur, an area on the Cape Flats. It was conducted during the carnival season 2011-2012, before, during and after the carnival period which involved the month long competition from 3 January 2012-till 28 January 2012. One of the main research methods included audio visual recordings of the performances through the streets, at the stadium as well as during the practice season. This was done through an ethnographic approach which included participant observation, informal discussions with various members of *klopse* troupes and life histories with some key members. The *klopse* has a highly publicized image thus in addition it includes analyses of the employment of aesthetics of the ‘*Ghoema* and *Glitter*’ exhibitions and the marketing of the *klopse* and the carnival.

Declaration

I declare that “The changing faces of the klopse: performing ‘the Rainbow Nation’ during the Cape Town carnival” is my own work and that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used, or quoted, have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

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At the grass roots level the results of this thesis would not have been possible without the generosity and openness of the troupe Las Vegas and its members whom always replied ‘no problem’ to my requests. But firstly thank you to my friend Hibah’s father Mr. Hendricks who introduced me to Las Vegas. To Malo, Shana, Amina, Soheil, Pang, Kentucky and many others thank you for making me feel very welcome in Las Vegas. To the group of Stellenbosch that was with Las Vegas during the carnival season 2011-2012 and to the male choir thank you for making this research a fun experience. I would like to thank the Kaapse Klopse Karnaval board, in particular Mr. Mathews and Denis who were generous enough to allow me open access to the carnival.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

It is a sunny Saturday afternoon. Shana and Amina, executive members of the *klopse* troupe, Las Vegas, had sent me directions to where I should meet up with the rest of the troupe in Manenberg, a low socio-economic area on the outskirts of Cape Town, known as the Cape Flats. I get out of the minibus taxi which transported me from the Cape Town city centre to Manenberg. I see the colours of Las Vegas's tracksuits: light blue and white. I hear the *ghoema* beat drumming and the brass instruments blowing in preparation of the revelling and march down the street in Manenberg.

I look for Shana and/or Amina's faces, or anyone else from the practice sessions. I find it difficult among the many unknown faces wearing the colours of Las Vegas. Suddenly I see them and go over to them. "*Haai jy kom nou maar ees an*" (ah man you only arrived now) says Shana to me when I greet her and Amina. I explain that the taxi took long to fill up. "*Pity man jy het die march gemis*" (pity, you missed the march), says Amina to me. As we speak, people come over and greet. At that moment Maloe comes over and we greet each other; he too says to me, "shame you missed out on the march, you should have seen us". He continues: "We gave them a show! But don't worry there are still more marches to come". "Ja we need to get going", says Shana. "Where are we going?", I ask her and she replies that next we are going to Kalksteefontein. We all get onto the busses that are waiting to transport us to the next area.

When we arrive in Kalksteefontein, Las Vegas's arrival in the area is visually and sonically spectacular. The drum majors, also known as *voorlopers*, lead the procession, followed by the junior members holding the bright multi-coloured flag of South Africa, and Las Vegas flags: Blue Flags on which Las Vegas is emblazoned. This was followed by the tambourines, also known as "the jingles", who lead the *ghoema* players and the brass band. People came out of their homes to watch, and the younger children ran and danced along following Las Vegas; There were no footlights between the crowd and Las Vegas as the crowd intermingled in the march.

The rest of the day was filled with various stop-overs in different areas. The next stop was Bonteheuwel, another area on the Cape Flats that is known in the media for gangsterism, unemployment and drugs. Another troupe called Rainbow Nation was *jolling* there as well. They wore similar colours as Las Vegas and it became difficult to distinguish one from the

other. At this point Bronnie, one of the male choir members grabbed my hand and asked me to hold the camera. Whilst he led me to Rainbow Nation he recorded the troupe and their instruments. He introduced me to his friend who was playing in the band. As we made our way back to Las Vegas I resumed ownership of the camera and he resumed his revelling. Similar to Kalksteenfontein, people were coming out of their homes or they stood at their doorsteps smiling and waving; especially when they saw the camera.

By the time we arrived at Lavender Hill the sun was setting, and after having received our *tafel*, (a table filled with eateries), at one section of Lavender Hill, we moved onto the next section. Youngsters, men and women of varied ages were standing on the corners. I was warned to be careful with my camera; “*Jy moet oppas met jou camera*” (you need to be vigilant with your camera) said someone to me. This is when I started noticing that Pang, another executive member, was walking alongside me; keeping an eye on me. I noticed that the captains were actively keeping things in order as some of the local young men, who seemed to be getting too rowdy, would be given a stern aural warning to stay clear. The captains performed more as human barriers, as opposed to the metal barriers that are put up when the *klopse* march on *tweede nuwe jaar* in the city centre. Whistles went off and the captains shouted direction orders, which was accompanied by hand signals indicating the directions. Darkness settled and reigned with only the street lamps shedding light. But this did not stop the *jolling* and the active spectatorship embodied through the women who looked down upon the procession from the windows of their homes. By the end of this *voorsmaakie* (preview) march we got back on to the bus and drove to *Makkha*, Petunia Street in Lenteguur, where Las Vegas is based and where all the other troupes would continue marching.

This opening vignette recounts how I experienced the *klopse* troupe Las Vegas’s *voorsmaakie* (Afrikaans: preview) march on 11 December 2011. My thesis explores the changes of the embodied performances of the *klopse* carnival troupes in post-apartheid Cape Town. The *klopse* troupes are one of the components of the New Year carnival in Cape Town that also consists of the Christmas Bands and the Malay choirs. The carnival itself is officially known as the Cape Town Minstrel Carnival, sometimes also called the Cape Town Coon Carnival (Mason webpage). However, more often the *klopse* are still referred to as “coons”, both in local usage and in the academic literature. Mason (Webpage) and Constant–Martin (1999) two researchers who have been extensively involved in research on the *klopse* state that

objections can be raised to both names because of the derogative connotations it had especially in relation to African-Americans. At the same time Mason and Constant-Martin two researchers who have been extensively involved in research on the *klopse* since the 1990s make reference to the fact that in local parlance it holds no negative connotations. Mason (Mason webpage) refers to it as the Cape Town New Year's carnival and Martin (1999) refers to it as the Coons carnival. Martin (1999) qualifies his choice by referring to the fact that in local parlance it holds no negative connotations to those who participate. Similarly I have found that those who participate find no derogative connotation to the word "coon", although some do acknowledge the African-American derogative connotation. Furthermore I have found that various participants use the words "minstrels", "coons" and "*klopse*" interchangeably. However, I have decided to prefer the term *klopse*, as this, in my understanding, does not carry any of the derogatory connotations associated with the other two terms. I will use "coons" or "minstrels" only where these terms have been used by authors or interlocutors of my research. The word *klopse* plays upon, and evokes the sound of the *ghoema* beat (personal communication, Roderick Sauls, 2013): a wooden drum instrument that stayed steadfast through the changing aesthetics of the carnival. It is an instrument that tells the many musical influences of the Cape embodied through the word and sound *ghoema beat* (Martin, 1999). Thus, a story of creolization is annually embodied through the *ghoema beat* during the highly publicized *tweede nuwe jaar march* (second New Year) on 2nd January in the city centre of Cape Town. However, what is not known as publically as other aspects, are the marches through the streets from which the troupes draw their members, as I have illustrated in my introduction.

These marches through the streets demonstrate a making of the Cape Flats home through the marching carnival body. This making of the Cape Flats, an area on the outskirts to which many people were forcibly removed home through the carnival body, embodies the shifting trajectory of displacement that is attached to the Cape Flats. Another noteworthy observation is the shifting trajectories of the carnival from "working class coloured expression" to discourses of 'our culture', 'local culture' and as 'embodying local culture', through public culture and marketing of the event. DaMatta (2005) writing on carnival in Brazil argues that carnival is Brazil and Brazil is carnival and therefore forms one of the threads of social identity this is in a post-colonial context where festivals and carnivals have become more about issues surrounding identity.

1.1 Carnival and the performance of difference in the 'Rainbow Nation'

Post-apartheid South Africa has over the past two decades seen the rise of 'the Rainbow Nation' discourse which emphasised diversity, ethnic diversity and difference (Becker 2010), which has also seen a growing discourse of a city with a slave past in Cape Town. This thesis argues that in public discourses the *klopse* seems to epitomize this history. In 2010 there was a major exhibition at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town about the history of the *klopse*, entitled 'Ghoema and Glitter'. Seemingly popular, the 'Ghoema and Glitter' exhibition's run was extended repeatedly. John Edwin Mason (2010), who also published the photographic book 'One love Ghoema Beat: Inside the Cape Town Carnival' (2010), wrote on his website that the exhibition showed the politics, identity, ritual and day to day activities all come together in the celebration of carnival. In a press release by the Iziko Social History Collections department they stated that this exhibition showcased a unique part of Cape Town and South Africa's history and culture. They further stated that the content of the exhibition, a legacy of Cape Town's history of slavery had never been the subject of a museum exhibition. This exhibition thus spoke to the changing context of the post-apartheid state that saw an ever growing heritage discourse. I argue that the core of this exhibition was placing the Cape Town's New Year carnival and the *klopse* firmly within the physical and social landscape of Cape Town. The popularity of the *klopse* and its invocation as part of the multicultural makeup of Cape Town by city officials was especially seen during the World Cup 2010, when the *klopse* marched through Central Cape Town streets ([Kaap Xpress, 2010](#)). This marketing and support of the *klopse* seems to hark back to 1996 when Nelson Mandela wore a *klopse* outfit at the Greenpoint Stadium in Cape Town, and parliamentary dignitaries referred to it as the 'embodiment of local culture' (Martin, 1999).

At the same time, although the *tweede nuwe jaar* gets marketed and framed as an enactment of Cape Town as a city with a slave history, access to the city comes with politics framed within the rhetoric of 'right to the city' which, in turn, calls up questions of citizenship. Ongoing disputes concerns the marches in Bo-Kaap, an area that was seen as the Malay quarter. Anwah Nagia, who heads Cape Town's Anti-Gentrification Front, claimed that Cape Town's Premier Helen Zille is "ashamed" of the colourful minstrels with their painted faces, and said that voters will be reminded of this at the upcoming local government elections. Anwah went on to say that, "The city belongs to us, not to them. They want to make this city for the privileged people. People who were born here have to get visitors permits. Why are they ashamed of us?" (IOL web article). Thus, it is evident here that through the carnival those

who participate claim their rights to the city and belonging. In the context of protests against gentrification and its implications on the marches Kara Mackay produced a film about the *klopse* during the carnival season of 2011/2012. Kara Mackay is a cultural activist and is affiliated with Imbawula Trust- a non-profit community based beneficiary trust which acts in the interests of street art and her focus lies within the struggles of indigenous arts and culture in the context of globalization and gentrification.

In addition to producing a documentary she wrote an article in response. In the article Mackay takes an anti-gentrification stance locating the resistance towards the *klopse* marching in the inner city of Cape Town as part of the gentrification process that is happening in Cape Town. Chronicling the historical significance of the event, Mackay places the event within the growing slavery history rhetoric. Mackay argues in the article that Cape Town is facing a gentrification that attempts to thwart the cultural history of Cape Town. Thus, through this politics, notion of culture, heritage, citizenship and belonging comes into play here. These concepts and assertions can be located in a global context whereby performance of difference and identity comes to be in vogue to be employed in the recognition of the politics of difference and obtaining interests (Geschiere, 2009:31 also see Comaroff and Comaroff, 2009). Furthermore the framing of the carnival within a history of slavery is very different from earlier accounts of the Carnival in local and national newspapers, which placed the carnival as a 'coloured affair' and as 'the coons'. I argue that Cape Town, as a creole city (I discuss this further in chapter two) with a slave past is increasingly coming to the forefront through public culture, and the *klopse* are seen as the embodiment of this history. Yet at the same time the politics of the space of the city, and access to this space calls up questions of citizenship and belonging. It also points towards how carnival is always political intimately and dynamically related to the political order and to the struggle for power within it (see Martin, 2000; Taylor; 1982; Jeppie, 1990 and Knauer, 2008).

It is especially these themes that the research project 'Performing 'the Rainbow Nation': Cultural Performance, Belonging and Citizenship in Contemporary South Africa' under the leadership of Professor Heike Becker, is interested in. In the project, we are concerned with the interrelation between cultural performance, citizenship and belonging in South Africa. Thus the project aims to investigate the politics of belonging that is taking place within the country both in relation to the local and global sphere; through looking at how performance

relays what being South African means in this current era; this and other studies investigate the “significance of aesthetic strategies for the reconfiguration and authentication of citizenship in contemporary South Africa” (Becker et al, 2010). It is grounded on Becker’s (2010:3) argument that “from the 1990s onwards Global discourses of multiculturalism along calls for Africanization has replaced in South African public culture the previously homogenised notions of modernity with ethno-racial claims to diversity”.

Acknowledging that identity politics and the performance of difference are even more salient and brings up questions of belonging and citizenship, this thesis explores the embodied aesthetics of performance in the making of belonging in the post-apartheid South Africa. Through an investigation of the *klopse* which forms part of the annual New Year’s carnival in Cape Town, I map how from its inception the carnival aesthetics changed and came to represent something new and different as the participants engaged with the changing South African and Cape Town society.

1.2 Debates surrounding ‘Coloured identity’

At the core of the change in discourse of the *klopse* has been the ambivalence of ‘coloured identity’. More specifically, the embodiment of the ‘coon’ in carnival appears as a figure of this ambivalence (Martin, 1999). Thus, the way the word ‘coon’ has been dealt with points towards the ambivalence of the event, and its history (which I will discuss in Chapter 2). It also highlights the question, whether a working class coloured tradition can be seen as ‘coloured culture’ and ‘coloured identity’.

According to a leading scholar on coloured identity, Mohamed Adhikari (2005), the concept of ‘coloured’ functioned as a social identity from the time of the formation of the South African state in 1910 to the present. Perceived as illegitimate, mixed, and unauthentic and having this cloak of perceived miscegenation, this has to a large extent psychologically disempowered the bearers of this identity (Hendricks, 2005). During the apartheid era the label coloured was seen and classified as a racial category. However, based on how Hendricks (2005), who critically evaluates the issue of discourse and politics of ‘coloured identity’, presents ‘coloured identity’, it becomes clear that the construction of is cultural rather than biologically racial. Furthermore her evaluation points towards what Martin (1999) argues that the cultural formation is one of creolization

After the April 1994 elections there seemed to have been a proliferation of organisations which emerged. Amongst these organisations were the *Kleurling Weerstandsbeweging vir*

*die Vooruitgang van Bruinmense*¹, the December First Movement and the Coloured Forum (Louw, 2010). A recently developed organisation in recent years was the emergence of the *Bruin Belange Inisiatief*², formed in July 2008 (Louw, 2010). Most of these organisations were based in the Western Cape, and were formed not only for access to material resources, but also for political and social recognition (Louw, 2010). The interesting thing about the 1994 elections is that with the end of Apartheid the first democratically elections in 1994 brought about debates surrounding ‘coloured identity’, after the majority of ‘coloured people’ voted for the New National Party³ (Hendricks, 2005).

This bolstering of ‘identity’ led to subsequent debates from academics (Erasmus, 2001; Adhikari, 2009; Hendricks, 2005) that started to think about ‘coloured identity (s)’ more critically. Erasmus (2001:14) writing on ‘coloured identity(s)’ in the edited book ‘Coloured by History Shaped by place’ examines the “discomforting” meanings that have grown around urban ‘coloured identity’. Erasmus (2001), like Adhikari (2009) and Hendricks (2005:14) argues that contrary to the misconception brought on by apartheid classification; coloured is not due to racial mixture but that it is actually based on “cultural creativity, creolized formations shaped by South African history of colonialism, slavery, segregation and apartheid”.

However, although these attempts at debating ‘coloured’ identity were done in light of removing essentialist discourses surrounding it there has still been the proliferation of organizations such as *Kleurling Weerstandsbeweging vir die Vooruitgang van Bruinmense*⁴. More recently there has been the cancelled television show Colour TV, which performed an essentialised idea of ‘coloured identity’. This points towards the major issue of the concept identity, that it fixes what is in flux (Geschiere, 2009).

The show Colour TV was viewed as a platform in which ‘coloured stories’ is finally being told on national television. However, just like the *klopse* and carnival, the show Colour TV seems to conjure the same ambivalent feeling. Some argue that it puts coloured people in a bad light by playing on stereotypes. Here this reference can specifically be made to many coloured elite whom denied any association with the carnival and *klopse*. At the same time debates raged that the show seemed to favour a conceptualization and representation of

¹ Coloured Movement for the Progress of Brown People

² Brown Interests Initiative

³ Former National Party of the Apartheid regime

⁴ Coloured Movement for the Progress of Brown People

‘Coloured=Cape Town’. Some social media users have requested that a bit more of the diversity of “being coloured” needs to be shown. I discussed Colour TV in order to highlight the fact that despite theorising that identity and culture is constructed, and formed around notions and processes of creolizations, an essentialised notion of ‘coloured identity’ was still being performed.

This further points to the flaw of continuing with a deconstructive approach towards concepts such as identity and culture, when it is perceived in an essentialist way and therefore real.

This is one of our arguments in the ‘Performing ‘the Rainbow Nation’’ project. Becker (2011) argues that a new way of theorising around issues such as identity and culture is needed and proposes that ‘performance’ would prove to be helpful. Colour TV used bodily posture, language, ideologies and aesthetics in the form of self-styling as a celebration and exploration of an authentically felt (Lindholm, 2008) ‘coloured culture’ and ‘coloured identity’. Connecting new perspectives on performance with Meyer’s (2009) recent work, Becker (2012) argues that performance allows the investigation of strategies of aesthetic persuasion, or sensorial and embodied styles in the making of “aesthetic formations”.

Thus, being aware of the identity problem as something that is constantly fixing what is in flux (Geschiere, 2009:31), and personally critical of the attempts of coloured identity politics pursued by organizations such as *Kleurlingweerstandbeweging vir die voouruitgang van bruinmense*, I follow Becker et al (2010) and use the term ‘identity’ as a category of practice, as argued by Brubaker and Cooper (2000). This brings a new light at how the *klopse* feature in Cape Town. In this case how the *klopse* performance is employed to create a sense of belonging through cultural performance, and validating a position in ‘the Rainbow Nation’. However, at the same time I draw on notions of creolization and theorising around creolization, which Martin (1999) influentially engaged with.

1.3 Going forth

The core investigation of this thesis will be performance, aesthetics and how it is embodied in performing ‘the Rainbow Nation’ and a sense of belonging through the *klopse*. I use performance as an empirical -based analysis. Thus, I view carnival as a clearly framed event, set apart from everyday reality. At the same time, I use performance as an analytical category of ‘performing ‘the Rainbow Nation’’ (Becker et.al., 2010), which is drawn from Askew’s (2002) aptly first named “Performing the Nation” work on the emergence of the Tanzanian state. I employ this amalgamation following Becker’s (2011) argument that in order to

retheorize culture we should embrace the multiple meanings of performance. Becker (2011) was especially referring to the amalgamation of Goffmanian(1959) notions of performance; the presentation of the self in everyday, as well as the Turner notion of social drama of performance as marked events and acts of culture. Becker (2011) points out the significance of Turner's recognition that performance should be understood as the 'making' of identifications in the process of performing, instead of the 'performance' of pre-existing 'roles' or identities.

Furthermore, I use aesthetics in an Aristotelian way as proposed by Meyer (2009) in which the body as a whole plays a role in how we sense, understand and experience the world through our five senses; namely our total "sensory experience of the world and our sensitive knowledge of it" (Meyer, 2009). The aesthetics thus includes images, things, sounds and texts, but more specifically a total sensory experience of the world. I argue that the conceptualization of aesthetics as our total sensory experience of the world is especially crucial in understanding the making of the Cape Flats home through the body, which I referred to in the beginning, and in creating a sense of belonging.

The ambivalence of the grotesque, and the role it had in medieval peasant culture as proposed by Bakhtin (1984) is understood and used within the role of the aesthetics of the carnival in performing a sense of belonging. Thus I use belonging as proposed by Johanna Pfaff-Czarnecka as something that is easily felt and tacitly experienced through performance, which are then materialised through social power and spatial and temporal processes enacted by everyone. This is especially crucial in understanding access to the city and rights to the city that brings up question of citizenship as well as the performance of 'the Rainbow Nation' through what Becker (2011) termed "embodied symbolic enactment".

1.3 Chapter Outline:

Looking at the changing aesthetics of the carnival, **Chapter Two** follows the changes in aesthetics from the inception through following a historical process. It highlights how at different periods the *klopse* came to mean something new and different. The chapter concludes with pointing out that despite all of the socio-political factors the *klopse* still remain and have taken on a new face through the diversity rhetoric of the post-apartheid.

In **Chapter Three** I look at the *klopse* in public culture by focusing specifically on the "Ghoema and Glitter" exhibition and marketing of the *klopse*. It looks at how the *klopse* is seen more as an embodiment of local culture, and Cape Town culture, through the rhetoric of

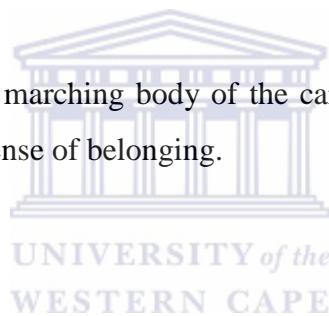
slave history. The proliferation of a slave account is looked at within the context of the growing heritage discourse that has seen a transformation in museums and heritage practices. This is also evident in the ‘Rainbow Nation’ rhetoric of inclusion. It concludes by asking how the ‘Rainbow Nation’ of inclusion is performed by *klopse* troupes. In order to investigate this, I joined a troupe known as Las Vegas, based in Lentegeur.

Subsequently, **Chapter four** highlights becoming Las Vegas and focusses on the research process. It gives a sense of who and what Las Vegas is by giving a descriptive account of the troupe. It also explains how I gained access to the troupe, with a focus on reflexivity.

In **Chapter Five**, I look at the performance of ‘the Rainbow Nation’ at the stadium. In this chapter I look at which story of the ‘Rainbow Nation’ is performed, and how is it performed. I look at how the ‘Rainbow Nation’ ideology of inclusion is possible at the stadium because of the importance of change and creativity. I thus focus on the aesthetics that is at play in the stadium.

Chapter Six highlights how the marching body of the carnival is re-rooting and re-routing the carnival and thus creating a sense of belonging.

Chapter 7 is the conclusion.



Chapter 2 Cape Town Carnival in a historical perspective

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will be looking at the Cape Town carnival in a historical perspective.

Drawing upon Baxter's (2001) notion of the change and continuity discourses that surrounds the carnival and the *klopse* performances in the present day, this chapter will contextualize the changes of the aesthetics of the carnival. In noting the changes within historical contexts, I will then attempt to historicize it as Cohen (1993) proposed, and had done with the Notting Hill carnival in London, where he noted how at different periods the aesthetics changed and the carnival came to symbolize "something new". Five significant periods had been identified within which the changes occurred- the slavery period; the formal formation period, which is connected to the competitions; the war years; the apartheid years and the post- apartheid early 1990s. My interests in this chapter lies in the changing aesthetics in connection with both coloured identity politics in the context of 'the Rainbow Nation' discourse, thus to engage with aesthetics and politics through performance, and this will be discussed within the framework of creolization.

2.2 Overview of research on the *klopse* carnival

Until the turn to the 21st century, most authors on the *klopse* and carnival in Cape Town noted that there was not much written about the historical development of the carnival. In the words of Baxter (1996: 29), who wrote an MA thesis in History on the *klopse*; "...the gaping absence of historical commentary relating to Cape Town's coon carnival makes any research on the subject largely dependent on the oral accounts of participants and observers, on pictorial representations and on contemporary Press coverage...". However, the gap of a full historical account of carnival in Cape Town has been filled by the French social scientist Martin's (1999) seminal comprehensive history of the carnival, garnered from intensive fieldwork conducted during the 1990s. Martin (1999) argued that the carnival was (is) never isolated from South African society. Thus, he analysed the changing aesthetics within the emergence of a creole culture of which music and language made up these different facets. He argued that although it was a contested terrain, in which opposed conceptions of coloured identity were confronted, it always preserved the creole foundation. Most notably, the period

in which he conducted his intensive fieldwork was a period in which debates surrounding ‘coloured identity’ and ‘coloured culture’ took shape. What Martin’s (1999) book brought forth was important for theorising carnival and the notion of ‘coloured identity around notions of creolization, which I will subsequently discuss in this chapter.

Prior to Martin’s (1999) seminal work, research had been conducted by Cape Town graduate students Shamil Jeppie (1990) and Baxter (1996). Jeppie (1990) had explored the class, colour and gender character of Cape Town popular culture, through an examination of the New Year’s carnival from the start of World War Two to the end of the nineteen fifties. It was a period in which the “white middle class citizens gravitated towards plush city cinemas and members of the predominantly ‘coloured’ working class engaged themselves in private pleasures like household music-making and the public leisure of choral clubs and cheap inner city cinemas” (Jeppie, 1990:1). One of the main arguments that came out of Jeppie’s (1990) work was the framing of the carnival as an event of singular significance on the calendar of working class culture, a largely ‘coloured’ affair where the participation of women is mostly in a supportive role.

Following Jeppie’s (1990) exploration of the class, colour and gender configuration of carnival, Baxter’s thesis (1996) explored the change and continuity discourse of the *klopse* carnival, focusing on the 1960s and 1970s. Instead of looking at carnival as a solely pre-eminent working class expression, she (Baxter, 1996) looked at its meaning through exploring differences. What Baxter’s thesis brought to light was a deep historical investigation of the *klopse*, different representations, and levels of participation. Concomitant to that her thesis included interviews with various participants, looking at how it conveyed notions of continuity and change in carnival during the 1960s and 70s. This period Baxter (1996) characterised as a period where attitudes toward the event were sharply polarised with an increasingly politically-based opposition to the event. Apartheid policies were being fleshed out in this period, which posed key cultural implications (Baxter, 1996). Subsequently, she argued that to look at carnival as a working class expression disguised the complicated levels of participation in the event (Baxter, 1996).

These works paved the way for further research, with a few honours theses written after this, one by history student Zarin (2001), who explored carnival during the 1940s as an expression of culture within a changing political and economic environment. This thesis was done under the supervision of Bickford –Smith at the University of Cape Town, who had also explored

carnival and Cape Town society in the late Victorian era. Another Honours thesis was produced by Wentzel (2010) in Social Anthropology at Stellenbosch University.

What these bodies of work revealed were nuanced discussions around issues of space, culture, history, identity and group consciousness. Through following a historical approach it is evident that, at present, carnival is becoming more and more an expression of identity (see Cohen, 1993, see DaMatta, 2005). More importantly, the process of creolization as argued by Martin (1999) is revealed through this body of work in connection with ‘coloured identity’ and ‘coloured culture’. In the following sections I will discuss the changing aesthetics within the historical context of Cape Town and broader South African politics.

2.3 Emancipation of slavery accounts: “the beginning” of creolization process

It has been argued that in the present day a mythical association exists between carnival and manumission (Patterson cited in Baxter, 2001). This is because Cape Town as a city has a slave history. It served as a commercial entry port for the Dutch VOC which further influenced musical styles. Bickford-Smith (1995), writing on Black Ethnicities, Communities and Political expression in late Victorian Cape Town, states that the extent of trade underpinned the economic and demographic fortunes of the town. During this period the Cape was an extremely diverse place, made up of people from various other African regions, European and Asian origins, as well as the local indigenous Khoikhoi (Martin, 1999). Thus, there was a mixture of different people in various interactions. Drawing parallels with the Cape and the American and West Indies, Martin (1999) argues that creolization took place among members of the dominated groups. The question of course is, how did this process of creolization relate to music making and the birthing of what is today known as the New Year carnival?

Exploring this connection with musical styles was Coplan (1985), an anthropologist of music, who argued that mixing with whites as the diverse population had, made important contributions to South African musical styles. Similarly, later Martin (1999) would argue that the criss- cross meeting point of many musical influences at the Cape was to from part of Cape Town life. Martin (1999) locates the start of this creolization as the moment when Vasco Da Gama set foot on shore, on what is today known as Mossel bay, and was entertained by Khoikhoi musicians. Both the local indigenous Khoisan and slaves were employed in slave orchestras. These players played by ear and in their own free time for their own entertainment. Furthermore, a lack of musical and theatrical space allowed for a “culture

of the street” to flourish (Martin, 1999: 61). This was embodied in a conclave of New Year celebrations from Islam, Christianity and local Khoikhoi traditions, which included street parades with musicians and serenaders. When slavery was abolished in 1834 and when apprenticeship, a period served by slaves after slavery before being completely liberated, ended in 1838, street parades formed part of the celebratory practices of former slaves (Martin, 1999). Thus here it is evident that a creole culture was developing in the Cape, through the cultural mixture of diverse people. This was to be extended to the minstrel figure from North American popular culture.

2.4 Minstrel impact

The ‘minstrel’ is a key figure in the long standing connections in popular culture, between North America and South Africa. This trans-Atlantic connection points to the fact that during the mid-nineteenth century the minstrels were the most popular form of American musical entertainment. Martin (1999:79) writes that, “Minstrel shows brought to South Africa new music, new songs, new dance and an original way of enacting racial relations and that with the arrival in Cape Town it brought the character of ‘the coon’”.

The impact of the minstrel shows was not only evident in popular culture in the Cape, but also at another port city: Durban. Thus musicologists such as Erlmann (1996) and Coplan (1985) also explored the impact of minstrel musical styles in South Africa, which was not only relegated to carnival. Although the minstrels visited both cities, the effects and impact of it had different significances and adaptations. Erlmann (1996) argues that the adaptation of these elements transformed it creatively into a genuine black South African urban tradition, which were to last into the modern styles of the 1920s and 1930s. In Durban Cockrell (1987) notes that elements of it were included in *isicathamiya*, and in gumboots dances, whereas in Cape Town Martin (1999) notes that it impacted aesthetics of carnival

The figure of the ‘minstrel/coon’ was a derogative embodied performance of Black Americans. Musicologist Cockrell (1987) suggests that the American minstrel show was probably first formulated in early 1843, when several well-known white musicians who had heretofore made a living as solo performers loosely imitating the music, dance antics and humor of the American black man, joined together and called themselves the Virginia Minstrels. One of the key features of a typical minstrel show was the makeup of performers, and in the early years when all the entertainers were whites in black face, they wore additional makeup to exaggerate their lips and eyes (Cockrell, 1987). With regards to the

dress code, Cockrell (1987) further notes that their dress code was either of the two sorts: shabby and ragged to depict rural Southerners or fancy white gloves to depict a stereotype of northern urban blacks.

Yet although it was derogative, the trans-Atlantic visit of minstrel shows was popular with local black audiences in South Africa. Cockrell (1987) notes that at the height of the minstrel show craze in Durban in the 1880s, performances by local groups were given frequently. But how was such a show that drew on derogative connotations of black subjectivities popular with not only white audiences but black audiences? Exploring the popularity of it Martin (1999) argues that the reasons why they became popular were due to the fact that their initial contents were mixed, anti-authoritarian, imbued with working class rebellions, and that these qualities seemed relevant to the social, racial and economic situation in Cape Town.

The question that follows now is; what did the impact of the minstrel mean to music making in South Africa? Firstly the impact was seen through minstrel shows and Gospel hymns which added onto the process of creolization that was taking place in Cape Town, and the rest of South Africa. More specifically Erlmann (1996) writes that the influence of minstrel shows impacted Dutch Boer and Cape coloured culture, and folk song, and that from 1869 the amateur coloured troupe under Joe Lyal presented almost weekly full scale minstrel shows to Cape Town audiences. By the late 1880s the minstrel craze had faded because audiences preferred more sophisticated forms of entertainment (Erlmann, 1996). However, although the craze faded the effects and impact of it on South African audiences, especially black and coloured South African audiences lasted.

One of the lasting effects of the ‘minstrel/coon’ figure was the place it would assume in present day *klopse* performances as well as its place in ‘coloured identity’ politics through the phrase *deurmekaar* (Afrikaans: rowdy antonym of respectable), which I will subsequently discuss later in this chapter. These early years of street celebration and minstrel shows, forms the early development of the carnival and its aesthetics. However, it was not the form of the carnival we see today. It was only in the formal formation years that carnival developed into its present day form. Concomitant with the politics of space, the political formation of a ‘coloured group’ and the subsequent rhetoric of “an event of singular significance on the calendar of working class culture; a largely ‘coloured’ affair” (Jeppie, 1990:2) developed. In the next section I explore the formal formation years.

2.5 The formal formation years

In the formative years and in the 1900s, New Year celebrations took place both in the centre of Cape Town and in the popular districts, however, competitions were informal. 1907 is the year that most writers like Baxter (1996) and later Martin (1999) see as the year when the carnival in its present –day form which consists of a mixture of street parade and organised competitions at venues, took shape. Martin (1999) writes that it is in that year that competitions started taking place at the Green Point Track which became tradition

By the late 1930s three boards were active: the Western Province Coloured Carnival Board, the Coloured Coronation Carnival Board and the Jubilee Coloured Carnival Board (Martin, 1999). The usage of ‘Coloured’ in the naming of the boards during this period is hardly surprising, as a few years before the formal competitions were formed, the census started differentiating between Coloureds and Africans. Before this the identity marker was rather fluid. Bickford –Smith (1995) argues that the APO (African People’ Organisation) was one of the organizations that promoted coloured ethnicity as a group identity. Launched in 1902, Martin (1999) writes that the APO was launched with the aim of fighting for the defence of coloured people’s political and civil rights. Abdurahman, a British educated doctor, became the APO's president in 1905, a position he held until his death in 1940 (Bickford-Smith, 1995). Although he was middle-class and Muslim, the ethnic mobilization stretched towards fusing the interests of Muslims and Christians, stretching towards the working class as well. Thus, they defended the economic interests of coloured workers in Cape Town; be they artisans, fishermen or Town Council street-cleaners, against whites and black (Bickford-Smith, 1995). At the same time influx control was systematically used to exclude black people from Cape Town, this was long before the Coloured Labour preference Law (Jeppie, 1990).

Jeppie (1990) argues that one of the effects of the influx control was that many black people were housed mostly in Langa; the oldest still existing township for black Cape Town residents, which was established in 1927 approximately eight kilometres outside central Cape Town, and in the growing squatter settlements on the Cape Flats like Windermere. Because carnival was an inner city affair, it became ethnicised as a ‘coloured affair’, more specifically a working class ‘coloured affair’, when coloured people still mostly lived in the city (Jeppie,

1990). At the same time Jeppie (1990) demonstrates that small numbers of black people did participate. This participation is further demonstrated by Martin (1999), who points towards the 1909 organization of the carnival where plans were made to include a 'kaffir'⁵ dance. However, because of opposition by coloured missionaries no black people would again be invited to participate in the carnivals until 1996, except to play as musicians. Not surprising that accounts of some ex black residents of District Six are filled with re-collections of participating. Thus, it seems that they were excluded but included as musicians. Based on this, Jeppie (1990) then argues that the carnival's ethnic character was thus coloured.

However, the rhetorics of 'coloured affair'⁶ seemed to stick with the carnival, as newspaper accounts that were to follow henceforth would either comment on it as a 'coloured affair', or advertise it as a 'coloured affair'. Thus through rhetoric and the socio-political context the carnival was established as a 'coloured affair'. This was embodied by the population participating, and also in the form of Dr Abudrahman and Mr S Reagon, who formed part of the main political parties for the coloured people (Martin, 1999). Martin (1999) argues that at that stage the elite did not separate themselves from the carnival, or look down upon 'the coons', but on the contrary made a point of supporting it and being associated with it. Martin (1999) writes that until the 1940s leaders of the APO would participate in the organization of carnivals; in the form of attendance, delivering speeches or presenting trophies.

Following the APO a younger generation emerged among the elite, and created new organizations, such as the National Liberation League in 1936 and then the Non- European Unity Movement in 1943 (NEUM) (Martin, 1999). Martin (1999) shows that they felt strongly about fighting government policy, which already before 1948 was aimed at a strict legal, and political segregation of the different racial sections. Thus they objected to separate affairs of coloureds. Also, as Martin (1999) argues, the members of the tiny coloured upper middle class that dominated the NEUM had internalised the canons of South African white respectability, and wanted to be recognized on an equal footing as people who exhibited propriety and not a caricature. To the coloured elites of NEUM, 'the coons' came to symbolize this caricature. Therefore, in the 1940s carnival ceased to be a link between

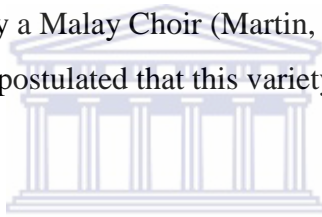
⁵ A racist derogative term used to refer to black people

⁶ This term I use with reference to some of the earlier newspaper accounts which referred to the carnival as a 'Coloured affair'

coloured political leaders and the masses who participated in it. Hence, the rhetoric and framing of the carnival as a largely working class coloured affair took shape from this break.

2.5.1 The creative carnival success of 1907

The 1907 event was seen as a success, based on the number of spectators that attended the event (Martin, 1999). Following this success, the competition was repeated the following year with an estimated seventeen troupes consisting of about 2000 competing members (Martin, 1999). Martin (1999) points out that creativity was alive, with lantern parades and that the continuous ‘add on’ of exotic flavour seemed to be the order of the day. Elaborating further on this, he (Martin, 1999) makes mention of the Queen of Tar Tars which he states was one of the best, the Italian Lifeguards, the Irish Princes in straw hats with white feathers and the Tipperary Coons in bowler hats, etc. Thus, the New Year carnival of the 1920s and the 1930s brought to the streets and stadiums different types of troupes; such as Coons, Privates, Americans and Bits and Pieces or Odds and Ends, participation of Brass Bands, Christmas Choirs and occasionally a Malay Choir (Martin, 1999). Commenting on the variety, journalist Manuel (1977) postulated that this variety indicated the origins of the ‘Cape Coloured people’.



Martin (1999) gives a description of the privates which sets them apart from the coon troupes. Adhering to a different set of aesthetic, some of them had period costumes with wigs, breeches and feathered hats. Others dressed like Spanish bullfighters or cowboys and outlaws (Martin, 1999). They had names such as the Spanish Mountaineers Outlaws, Sea Pirates, and Irish princes, marching like soldiers or royalty they did not blacken their faces (Martin, 1999). Apaches and wild Indians, and the Bits and Pieces appeared in the carnival as well. The bits and pieces were a group of people wearing different costumes, which included medical doctors, surgeons and nurses (Martin, 1999). However, they usually did not participate in competitions; rather they went from door to door dancing in front of people’s doors, and in turn were offered food and drinks (Martin, 1999).

Referring to the popularity of the 1920s ‘the Jazz singer’, Martin (1999) argues that films played an integral role in the aesthetics of the coons. Thus, troupes would imitate current trends displayed by international artists. Most notably the 1920s film: ‘the Jazz singer’ caused a sensation in the Cape upon its release and took resonance (Martin, 1999). Featuring Al Johnson in black face it rejuvenated the character of ‘the Coon’. Martin (1999) argues that this channelling of the latest fashions was aided by commercial endeavours and competition

which allowed for innovation. Through perusing images from the 1960s and 70s, Baxter (1996) illustrates this hybrid involvement and display; from local sponsorships to international influences, which included the United States of America flag and United Kingdom. She argues that through this conflation of words, symbols and images the multiple overseas influences were reflected (Baxter, 1996).

Based on these two sections what becomes apparent is that a definite event was forming from the street culture of the slavery period, and the subsequent minstrel impact. This was being framed as a 'coloured affair' through media representations and rehtorics, as well as the presence of the APO at the event who used it as a way to strengthen coloured group consciousness. The variety of the event and borrowing of cultural elements from films and music consolidated the creole nature of the Cape, and those who participated in the event, thus it added on to the creolization nature of 'coloured identity' (Martin, 1999).

In the next section I look at how what was once a creative diverse event gave way to a uniform event, first as a result of the war years, and then the subsequent apartheid years. Within these significant historical periods, the minstrel/coon figure took its place as the key figure in the carnival.

2.6 The War Years; Union Jack Flags and universal solidarity

It seems that the war years were the time when the creativity of the carnival gave way to uniformity. This is noted by observers of the carnival, that the war period saw the end of the 'Privates', a term which I will discuss in the next section. According to Martin (1999) the assumption was that it became too expensive for these troupes to continue performing, and that the only group that continued performing until the 1970s was the American traditional warrior, or 'Atjas' as they are known. However, in the carnival period of 2011/2012, I saw one 'Atjas' troupe among the many carnival troupes at the stadium.

In 1939 World War II broke out bringing about hardships, however, observers like Jeppie (1990) and Martin (1999) argue that the hardship of the war did not inhibit the 'spontaneous' participation of the troupes, yet at the same time it affected the troupes in various practical ways (Jeppie, 1990). One of the effects was regarding the running of the troupes; the troupes became smaller and the age categories became younger. This was due to the fact that many of the troupe members had been drafted, and younger people had to replace them. It not only

affected the troupes but households as well; many Cape Town men had been drafted, and as a result of this departure it brought on economic constraints (Jeppie, 1990).

Although the war had brought on economic constraints, this did not stop the boards from participating in war fundraising. Martin (1999) points out that directly after the war broke out the seaside attraction department of the Cape Town Municipality co-operated with the Coloured Carnival Coronation Board to prepare a carnival for 1940. The gate takings were used as a contribution towards the war fund. Competitions at the stadium were also used as recruitment areas. On the other hand, one of the other direct influences of the war on the parade of the Coons was the increase in the use of the colours of the Allied forces, and the display of the Stars and Stripes and the Union Jack (Martin, 1999). These were all worked into motifs on the outfits, and through cardboard figures of John Bull and Uncle Sam. Jeppie (1990) commenting on the creativity and resourcefulness of participants and organizers argues that much creativity and resourcefulness was needed to accumulate material. It needs to be noted that this period was characterised by escalating costs and scarcity of materials, resulting in restrictions in the number of colours that were used. This in turn also brought on a change in uniform, because satin was unavailable, cotton was often used and caps replaced hats (Jeppie, 1990).

Thus a change in the aesthetics took place, which would consolidate further into a uniformity of the aesthetics of the event during the advent of the apartheid years. A further rift was embodied between those who participated in the event, who at this period consisted mostly of working class coloured people, and the growing middle class populace. In the next section I look at the changes that were brought on by the apartheid years.

2.7 The advent of apartheid

The advent of apartheid brought on many noticeable changes in the carnival, which in turn echoed discourses of displacement, and moral decay, which Martin (1999) and Baxter (1996) among others reflected upon in their writings. One of the key aspects was the Group Areas Act of 1950, and the subsequent implementation of it. The Group Areas Act of 1950 demarcated many areas as ‘white areas’, this in turn meant the forcible removal of people not classified as white. Although segregation did exist, it was not as systematic as the implementation of the Group Areas Act. In Cape Town there was at first resistance to it, but by 1964 many areas in Cape Town were declared white (Martin, 1999). One of these areas was District Six located near the city centre. Martin (1999) argues that District Six was more

than a geographical area; it featured as the heart of life in Cape Town. Being overpopulated, and crowded, the culture of District Six was essentially a street culture, whereby Malay choirs, and troupes rehearsed and paraded in the streets (Martin, 1999). Thus, it served as the nexus of the creole culture that Cape Town, and the people who lived there, came to embody. After forced removals and in the new dispensation it became a symbol of the effects of Apartheid, the subsequent effect on the community that used to be there, and the organization of the carnival troupes. I would argue, as Baxter (2001) has done, that it brought on the 'golden age' discourse, where everything that followed it was seen in a negative light.

In the following subsections I discuss particular changes that took place in the carnival, as it engaged with the changing South African and Cape Town society during the apartheid years. I show how a growing attempt was made to turn the event into a form of 'coloured identity' by apartheid officials in the form of the folklorist Dr. I.D. Du Plessis, and how a dynamic resistance composed of acquiescence and resistance, was exercised by carnival troupes against a uniform "Afrikaans coloured identity". At the same time, as mentioned previously how the coloured elite fighting against apartheid powers saw the *klopse* as a caricature and an antithesis of the fight against apartheid. In the *Drum* publications, a magazine directed at the urban black market, which by the end of the 1950s shifted from the more entertaining stories published in *Drum* to the emergence of struggle (South Africa History online). In 1967 the rhetoric of the carnival changed from 'coloured affair' and 'coloured' carnival, to one that was seen as minstrel carnival.

2.7.1 Farewell Privates, odds and ends with your bits and pieces: creativity gives way to uniformity

One of the main evolutions, which I had previously alluded to, was the disappearance of the privates, which occurred during the war years. After 1956 carnivals involved only 'Coons', Indians, and Bits and Pieces troupes (Martin, 1999). By the 1970s the only group that survived was the American traditional warriors the Apache 'Atjas'. Earlier, I had referred to the explanation given by Jeppie (1990) and Martin (1999) for the disappearance of the Privates; that the war could have made the costumes too expensive. However, Martin (1999) in the same breath brings forth that after the war, when economic conditions improved, they did not reappear. There was an attempt to revive it during the Van Riebeeck festival, but ultimately this attempt failed (Martin, 1999). The Van Riebeeck festival was organised in 1952 to commemorate the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck at the Cape. According to Martin (1999) some troupes declined to participate in the festival, on the grounds that the festival

was actually meant to celebrate three hundred years of oppression. One of the aims of the festival was to exhibit human showcases of authentic pristine cultures, which the troupes were seen part of. I argue that the attempt to revive the privates during the Van Riebeeck festival failed, because to include the privates in the Van Riebeeck festival would go against the whole idea of the Afrikaner identity, and Afrikaans as part of the 'coloured identity' they were aiming to construct through the festival. I will subsequently discuss this in the following sub-sections. What is also of interest here is how a language such as Afrikaans with its roots in creolization was utilized and authenticized as pristine pure Afrikaner identity. In turn it was utilised to make a 'uniform coloured identity'.

Changes were thus seen in the styles of the costumes, for example in the early 1960s Panama hats replaced top hats and sticks gave way to umbrellas (Martin 1999). Ordinary troupe members saw these as a result of the captains' quest for personal profits, because they abandoned the smart expensive top hats for the cheaper cloth hats (Baxter, 1996). Martin (1999) then follows how synthetic fabrics progressively replaced the cotton and silk. Consequently these changes resulted in the standard outfit: a jacket, a pair of trousers, an umbrella and a hat. However, all is not as clear cut. Upon perusing images taken in 1963 and 1977 Baxter (1996) found that there was a striking continuity in both images, male troupe members were shown in top hats encircled with stars and stripes and single breasted suit jackets. The only notable difference she notes is the lack of canes in the image taken in 1977.

In addition to the argument that the privates disappeared due to the costs, a further explanation can be given to the failed attempt at the revival of the privates and the standardization of costumes. Tailors had generally been part of the community, and ran small home-based industries (Jeppie, 1990). After the inner city area of District Six was demolished, participants lived in areas that were great distances away from the tailor and the troupe captain (Martin, 1999). Zarin (2001) argues that coordinating the uniform fittings was difficult, especially as most working class members did not have access to their own transport. The fact that they did not have transport was not necessarily due to being 'working-class'. Jeppie (1990) has shown that most inner city residents who lived in District Six had no need for transport whilst living there because most amenities had been in walking distance as well as the places of employment.

2.7.2 'Keeping with the Times' of the music from strings to brass bands and the creation of a 'coloured Afrikaans identity': the introduction of Afrikaans through moppies

In the previous sub-section I referred to the failure of the revival of the privates at a festival that aimed to showcase a certain 'coloured identity'. This 'coloured identity' was one of which Afrikaans was used as a marker of 'coloured identity'. Already before the festival, carnival was used in the 1940s as a platform to introduce Afrikaans as a marker of 'coloured identity'. Many of the troupe members had Afrikaans as a mother tongue however, Afrikaans was not the language of the 'coons' (Martin, 1999). Consequently Afrikaans songs were hardly heard at the stadiums, where competitions were held (Martin, 1999).

The growing usage of Afrikaans was mostly the efforts of Dr. I.D. Du Plessis, who was appointed as the Commissioner for Coloured Affairs in 1951 (Martin, 1999). Dr. I.D. Du Plessis was especially influential in attempting to formulate a distinct Malay cultural identity, and was responsible for the establishment of the Cape Malay Board in 1939 (Martin, 1999). Thus, it is through the influence of Dr. I.D. Du Plessis that Afrikaans songs progressively became more and more part of the repertoire in the 1940's (Martin, 1999). This was all done to create a 'Coloured identity' that was an appendage to 'White identity' (Martin, 1999). Consequently this would play out in later 'coloured identity' discourses. Martin (1999) points out that this was met with oppositions but after 1948, the year that the National Party (NP) became the ruling party, pressures towards the use of Afrikaans became hard to resist. Thus *Liedjies* (Afrikaans: songs), such as *Moppies*, a comic upbeat song or melodies, became regular items of the competitions (Martin, 1999). It is clear from the above that whilst a growing standardization of the carnival in terms of its participation and outfits were taking place, efforts to make it decidedly Afrikaans was taking place as well and in addition to that the music was changing as well (Martin, 1999).

As noted earlier, repertoires consisted of modified international music and one of the important modifications was the orchestra (Martin, 1999). Traditionally, singing was accompanied by string bands. Strings progressively gave way to trumpets, trombones and saxophones (Martin, 1999). Martin (1999) argues that the usage of brass instruments is a testament to a reaffirmation of the influence of the United States on the 'coons'. He (1999) argues that the adoption of brass bands and later of electric bands can be interpreted as

strengthening the Jazz element, as well as claiming a stake in modernity through a preference for modern styles.

These changes in the music took place in the growing commercialization of the competitions, through ‘hunts’ for talents, whereby soloists no longer came from the troupe. I further tentatively argue that it could be that in the same way the forced removals impacted the standardization of costumes, it impacted the choice of soloists. Soloists no longer came from troupes because the troupes were separated in far flung areas, which destroyed the communal feeling and participation. Martin (1999) further demonstrates that the increasing presence of the brass bands, the modernization of the music, as well as the ‘Coonification’ of the carnivals were also a discreet reaction to what was happening in South Africa in the 1950s and the 1960s. The brass bands synonymous with jazz and the United States symbolized what America increasingly came to represent, especially after World War II, as an icon of freedom which was the antithesis to what was happening in South Africa in the 1950s and 60s.

What was happening in South Africa during the 1950s, and how it impacted upon the carnival was reflected in the repertoire of songs as well. In the next section I discuss how the repertoire and lyrics of the songs reflected how troupe members experienced Cape Town and society. Reflecting upon what is happening in society through song was not a new phenomena however, the effects of the apartheid regime brought on long lasting effects.

2.7.3 Repertoire of songs

From the carnival’s earlier inception, and the post emancipation society, songs were sung by informal bands of troupes. The songs reflected a satirical hostility to a post-emancipation society, Bickford-Smith (1995). These songs performed to a *ghoema* beat included variations on Rule Britannia and the Old Hundredth. Bickford-Smith (1995) refers to one version of Rule Britannia, sang in 1886 that made an overt political statement

Kom Brittanje, jy beskaaf,

Maak die nasies tot jou slaaf...

Jou dwinglandy sal gou verneer

Die wat hulle land eige noem.

Come Britannia, the civilizing one

Make the nations into slaves ...

You tyranny will soon humble

Those that call this land their own.

Here one sees how through lyrical reflections upon the post-emancipation society, which still held the same social relations.

“Here I am again ... In front of the door ... In front of the Judge ... And the Magistrate,... Oe la, my master, What did I do? Then they give me nine months In Roeland Street” (Bickford-Smith, 1995). This song refers to someone who was brought to the judge again, and sent to jail in Roeland Street which used to be part of District Six. Some of the lyrics of *ghoemaliedjies* would express a group consciousness (Bickford-Smith, 1995) “listen to what the people are saying, the people of Canal Town”. Canal Town in this instance referred to District Six which was referred to as *Kanaladorp*. Martin (1999) writes that District Six may have been named canal (kanaal) town (dorp) because it was built across from a canal. Another explanation he provides is that the word *Kanala* could refer to the Malayu word which means please, thereby emphasising the collective mutual support which existed in District Six. From this it is evident that songs served as a vehicle for sadness, anger, and making political commentary (Martin, 1999).

During the 1930s and 1950s, *moppies* (comic songs) very often parodied sexual mores and courting patterns (Jeppie and Levitan, 1990). More specifically for this section, the lyrics made reference to the effects of removals from District Six, as seen in the two song lyrics below;

Boeta Dola's out of District /he was there all the time/ Now he is very angry/he had to leave his house in District/ he was there all the time/ now he lives in Mitchells Plain/ There where the sand dunes have fine sand/ he's filled with memories/ there on the Cape Flats.

This land is mine/ God gave this land to me...Then I see a land...where children can be free...to make this land my home/If I must fight I'll fight/To make this land my own⁷.
(cited in Martin,1999).

In the same breathe Jeppie and Levitan (1990) state that these political songs may have been the exceptions in the genre of carnival song. They state that a more representative of the songs is *die nonnie van Waalstraat* (the lady from Wale Street). The song caricatures a woman assigned to the role of cook yet also perceived as attractive. At the same time the song lyrics I quoted above, *die nonnie van Waalstraat*, could be read further and deeper than the mere frivolous nature Jeppie and Levitan (1990) ascribes to it. Through singing about *die nonnie van Waalstraat* they are inscribing their existence and experience within that street which forms part of the traditional route of the carnival, thus through frivolity they are making commentary. In this section I have shown how the lyrics reflected the experiences of troupe members. With specific reference to the forced removals it reflected experiences of displacement yet at the same time a frivolous approach to life. It is with this that I want to move on to the next sub-section regarding the effects of the implementation of the Group Areas Act on the march through the city centre.

2.7.4 From circular route to one-directional route: spatial effects of apartheid

The Group Areas Act served as the catalyst for the change in parade and route. Western (cited in Baxter, 1996) points towards the effect of the removal of the carnival from the city centre, in the wake of the District Six removals from 1966. He (cited in Baxter, 1996) suggests that the reason for this ruling was to prevent the symbolic assertion of Coloured ownership of, and identity with inner city Cape Town. Already here, we see Becker's (2011) proposition of performance as an 'embodied symbolic enactment'.

The parade consisted of linking District Six and Bo-Kaap. It passed en-route not far from some historical landmarks such as 'The Groote Kerk', which is the 'first Dutch reformed church to be built in South Africa, and passed the old slave lodge building, the houses of parliament and St. George: the Anglican cathedral (Martin, 1999). This movement in the city meant the appropriation of spaces, that was temporarily re-configured. Furthermore through moving through these spaces a history and memory of slavery was performed. Jeppie (1990) and Baxter (1996) argue that this inversion and occupation of the city centre space, which appears spontaneous and anarchist, is in fact very carefully controlled through the

⁷ A song that Joseph Gabriels taught to the Young Stars in the 1960s

involvement of the Municipality in the organization of the performance. Strict rules were adhered to, troupe members were not allowed to harass members of the public. Thus, council was able to place various restrictions on the movement of 'the coons' (Martin, 1999).

Based on this route Baxter (1996) states that before the imposition of the Group Areas Act, the carnival parade followed a more or less circular route. However, after the implementation of the Act, with participants forcefully relocated to disparate areas, and banned from marching the precise route, the carnival then assumed the form of a one way trip (Baxter, 1996). Baxter (1996) argues that it changed from an inclusive circular route within the boundaries of neighbourhood communities, into a pre-established, non-negotiable one directional affair. Subsequently she states that with the implementation of the Group Areas Act, carnival took place in streets where people no longer lived, and under stringent constraints which had an effect on the style of the performance. This she argues caused a further rupture in the metaphoric process of the route as a journey narrative, whereby the heroines or heroes return to their communities wiser and more mature (Baxter, 1999).

The change in the marching routes brought a change in the speed of the music. Howard, an ethnomusicologist (1994 cited in Baxter, 1996) who for his degree in ethnomusicology focused on secular music in Cape Town, argues that over the last thirty years the speed of the music had changed and become faster. The speed used to change with the terrain, slowing down as the marchers ascended a hill, but nowadays troupes are bussed into the city therefore there is no need for them to pace their marching. Howard's claim argues Baxter (1996), may serve as an example of how the Group Areas Act and the restrictions placed on the road march may have indirectly impacted on the intricacies of style and performance.

Although Baxter (1996) argues for a perspective that sees the continuous change and 'becoming' aspect of the carnival, I argue that while her assertion locates the metaphoric process of the parade and the march in the geographical area, it would be more appropriate to focus instead on the bodies of the marchers. In chapter Six I look at the 'emergence' of a neo-circular route, through the re-routing and re-rooting of the march through the bodies and the busses. Thus, in this section I have shown how the effects of the forced removals played out on the actual parade in the city. Moving beyond the restrictions that were placed on movement, I have discussed how it played out on the style of the march through the tempo of the music. Thus, similar to how it played out in lyrics that are expressed orally, it played out

on the style of body movement. In the next section I look at how it reflected in the naming of troupes.

2.7.5 Changes in the names of troupes

In a section in which Martin (1999) notes the effects of apartheid on the *klopse* he points out that one of the changes or transformations concerned the naming of the troupes. Martin (1999) argues that names pointed towards certain glamour, allowing troupes to name themselves. Thus names such as the Glamour Boys and The Young Pennsylvanians evoked this glamour. In a later paper in which he looks at the classification and construction of identity Martin (2000) maintains that this play on names took on a particular importance because it allowed coloured people to name themselves. Martin (1999: 145) puts forward that as a group coloured people had never chosen to be called “Coloured”, “Cape Coloured” and “Malay” but was ascribed as such through the classification of the apartheid government.

He shows that the names that the troupes gave themselves were very imaginative and argues that it resulted from a perception of the self and identification with others (Martin, 2000).

What seemed to have formed a core part in the creative naming is the United States.

Moreover, the word ‘Coloured’ seems to be absent from naming, and reference to Africa seemed to not be so popular (Martin, 2000). Thus, if one were to follow Martin’s (2000) thought pattern here, which forms his core argument, carnival goers are never coloured they are always something else. The names of the troupes would either be names such as Boston or Mississippi. Martin (1999) especially makes reference to the name Pennsylvania which made its entry in 1949. By looking at the different troupe names that were prevalent from the 1930s to 1990s Martin (2000) comes up with a list of description and identification found in the names. From the list he indicates that qualifiers which projected a positive image often accompanied the name (Martin, 1999).

Sad qualifiers like Weeping *Darkies*, from the 1930s, were seldom heard and used. In fact, Martin (2000) argues that following the advent of the National Party in 1948 the intensity of adjectives connoting a positive value increased. When apartheid became firmly entrenched, and coloured people were hit by forced removals, a second wave of intensity in positive adjectives came about argues Martin (2000). He reads it as a negation of the dominant ideology, yet at the same time not an open revolt (Martin, 1999). With the forced removals the troupe names indicated a re-rooting in the places where the communities had been forced to reconstitute themselves. At the core of this section were naming, and the re-assertion of

‘identity’, understood as an embodied subject position, most specifically ‘coloured identity’. This was to form part of the post-apartheid politics of identity. In the next section I explore the early post –apartheid years.

2.8 Early Post-apartheid years

In the early post –apartheid years the *klopse* were a key player in attracting ‘the coloured vote’, by both opposition parties, the ANC and the New National Party (NNP)⁸. The aesthetics of the carnival reflected the mood of the new dispensation: ‘expectancy’. This was embodied through costume, song and the support provided by the ANC to the carnival. However, at the same time as there was expectancy, there was violence in the country, and fear of a possible civil war (Martin, 1999). Through rhetorics, and visual aesthetics, consisting of two birds and the phrase: ‘peace in our land’, the motto of the carnival reflected this dual mood of fear and expectancy. During this period a particular ‘peace song’ was very popular. The song lyrics stated that the people of the country love their country and that they should show the whole world that they can bring peace in their land. However, a particular *ghoemaliedjie*, ‘gimme hope Joanna’, won the people’s heart. *Gimme Hope Joanna* was composed by Guyanese musician Eddy Grant and its lyrics were adapted to the South African situation. The Walt Disney song ‘A whole new world’ was adapted as well to the South African situation. Thus, once again it is evident that the carnival does not exist outside of South African society. Furthermore, it is clear as well that international influence still played out in the aesthetics of the carnival.

At the same time as there was hope for the new dispensation, there was another anxiety, whether or not the carnival had a place in the new dispensation (Martin, 1999). This echoed a broader anxiety, whether coloured people had a place in the new dispensation. With the end of apartheid the first democratic elections in 1994 brought about debates surrounding ‘coloured identity’. These debates took shape especially in the Western Cape after the majority of ‘coloured people’ voted for the New National Party (Hendricks, 2005). There was a sense of marginality that many ‘coloured people’ felt within the new dispensation. They felt that they were not receiving the same ‘preferential treatment’ as the black population. To dispel this anxiety, the ANC tried to attract ‘the coloured vote’ through supporting the

⁸ Former apartheid National Party

carnival. On *tweede nuwe jaar* 1994 the newly democratically elected ANC showed their support, by giving each of the rival boards a cheque (Martin, 1999)

2.8.1 *Ordentlikheid/ deurmekaar*⁹

I locate the ambivalent nature of the *Klopse* in the broader *ordentlikheid/deurmekaar* (respectability/rowdiness) discourse/performance, which is what Erasmus (2001) theorised ‘coloured identity(s)’ around. Erasmus (2001:13) writing from personal experience indicated that respectability played an important role in identity formation in “coloured communities” ,especially within “middle-class coloureds”. Attempts at re-thinking ‘coloured identity’ as an analytical category which allows for hybridity in its construction was done by Hendricks (2005) and Erasmus (2001) among others. I argue that the *ordentlikheid/deurmekaar* discourse is performed through the character of ‘the coon/minstrel’, the figure itself a product of creolization.

In the previous section I showed how during the early post-apartheid years the carnival became a key player in ‘coloured culture’ and ‘coloured identity’. Yet at the same time it still holds/held certain ambivalence. This ambivalence is located on the nature of the process of creolization which contradicts separateness, instead emphasising the process of blending where all original styles have already been mixed (Martin, 1999). This is in direct opposition to the identity politics of the post-apartheid or indeed the segregation and apartheid politics.

The changing aesthetics of the carnival points towards creolization. At the same time, although it was diverse and a product of creolization, attempts at linking it with ‘coloured identity’ and ‘coloured culture’, which also was a product of creolization, was met with ambivalence. Thus, the creole nature of carnival points toward the creole nature of ‘coloured identity(s)’ that finds uniformity within the diversity. Moreover, the ambivalence can be located in the attempts at presenting singular uniformity. This ambivalence was seen within the context of apartheid policies which tried to control the carnival, and orchestrate a ‘coloured identity’ as an appendage to white.

The specific historical changes in the carnival brought on the different discourses surrounding ‘coloured identity’. Before the implementation of apartheid policies the distancing of ‘coloured political parties’ from the event brought on the class aspect. At a broader level it indicated the trajectory of ‘*deurmekaar/ordentlikheid*’.

⁹ Respectability/ rough or rowdiness

In the process of a shifting South African political landscape to a democratic one, this brought on new theorising and debates of ‘identity’. I argue that a lessening of the ‘coon/minstrel’ figure is taking place. Thus, a lessening of the rigid ‘*deurmekaar/ordentlikheid*’ instead of the slave history of the event is gaining more public grounds. One of the instruments that stayed consistent through the changing aesthetics was the *ghoema* drum, a wooden drum that is built like a small barrel. In Mason’s (2010) pictorial book, *Boeta*¹⁰ Achmat a maker of *ghoemas* states that the “*ghoemas* are essential to ‘the coons’”. He states that “the *gammies*” and the tambourines are the nucleus. Thus, through the changes of aesthetics the *ghoema* has stayed constant and as seen in *Boeta* Achmat’s assertion, a symbolic meaning of the *klopse* and the history of District Six¹¹. The *ghoema* has become the main feature of the *ghoema* musical complex. *Klopse* publications and stage performances calls up the aesthetic of the *ghoema* through the rhetorics of books by Mason: ‘One love, *Ghoema* Beat’, and the recent ‘*Ghoema* and Glitter’ exhibition.

Concomitant to that, the *ghoema* calls up an aesthetic formation of slavery. This I argue brings the whole creolization of the aesthetic formation ‘coloured identity’ to the forefront. In the next chapter I look at how through the growing heritage discourse in South Africa the carnival has changed from being ‘working class’ to being ‘Cape Town culture’.

2.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I have looked at how the carnival has always been in constant conversation with the changing socio-political and economic context. At the core of the changing aesthetics was the process of creolization, which defied uniformity through the blending of different cultural traits and influences. Through following a socio-historical process of looking at the aesthetics of the *klopse*, one aspect that remained constant through its changes was the assertion of an aesthetic formation of ‘working class coloured affair’. One of the aesthetics of the carnival that remained constant was the *ghoema*, I argue that the symbolism of the *ghoema* brings the slavery discourse of creolization to the forefront which will be discussed in the next section.

¹⁰ A term of respect to an elder male

Chapter 3: “Welcome to Cape Town”: public invocations of the *klopse*

September 2012; It is a Wednesday morning and I am browsing through this week’s edition of the community newspaper, The Plainsman, which is distributed free of charge to all households in Mitchell’s Plain. As I turn to page 16 my eyes fall upon the heading; “Competition to have fun in new ‘old’ Cape Town” (Plainsman, 12 September 2012). The article was offering its readers “an opportunity to celebrate some of Cape Town’s architectural Heritage with Grand West”, a casino in Cape Town, on Heritage day. Heritage day is celebrated on the 24th September and was first marked in 1996 by former President Nelson Mandela (Government website). The aim was to celebrate the cultural diversity of South Africa “the Rainbow Nation” (website about South African holidays), a term coined by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The day also points towards what anthropologist Becker (2010:75) refer to the “surprising obsession of the post-apartheid era with difference and the celebration of previously rejected ethnoracial”. Thus, this offer presented within the article was in the context of the approaching Heritage day. The article then proceeded to discuss the erection of vanished landmark buildings, at the Grand West, as homage to the culturally diverse and vibrant city. By erecting these replicas the Grand West aimed to recall the vanished symbols of Cape Town’s past... (Plainsman). The most recent is a replica of the original Grand Hotel, which was built in Cape Town in 1894, with a sculpture of Minstrels in the exterior in exuberant postures. The interesting thing here is that a highly commercial enterprise, the casino, uses the heritage discourse.

3.1 Introduction

Following the preceding chapter, I started this chapter with the piece above in order to indicate how within the growing heritage discourse in South Africa, the carnival is viewed increasingly as heritage. Discussing the growing heritage discourse which includes tourism, community museums such as the District Six museum, and exhibitions I am interested in how through the employment of various aesthetic strategies, the carnival is authenticated as embodying Cape Town.

I have divided this Chapter into four sections. The first section highlights the growing heritage discourse in South Africa within the context of a post-apartheid South Africa which emphasize multiculturalism. The third section looks at how the District Six community museum utilizes elements of the carnival to re-imagine the city to one that is more inclusive.

The second section specifically looks at the recent *Ghoema* and Glitter exhibition held at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town by the Iziko Social museum in 2010. It is then discussed within the context of the global transformation of museums. The *Ghoema* and Glitter exhibition presented the history through a sensorial presentation of memory, which incorporated archival material that placed the event and its participants firmly within the history of Cape Town, and as an integral part of Cape Town. The interesting thing about the *Ghoema* and Glitter exhibition is that it brought out different discourses of the carnival. It brought out the creolization discourse yet with a sense of exclusivity to those who lived in District Six, as well as the aspect of youth development/upliftment. In the third section I discuss Cape Town artists Roderick Sauls' *Ghoema* and Glitter installations that now features as a permanent installation at the slave lodge. I argue that the permanence of this installation at a national museum removes it from the margins of the history of Cape Town and places it as a key nexus of Cape Town as a slave city. Furthermore, I argue that through the installation a permanent appropriation of a specific space is taking place.

In the last two sections I look at the touristic marketing of the carnival and the *klopse*, where a continuous reference to revelry and merry making is made with reference to the slave past. I use this to look at the growing slavery past that seems to fill commentary about Cape Town, which hinges on the 'Cape Town as a creole City'.

3.2 The growing heritage discourse

Before continuing further, I would like to follow Shepherd (2008) in needing to ascertain what is meant by heritage, or rather the meanings different people assign to the concept heritage. The need for this was made evident during the 2012 heritage day celebration at the District Six Homecoming Centre, which forms part of the District Six community museum, I will discuss the museum later. On heritage day the homecoming centre had free access to all and hosted an exhibition curated by young school learners on 'con-heroes': their struggle heroes. After the exhibition the young curators held an open forum in which they interviewed some of their heroes. One of the questions posed were, "what is your heritage". Answers varied from the intangible: 'history', to the tangible: 'food'.

Thus one will find differing meanings and ideas of what is meant by heritage, argues Shepherd (2008). He investigated the different meanings of the heritage concept in post-apartheid South Africa. He shows it may refer to tangible objects, of treasures and buildings or more playful approach of heritage theme parks. I argue then that in the case of the *klopse*

and carnival, within public culture it is not as neatly compartmentalized of tangible versus intangible. As a performance it is intangible but through heritage making various facets of the *klopse* becomes tangible. The sculpture of the minstrels in front of the replicated Grand Hotel is a clear indicator of that, whereby it made the minstrel performance a tangible heritage. Similarly, within the ‘*Ghoema* and Glitter’ exhibition and the District Six Museum, which I will discuss later, that which is intangible becomes tangible through the process of presentation.

Becker (2010) has shown that unlike the earlier rejection of ethno-racial labels that nowadays there seems to be a growing obsession within the post-apartheid era with asserting difference. This seems to be most notably encapsulated in the celebration of heritage day. I noted earlier on in this chapter that the day was gazetted as a day to celebrate South African history and diversity, captured in the term ‘Rainbow Nation’. This diversity can range from ethno-racial diversity to gender and sexuality¹². At the same time she argues that although it embraces a range of social identities in post-apartheid South African discourses it is mostly used in reference to ethno-racial difference (Becker, 2010). Interestingly enough Becker (2010) makes reference to viewing a report of the celebration of heritage day in 2010, where there was a strong assertion of ethnic pride. Similarly, in 2012 having spent the day in central Cape Town, attending exhibitions at the District Six homecoming centre, and listening to live performances in ‘the Company’s Garden’, assertions of diversity and heritage abounded. This heritage streamed from the tangible: i.e. Table Mountain, to the intangible: music, ethnic identity “which makes up our beautiful Cape Town city”¹³, to funny assertions made by local comedienne Wayne McKay who asserted that hair forms part of coloured women’s heritage. Here he was specifically referring to the politics of hair among coloured populations. In these examples there is a continuous reference to difference, which Becker (2010) had noted as well.

With regards to institutional heritage policy, Murray (2005) found that heritage practice has been the subject of a number of changes both in the forms of approaching heritage planning, management and in legal terms. This has led to various amendments in naming the heritage act, which changed from ‘the National Heritage Resources Act (NHRA)’ to the National Monuments Act. It was then followed by the South African Heritage Resources Agency

¹² Celebration of the gay pride in South Africa can be seen as a set performance of this part of diversity of South Africa.

¹³ An assertion made by local Cape Town comedienne Wayne McKay who was the speaker at the performances in the gardens.

(Murray, 2005). Murray (2005) argues that this was done to make the conceptualization of heritage more inclusive to the diversity of the country. Similarly, Saunders (2007) considers the transformation as an attempt by the Department of Arts and Culture to redress imbalances in heritage, and promote a more egalitarian culture, whereby previously marginalised communities should now have their cultural heritages recognised.

Historians and Curators such as Saunders (2007) and Minty (2006) notes that the heritage boom saw a transformation in various institutions such as the state museum and theatres, the establishment of a department of arts and culture, a national arts council, a national heritage council, a film board and a state lottery. Minty (2006) states as well that the financing pool grew because of an increase involvement in the private-sector in supporting arts and culture, such as the Grand West casino, and through an increase in tourism (Minty, 2006). Thus, there seems to have been a ‘total’ transformation, not only in the naming but also in the institutions and the financing of it.

Becker et al (2010) and Robins (2000) connect these transformations to the arrival of a global discourse of multiculturalism alongside calls for Africanization in all spheres of South African culture. Becker (2010) noted that the South African keywords project of the 1980s was in similar vein to the rejection of ethnic labels, however, the newer version entitled ‘New South African Keywords’ deals more with these labels, by looking at concepts such as ethnicity and heritage in the new context of celebrated difference. Thus, Shepherd and Robins (2008) notes in their introduction to the New South African Key Words that in post 1994, notions of culture, tradition, and identity seems to be seen more in public life. This discourse is driven by “NGOs, the media and the ever growing heritage and cultural tourism” (Becker et al, 2010:2).

Writing from an architectural background Murray (2005) reflected upon research she had done at Mission Settlements in South Africa. She argues that the concept with the most currency circulating in popular heritage discourse in South Africa at present is the idea of heritage as inherited tradition. Thus similarly to Becker et al (2010), Murray (2005) argues that the concept is applied in many ways. It is used in popular conceptions of history, through market-driven tourist narratives, in the media, and particularly in developing sites (2005:61)

In her work on heritage making, Meyer et al (2009) puts forward that ‘heritage making’ includes the styling and or fashioning of particular items as ‘heritage’. Subsequently it is clear from the above that there is an active sense of heritage making, as argued by Meyer

et.al. (2009). It follows then that in the making of heritage there is always the underlying sense that representations of history and culture are authentic and fixed. In the next section I look at how the community museum District Six engages with carnival.

3.3 District Six museum engagement with carnival

During the year 2012 I participated in two projects run by the District Six museum and homecoming centre. Both projects involved the re-imagining of the city, and of District Six as more inclusive. One of these projects entitled re-imagining identity in carnival facilitated by artists Hassan and Hussain Essop was run in partnership with the District Six museum and the Art Peace project of the University of Hamburg/Germany. A three day workshop was attended by the young curators of the museum, a group of school learners from various schools in Cape Town. The learners, aged about fourteen fifteen years, identified themselves as black and coloured. Through the workshop the learners had to re-imagine carnival through photography. I participated along with the young learners in re-imagining carnival. Mogamat Benjamin who used to be a *moffie voorloper* (a homosexual dressed in women's clothing who usually led the troupe) and Ruth Jephta a seamstress for the *klopse* were the speakers they had at the workshop. Some of the themes that the learners came up with were slavery. This was evident in the photographs they, myself included, staged and captured, which depicted re-imagined stories of slavery using carnival themes.

The District Six Museum located on Buitenkant Street in Cape Town stands at the forefront on the representations of 'ordinary Black people'. I use 'Black' here as a political term to refer to all those who are considered as non-white and as indicative of inclusivity of all stories. Saunders (2007) states that the museum found its roots in 1989 when a group of ex-residents who were then involved in a "Hands Off District 6" campaign came up with the idea of finding a museum as a way to bring the former residents of District Six together. Prosalendis et al. (2001) states that the mission of the Museum was to mobilize the masses of ex residents and their descendants into a movement of land restitution, community development, and political consciousness. In line with the transformation of museums, Prosalendis, Marot, Soudien and Nagia (2001) in an article in which they present and gave their impressions of the museum at different time periods, states that the District Six museum is more than just a static place it is in fact a space that enables us to continuously confront our past.

Rassool (2001:ix), a historian and founder of District Six museum sees it as “fortuitous” that District Six Museum was created as a cultural institution when transformations were occurring in South Africa. Thus, the transformations that were happening in the country, and globally, made it conducive for community museums such as District Six museum to flourish. Rassool (2001) further argues that although the transformation that was happening in the country made it a conducive context, at the same time, being a community museum it did not face any pressure to conform to state authorities and the emerging heritage policies.

Minty (2006), an independent local Cape Town curator, notes that a key aspect of the museum is the story of forced removals, memorialising ‘hidden histories’ and the reimagining of the city. This is not particular to Cape Town as elsewhere in South Africa community museums like South End museum in Port -Elizabeth followed the District Six museum model as well.

In this age of transformation in museums the “museum effects” have transformed as well (see Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, 1991:410). Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (1991:410) describes the “museum effect” as the manner in which ordinary things become special when placed in museum settings. This manner involves the staging of the objects, the use of light, the display cases and pedestals. The key feature of the new museums is that they deploy strategies of the applied theatrics of aesthetics and rhetoric to not only invite emotional responses from visitors writes Andermann and Arnold de-Simine (2012) and Dickinson, Blair and Ott (2010), but to reflect as well on their positions. Thus an active usage of the aesthetics and rhetorics is involved. In addition to this, the very interactive public concept that District Six museum employs makes the process of the employment of aesthetic strategies an interactive one (Prosalendis et al, 2001).

However, at the same time Saunders (2007) argues that it is this very use of certain aesthetics and rhetoric employed by the District Six museum that has led to criticism of coloured exclusivity in the narration of history, with relatively little on the history of the black residents who had lived there in considerable numbers. This has been addressed (see Rassool & Prosalendis, 2001) and is continually being addressed in new displays opening at the museum. There is thus a move towards removing the ‘coloured exclusivity’ that has been attached to the history of the District and in turn making it more inclusive.

To return to Prosalendis et al's (2001) assertion that the museum is more than a static place, one of the moves, as stated above, is through opening new exhibitions, through its particular curatorial practice of continuity, inclusivity, and spontaneity. This includes working with "youth, communities and the disengaged from spheres as diverse as religious groups, street children, prisoners at Correctional Services institutions, unemployed youth, young artists, established artists, professionals and intellectuals, both academic and community" (Prosalendis et al, 2001:91). Similarly the workshop I attended with the young school learners were indicative of the inclusive projects the museum is engaging with as it re-imagines carnival and the District.

This project was followed by another District Six museum project, the Reminiscence theatre festival. This festival was to be a three day event to re-imagine the city and its public space. It started on the 31st of November and builds upon the Emancipation day procession: the day the slaves were set free. This festival called upon artists as well as communities to participate. According to the booklet the festival draws upon the notions of celebration, performance and the on-going legacies of practices of segregation. The form of celebration they drew upon was the *klopse tweede nuwe jaar* celebrations and facets of it like the *klopse kamer*. The festival was attended by black, coloured as well as white women and men, with most of them being artists. In these two projects that I highlighted one sees this continuous re-making and re-imagining of the city and the District. Moreover, I argue that in the two projects there is a growing assertion of a slavery heritage, which carnival seems to embody. This seems to comment on Cape Town as a city with a slave history.

Similar projects were already conducted a decade ago in 2003, for instance the magazine *Rootz* did a cover of the re-imagining carnival project. The re-imagining carnival project was part of the District Six Museum's Public education Programme for the 2003 Cape Town Festival. Among the many artists involved in this programme were local Hip Hop artist Emile Jansen of the hip hop group Black Noise. The programme included samba artists, capoeirists, hip hop artists and homeless children walking on stilts. The aim of this programme according to Julian Jonker (Rootz, 2004) was to draw the connections between different slave routes and the routes of African culture. The project was described as having formed part of an array of interests from cultural practitioners in the possibilities of carnival in Cape Town (Rootz, 2004). Through her article on the project she suggests that perhaps by focussing on the parallels of the different forms of the carnivalesque in Cape Town, "we are edging towards a

carnival that is universally inclusive, and free from the shame of blackface minstrelsy” (Rootz, 2004: 16). This inclusivity that she argued in the magazine was further embodied through the images in the article. On the cover of the magazine a woman is shown in *klopse* gear with a banjo. Through having the woman on the cover tradition and change intercepted. This is different from the drum publications in the 1950s and 1960s, which featured male *klopse* only. The rest of the article featured an image of a dreadlocked man blowing a horn, *klopse* troupes in their gears, *nagtroepe* and a woman in a bikini top and jeans dancing to the beat of the samba drummers. A sense of inclusivity and re-imagining of the city and the carnival was embodied here through the rhetoric of slave routes/root.

The question that follows now is: Where do state institutions fit into the representation and presentation of the carnival? I have noted earlier in this chapter that a transformation occurred in heritage discourse and practices. In turn this transformation was reflected in institutions such as museums. Similarly, with the transformation of heritage discourses, a transformation occurred in museums, which were reflective of a global transformation. This global transformation is noted by Andermann and Arnold de-Simine (2012:3) who writes that “over the last decades, in response to feminist, postmodern and postcolonial critiques of the modern museum, objects, collections and processes of musealization have been radically re-signified and re-positied in the cultural arena”. This in turn led to the emergence of new forms of museums. With this new emergence, a change was seen in the narrative structure, as well as the process of narration, which moved from the grand authoritative narrative to a place of horizontal practice related notions of memory, place and community, argues Andermann and Arnold de-Simine (2012). It is with this that I move onto the Iziko national museum’s ‘*Ghoema and Glitter*’ exhibition.

3.4 ‘*Ghoema and Glitter*’ exhibition



Figure 1 entry to the gallery if one were to turn left in the doorway you entered an exhibition about Dutch Colony history and furniture



Figure 2 A board which stood outside the gallery indicating the extended timeframe of the exhibition

31 July 2011

The Iziko Social History museum under the curatorship of Lallou Meltzer and a team of researchers, film makers, and artists produced in 2010 the exhibition ‘*Ghoema and Glitter*’. It was the first ever exhibition to cover the carnival. It was originally scheduled to run only from 5 June 2010 to 31 Jan 2011, but “came back by popular demand” (as I saw on a poster during one of my visits to the exhibition). Consequently its run was extended to the 31st July 2011. It was financed by the national lottery and exhibited in the Castle. To narrate this story the curator team drew on secondary and primary research, which included works of Martin, Baxter and Jeppie.

Most notably the team consisted of Cape Town artist Roderick Sauls, who had worked on memory projects before. He had famously done ‘Rod’s room’ in the District Six museum. ‘Rod’s room’ is an exhibition which speaks of the fading recollection of memory of the District. He was also responsible for an installation in the Slave Lodge which deals with slavery and re-creating the memory of it. According to Lallou Meltzer (the making of *Ghoema and Glitter*, 2010) this exhibition was a historic moment in the country, because it had never been told in a museum. One could say that she was referring specifically to the fact that it had never been told in a national mainstream museum before.

The exhibition took the visitor on a historical-memory tour which was mediated through multimedia technology. For the video footage they approached Joelle Chesselet whom together with Loyd Ross had previously shot the *Silver Fez*, a documentary about the Malay choirs (The making of *Ghoema and Glitter*, 2010). For the ‘*Ghoema and Glitter*’ exhibition she had shot various scenes, footages and interviews which were interspersed throughout the gallery in four different themed documentaries. I will now discuss various aspects I noticed at the exhibition, as well as draw upon the footage in the CD ‘the making of *Ghoema and Glitter*’.

3.4.1 Good Hope Gallery: a space of meanings

On the day that I visited the exhibition there were not so many people around the Castle and in the Good Hope Gallery. Physically the space was small and they



Figure 3 image of the Castle from outside

had to utilize it strategically in order to tell a story, stated Meltzer (the making of *Ghoema* and *Glitter*, 2010). However, set in the Castle of Good Hope the space held much more meaning than the limited circumference of it.

The Castle of Good Hope is situated on the corner of Darling and Buitenkant Street in the inner city area of Cape Town and is opposite the central bus and train station, two of the main form of transportation for many of Cape Town's residents who travel daily into the city. The castle, which is more like a fort, was built between 1666 and 1679 by the South East India company (VOC) as a maritime replenishment station (Castle of Goodhope Website) and is the oldest surviving colonial building in South Africa. Today the Castle is the seat of the military and houses the castle military museum and Iziko museums of Cape Town.

The website of the Iziko museum holds that the Castle of Good Hope is South Africa's key colonial building, which provides entry points into issues of power and control in the period of Dutch VOC settlement of the Cape. Animating the inanimate building, the website states that the Castle holds the story of the people who lived and worked in it. Voicing this meaning and representation of the space was Roderick Sauls who reflected on his childhood when as a young child he would walk past the Castle and "not know what was going on in the space" (The making of *Ghoema* and *Glitter*, 2010). Thus, working in this space afforded him with an opportunity to create meaning through drawing on his own childhood memory.

Consequently, through his installation he drew on his childhood of growing up in District Six and running up to Hannover Street to watch the *klopse*, of which both his father and his cousins were involved in. He himself had been involved in the Christmas Choirs. Thus, through his installation Roderick Sauls reflected upon his own intimate memories of the *klopse* and the Castle of Good Hope.

As I entered the gallery I saw one room was set up as a viewing room. Chairs were set up in front of a projected screen. The walls of the room were surrounded and pasted with various images of *klopse* troupes. I sat down for a while, and while seated I noticed more people entering the space. They would walk around, look at the images on display, and the boards, and sit down to watch the videos. In room two they had a similar setting, of chairs with a screen, but in this room there were examples of different boards¹⁴. One board in particular was decorated in gold and green, which forms part of the South African colors. It had "Our African dream" inscribed upon it and followed a motif of the African dream. The board next

¹⁴ These are display boards which has a motif on it.

to it had a FIFA world cup theme with soccer balls and a mascot. It seems that these two boards had been selected for the display because it commented on specific time periods.

The panels in this room were pasted with various newspaper clippings from local newspapers such as *The Argus* and *The Cape Times*, some dating back as far as the 1930s. The newspaper clippings had headings like “coon carnival likely to be best”, “happy coloured carnival” and “renewed interest in *Ghoema* music in Cape”. It thus indicated the representation of the carnival in newspapers. Various gears were hanging against the wall and further down the room there were *ghoemas* set up. The *ghoemas* were in an encasement alone. This could be read as emphasizing the symbolic meaning the *ghoema* has in carnival. This was set up next to a board that paid homage to 2010 World Cup and next to it was one that had the red emblematic ribbon on it and underneath it stood AIDS is a Killer. This further showed how the event is always engaging with society and never separated from it.

Various panels depicted the different aspects of the carnival, its slavery inception, the influence of the minstrel figure and the American ‘Atjas’. Next was a panel that highlighted the family generational aspect. It was embodied by an image of a young girl and a man that is presumably her father in *klopse* costume. What is most interesting of this panel was the ‘our culture’ aspect that went further in establishing the carnival as part of ‘our’ blood. The creole nature of the carnival was presented through panels that had the different song types of the *klopse*, *nagtroepe* and Christmas bands¹⁵. The creole nature and trans-Atlantic influence was further consolidated with a panel that described the famous Afrikaans song *die Alibama* (the Alabama) which was in reference to the Confederate American CSS Alabama ship that captured, during the American Civil War (1861-65), the Northern States’ ship *Seabride* in Table Bay. This event followed by another Alabama ship event was memorialized in the song *die Alibama*. Panels describing the aesthetics of the carnival presented the character of the *moffie*, the making of the costume and *smeering* of the face (Facepaint). Most of these panels were presented in a comparative nature presenting the past through images and text, as well as the present day situation.

In this room was an overhead film by Joelle Chesselet and Loyd Ross, portraying the aspect of youth development/upliftment. The film showed Moenier Adams, of the production

¹⁵ *Nagtroepe* are the Malay choirs that march on New Year’s Eve in the inner City. The Christmas Bands are brass bands that play on Christmas Eve.

Afrikaaps, coaching some of the youngsters from the newly formed Starlites youth development troupe. Moenier has been involved with the Malay choirs and *klopse* from his childhood. He was approached by Hadji Bucks, a successful business man and owner of a Malay troupe, to coach the youngsters. A noteworthy observation is how the event is moving into places not traditionally associated with it. Paarl is hardly a place where one would assume the *klopse* to perform, some of the residents in the film made mention of it as well, that it is a first for them. Furthermore, this documentary would later be broadcasted online by the satellite TV channel Aljazeera (Aljazeera webpage).

In the middle of the room, between the different sections, were mannequins dressed in different period costumes. However, the mannequins did not pose in the manner one is used to seeing in department stores, that is, either in static or relaxed poses. Contrary to that, these mannequins were replicas of the poses one sees captured in photos, which fills books such as *One love, Khoema Beat* (Mason). Similarly, the sculptures in front of the replica Grand Hotel turned out to be replica postural sculptures. These mannequins were the work of Roderick Sauls which I will discuss later.

The exhibition was set out on an open floor plan. The open floor creatively embodied the 'street culture' of the carnival. It culminated with the street barricade at the end of the show. A literal barricade was erected to symbolize security and control at the street parades, as well as the stadiums. At a broader level it embodied the Group Areas Act and forced removals. Behind it were viewing screens. On these screens one could listen to and watch discussions by various notable people such as music researcher Collin Miller, who had published a Sheet music of Cape Jazz, and the late jazz specialist and memory activist Vincent Kolbe, who grew up in District Six.

The opening of the exhibition was attended by various artists, most prominently the well-known Afrikaans musician David Kramer. Surrounded by cameras, shooting both moving images and still images, a *klopse* troupe proceeded to the exhibition. Malay Choirs were present as well, most notably Katchie Davids of the documentary the Silver Fez.

There is no denying that the '*Khoema and Glitter*' exhibition left and made quite an impression as is evident by the continuous extension. There were various website accounts of

it as well. A DVD was produced, showing ‘the making of the exhibition’, as well as a booklet was printed.

3.5 Performative installation at the Slave Lodge

In September 2011 Cape Town artist Roderick Sauls’ installation, that was part of the ‘*Ghoema* and Glitter’ exhibition, became a permanent exhibition at the Slave Lodge. The Slave Lodge is one of the oldest buildings in Cape Town and the many names of the building over three centuries – Slave Lodge, Government Offices Building, Old Supreme Court, and South African Cultural History Museum – reflect the long and rich history of the building. Thus, similar to the Castle, the Slave Lodge held (holds) issues of power and control, to artist Roderick Sauls, who was born in District Six Cape Town and grew up on the Cape Flats. Roderick Sauls has over the past 20 years focused his inquiry around themes of identity, memory, loss and absence. Thus, many of his works have to do with memory making. Besides the installation at the Slave Lodge some of his other *Ghoema* and Glitter work has been moved to the Bo-Kaap museum. In the Bo-Kaap museum he installed another installation consisting of *klopse* jackets. In that installation he unpacked the stereotypes of what *klopse* is, through trying to bring the humanity of those who participate to the forefront. Thus, he unpacked ‘the coon’ character. This he did by having images of his mother, and notable entertainers imprinted on the inside of the jackets. By doing this, Rod Sauls was actually negating the argument of wearing a mask. At a broader level, this installation dealt with identity issues as well, as he explained to me in the conversations I had with him about his public art.

However, in this section I would like to focus on his master’s thesis installation at the Slave Lodge. The installation piece he did, entitled *os moeties vegietie*, (*we should not forget*) formed part of his 2004 masters of fine arts at the University of Cape Town (UCT). I had seen the installation of his piece in the foyer of the Slave Lodge, by accident, after having previously seen it at the *Ghoema* and Glitter exhibition. I knew I had to speak to him about it. When I asked him what inspired him, with reference to the installation, he replied that his inspiration came from his childhood. As a young child, his father was part of the *klopse* and thus he sees it as part of his culture, growing up, and part of his childhood memories. More specifically he sees it as a testimony of the son of the soil, where his ancestors came from. Thus, when they approached him he was excited, because this would afford him with the opportunity to work creatively and create meaning in this place that holds so much history of the city.

Figure 4 Image of the installation at the slave lodge



The image above is of the ‘*Ghoema and Glitter*’ installation that he had produced for his masters in Fine Arts at UCT. Situated at the front portal of the Slave Lodge one cannot miss it. While Roderick Sauls and I were sitting in the front portal, discussing his piece, many visitors to the museum would stop at the installation, candidly touch it and giggle. One group of young people were especially excited by the piece, they posed behind the mannequins who were headless. When I asked Roderick Sauls about the headless mannequins, he said that they had no heads because he did not want to dictate who the *klopse* are, “any one could have been and could be the *klopse*” he said. This he connected to the history of the Cape that was diverse. The postures of the mannequins were meant to capture the moment of performance. When I asked him about the choice in costume for the mannequins he replied that those were all costumes he had found, or people had donated to him.

While we continued our conversation the excited group got more rowdy in their interactions with the mannequins. It appeared that they got a bit carried away, because the security guard came by to stop them, and inform them they are not supposed to touch the mannequins. Yet Roderick Sauls feels that that is the point of public art. People should be able to make meaning of art through interacting with it. It seemed my own interaction would then ensue as well when we moved to the other piece of the installation, seen in the image below.



Figure 5 Installation at the Slave Lodge Artist: Roderick Sauls

The image above, of two mannequins sitting on a bench, reminded me of another installation of Roderick Sauls. I saw it as a reference to an installation he had, consisting of two benches *slegs blankes* (whites only) in front of the building where re-classification used to take place. When I shared my interpretation Roderick Sauls replied that this kind of meaning making is what his art is about. It is not an end product it's a process of meaning making, as one interacts with the installation he stated. His installations are thus performances and always in a process. Another noteworthy observation is the images behind the mannequins. If one looks at the images on the wall behind the mannequins it would seem that a history of Cape Town was stylized by both the mannequins and the images of war on the wall.

Thus, through his art and using the aesthetics of the *klopse*, Roderick Sauls is able to claim these spaces, spaces that bring up issues of power and control from slavery, colonialism and apartheid. Furthermore, by having his installation at the Slave Lodge he feels that he gets to claim his place within these spaces through the senses of touch and see. However, it is more than just his personal claim on these spaces. I argue that it could be read as making a commentary on the history of Cape Town as a creole city and placing the carnival and *klopse* within the process of creolization. This is especially evident in terms of the slavery discourses that fill accounts of the *klopse* and carnival these days. I move now to the

marketing of the carnival within the tourism sector and how the slave discourse plays out there.

3.6 'Welcome to Cape Town' It's just like Rio: the presentation of a city

Alongside the transformation of heritage discourses and practices developed a new focus of tourism in Cape Town. Robins (2000) noted that Cape Town has managed to represent itself as one of Africa's most popular tourist cities. Visser (2005) further argues that tourism has become a pillar of the Cape Town urban economy. This is within a context that saw countries constructing themselves as commodities with a unique identity, culture and traditions (Rassool, C & Witz 1996). Thus Witz, Rassool and Minkley (2001:277) argue that "Tourism in South Africa", "is not merely a business but it is also about the packaging of images that represent the society and its past" and a presentation of a city as proposed by Ebron (2002).

The Western Cape and Northern Cape tourist industries have developed and elaborated new place selling strategies which Robins (2000) calls the new 'rainbow' tourist. The carnival is among the selling strategies which Robins (2000) had not mentioned in his work, work which focused on urban tourism. Here I argue that when one thinks of the *klopse* in public discourses, especially in the touristic setting, it goes beyond 'coloured identity'. One rather sees a growing representation of Cape Town as an African city, with a slave past, and an attempt to represent it as a carnival city like Rio de Janeiro, as seen in the following excerpt I found online on a travel website;

"The Cape Minstrel Carnival, much like Mardi Gras, is a celebration of freedom – and a uniquely local event not to be missed"

(http://www.capetown.travel/attractions/entry/Tweede_Nuwe_Jaar_Kaapse_Klopse_Celebrations/)

Thus in the extract above one sees how the carnival is compared to the Mardi Gras. This seems to be the blue print when one describes a carnival, as this comparison is not particular to the carnival in Cape Town. Green (2002) focusing on Trinidadian carnival argues that marketing programmes in foreign countries attempt to highlight the cultural distinctiveness of Trinidad carnival, but also uses more generic depictions of carnivals, that draw on popular images of Mardi Gras or Brazilian carnival. Thus, marketing can highlight the distinctiveness of the carnival, yet also draw on similar generic depictions of carnivals. Marketing also indicate the integral relationship of authenticity to commodification, and lastly the portrayal of carnival may also be portrayed within the framework of 'sun, sea, sand, and sex tourism'

(Green, 2002). He further argues that public festivals not only provide occasions to make statements about national identity, it also offers culture brokers prospects of seeking foreign exchange through tourism (Green, 2002). In this case culture can be seen as both a commodity and a source of National pride. Similarly, the Comaroffs (2009) writing on the concept of ethnicity developed the notion of 'Ethnicity Inc', which essentially highlights the commodification of culture and indigenous intellectual property. Drawing on Meyer et.al (2009) who argued that 'heritage making' includes the fashioning or styling of particular items as 'heritage', I argue that one can refer to 'tourism making' in a similar manner. In this instance the item is 'the carnival'.

Consequently like Green (2002) contended, the marketing strategies consists of emphasising its uniqueness, 'uniquely local event', yet also draws comparison to similar events, in this case Mardi Gras. At the same time, the uniqueness is not drawn out simply by stating it is 'uniquely local' rather an aesthetic of persuasion is being played in the form of rhetorics- the power of oratory to win people's minds by words (see Meyer et.al. 2009). Although not in the form of an oratory persuasion, the persuasion on tourist websites is textually, however it still holds onto persuasion, as seen in the following excerpt I found online on Cape Town Tourism. Headlined 'Cape Minstrel' and illustrated with an image of a troupe in pink and lilac outfits, and white hats the description follows;

While new year always arrives with a big bang in the Mother City, it's the Cape Minstrel Carnival, known as Tweede Nuwe Jaar (second new year), that gives the celebration its local colour. The Cape Minstrel Carnival is Cape Town's longest-running street party, tracing back to old slave traditions during the days of the Cape Colony.

Historically celebrated on January 2, the one day Cape slaves were given off every year, the carnival is still marked today, typically on January 1, by merrymaking, music and a parade: Performers from local communities, dressed as minstrels and waving parasols, dance and sing their way from Zonnebloem, formerly District Six, through the city centre.

Legend has it that the carnival was influenced by a group of African-American musicians who docked in Cape Town in the late 1800s and entertained sailors with their spontaneous performances. Many tunes you will hear played during the parade are more than 200 years old, although you're sure to hear pop songs and local interpretations of modern music too. The song-and-dance troupes involved take the event very seriously – some start practicing up to six months in advance – and there are prizes for the most flamboyant performance, the best-dressed troupe, the best singer and the best band.

The Cape Minstrel Carnival, much like Mardi Gras, is a celebration of freedom – and a uniquely local event not to be missed (Cape Town Travel Webpage)

Thus, within this excerpt through the arrangement of words and expressions, rhetorics come into play whereby the carnival is depicted as having slave routes tracing back hundreds of years. At the same time, I argue that it inserts itself into one that is filled with fun, merrymaking yet still holding a certain sense of mysticism ie. “Legend has it...” Through this Cape Town and the carnival is fully entrenched within a slave history.

In this way descriptions of the carnival as having slavery roots and routes become the norm in describing the carnival and marketing it. However, this persuasion is not only within the rhetorics, it is accompanied by images which indicate merrymaking, and the bright coloured satins. Through this it is evident that a presentation of a city, which has slave roots, is presented. In this case the carnival becomes the embodiment of the slave roots, and to use Ebron’s expression (2002), a frame of enactment, creating moments of Cape Town not just in Cape Town, but in the performance of Cape Town for wide-ranging audiences. However, similarly to what Green (2002) noted with regards to the presentation of the Trinidadian carnival by magazines, the presentation of the Carnival on tourism websites fail to present the intricate historical processes of the *klopse*. Although alluding to its slave root and routes, within the commodification of the carnival, and authenticating through rhetorics, the carnival is presented as a ‘thing’, an object as oppose to a process (see Green, 2002).

3.7 Does ‘zation’ in creolization mean continuous process: discussing the usage of creolization?

I wrote this heading in order to draw attention to how the concept of creolization fits in here. My understanding of creolization is that it is a constant flow of drawing on different cultural elements and traits. As indicated in Chapter Two of this thesis, Martin (1999) argued that carnival is a product of the ‘melting pot’ of creolization at the Cape. Presently carnival as a product of creolization has brought on different ways in which it is used in public culture and tourism. The different usages rest on emphasizing the inclusivity of it, and continuous process of it as seen in the District Six museum projects. It could have an exclusive nature to it whereby it has owners: ‘our culture’ as seen in the *Ghoema* and Glitter exhibition or it could be used as an ‘end- product’ to be sold and marketed, as seen in the tourism marketing strategies.

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the growing enactment of Cape Town as a creole city, a city with a slave past. I have done this by exploring how within the growing heritage discourse in South Africa, carnival has come to be seen as heritage. In exploring the usage of carnival in public culture and marketing I have shown how the District Six community museum utilizes elements of the carnival to re-imagine the city to one that is more inclusive.

I then looked at the recent *Ghoema* and Glitter exhibition held at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town by the Iziko Social museum and discussed it within the context of global transformations of museums. The interesting thing about the *Ghoema* and Glitter exhibition is that it brought out different discourses of the carnival. It brought out the aspects of youth development/upliftment. It presented the creolization process and at the same time it exhibited a sense of exclusivity to those who lived in District Six.

In the last section I looked at how through marketing strategies the carnival is used to market Cape Town as a city with a creole slave past where the feature of creolization is marketed as an authentic end-product.

In the midst of these discussions I discussed Cape Town Artist Roderick Sauls' permanent installation at the Slave Lodge as a claiming of space, and re-configuration of the meaning of spaces through his art. This exhibition brings up a claiming of socio-historical spaces through the aesthetics of the *klopse*. More specifically artist Rod Saul reflections upon it bring up issues of belonging and claiming of spaces through the aesthetics which forms a core part of my argument in this thesis.

Chapter 4: Becoming Las Vegas

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I introduce Las Vegas, the troupe I joined during the 2011/2012 carnival season. I present it within the different locations and positions from which most of the members come from, giving a description of each area and position. I introduce the research methods

followed during the research process and my reflections during the research process. I discuss my positions as a researcher who at the same time held a position of being ‘at home yet not at home’.

4.2 Gaining access

In 2011 after I handed in my proposal I was faced with the dilemma, how and where do I find a troupe to follow. This was mostly due to the fact that growing up I had no real tangible connections with the *klopse*, thus I had no readily available access. In my case my upbringing pointed towards a working class background. Yet contrary to Jeppie’s (1990) assertion that the carnival is an expression of working class ethos, my upbringing pointed more towards Baxter’s (1996) countered argument that participation is more nuanced than merely putting it into a category of working class.

My mother grew up during the 1960s in Bokmakierie, a low socio-economic area in Athlone, one of the oldest areas to which Coloured Capetonians were confined. As she has told me, she grew up with the practices of the Christmas Bands, a more respectable music practice as pointed out by Bruinders (2011) in her research on the Christmas bands. Her father had played in it however she had not. When I asked her why she had not participated in it as well, she replied that girls did not play in it. Bruinders (2011) points out that it was in the 1990s with the change and transformation in South Africa that women participation grew in the Christmas Bands. My mother’s value system was and is based on the ethos of respectability and conservatism which was informed as well by her upbringing in a NG, *Nederlands Gereformeerde* (Dutch reformed) church. She and my late father eventually converted to Pentecostalism. My mother viewed the *klopse* as *deurmekaar; hulle maak n klomp geraas ek kan dit nie vat nie*, (*they make a noise I cannot take it*). As they went against her moral understanding of respectability and conservatism she did not interest herself in it. More



specifically the *klopse* and carnival went against the ethos of their Pentecostalism that framed it as *werelds dinge*, ('worldly' secular things). The philosophy that was preached in church was, 'yes we were good in those things when we were in the world but now we are with Jesus and we should leave it'.

My father and mother not participating in the *klopse* and the ethos of *deurmekaar* and conservatism, which was related back to religion, formed part of my background. In this regard it informed my dilemma of gaining access. This was until Hibah Hendricks, a friend and fellow anthropology student, suggested to me that her father Mr. Hendricks could assist me with finding a solution to this dilemma. Mr. Hendricks is a member of WEPCRU and is a *klopse* enthusiast more specifically he is very passionate about the youth development aspect of the *klopse*¹⁶.

I met the Las Vegas troupe on a Monday evening during their practice session in 2011. Earlier that evening Mr. Hendricks and Hibah had picked me up in Bokmakierie, an area in Athlone. At that time I was still living in Bokmakierie and they were taking me to a troupe in Mitchells Plain. Although, I had the option to follow a troupe in Athlone which would have been nearer, I decided to follow one in Mitchells Plain. This was mostly due to safety reasons since I was carrying a video camera given to me by the SANPAD project for research purposes.

It was near dark as we pulled up to a seemingly empty parking lot in front of a building in Lentegeur. I have since learned that the building belongs to Mohammed, more affectionately known as Moh. Moh had made the space available to not only Las Vegas but the youth band Impronto as well. The parking lot seemed empty, a few men were standing around outside, whilst sole figures walked past on the field next to the building. I have since witnessed on subsequent visits that whilst the choir is practicing inside, there would be people sitting or standing outside discussing the carnival season and logistics.

Music was emanating from the old surgery room wherein the choir was practicing. Mr. Hendricks, Hibah and I joined some of the people standing in the doorway. When Maloe, the troupe leader appeared, Mr. Hendricks called him aside and introduced me to him. I then told Maloe of my intentions of joining a troupe for research purposes and asked if it was possible

¹⁶ The Western and Eastern Provinces Cultural and Rugby Unity (WEPCRU) focus on youth development, for now mainly on the Cape Flats including Gugulethu. Thus it was with his help that I was introduced to Las Vegas.

for me to join and follow Las Vegas. Maloe immediately stated that it would be no problem. He then introduced me to the choir, at an appropriate time, and stated that I wanted to study the *klopse* and Las Vegas. He compared what I was doing to a book and documentary and then asked the members if it was fine with them for me to follow the troupe and attend the practice session. Afraid that they would have the impression that I am producing a documentary that will be shown on television or sold, I then explained further that it was a school project that I am busy with. By the end of the evening I was introduced to Shana and Amina who energetically kept telling me I should feel free to ask them anything and even asked me if I was on BBM¹⁷. Upon reflections now I am prone to think that my dilemma which turned into an 'easy access' was due to being introduced by Mr. Hendricks.

The very same week Maloe took me along to the board meeting. At this meeting the captains of the different troupes at Vygieskraal and the board members of the *Kaaps Klopse Karnaval* was discussing the logistics of the *voorsmaakie*, in the inner city. Subsequently later the evening they found out that it would not be taking place. That evening Maloe introduced me to the older troupe captains and Mr. Mathews the director of the *Kaapse Klopse Karnaval*. But first he first introduced me to Denis, who also serves on the *Kaapse Klopse Karnaval* board, to inform him of my purpose there and to request that I could attend the meeting. Denis acquiesced but suggested that we should speak to Mr. Mathews as well.

We caught up with him just as he was about to leave the parking lot. After introducing me to Mr. Mathews and after I had informed him of my purpose there he replied that it is a good thing that I am doing the research. When we parted ways he agreed that I could attend the meeting and do the research and requested that I should email him a document which outlines my research objectives. As there was an overwhelming acceptance from Las Vegas, the other troupe captains and board members, I was welcomed by each person who held a seniority position with. This kind of acceptance forms part of how one gets accepted into the troupes, through someone with a seniority position. Thus during the carnival season of 2011/2012 I followed and participated in the carnival activities with Las Vegas, and based my research at *Vygieskraal* stadium.

¹⁷ Black Berry Messenger

4.3 'The umbrella' Las Vegas

Las Vegas is one of the many troupes that are based in Mitchells Plain and also elsewhere in Cape Town. The troupe is affiliated with the *Kaapse Klopse Karnaval* board which holds its competitions at *Vygies Kraal* stadium in Belgravia Estate, a sub-section of Athlone. Fabuluos Las Vegas was founded on 7 March 2008 by Jamalodien (Maloe) Masoet, Ebrahiem (Hiema) Herby, Phaldie (Vallie) Masoet; Maloe's older brother, Amien Adams and Fowzia Moses. The founders, today regarded as the core members, came from a circle of friends of Maloe. Although a newly formed group which stands up against age old troupes such as the Cape Town Hawkers, all of the founding members of Las Vegas had been involved with various *klopse* troupes, some since childhood. Maloe and the other founding members had come together because they perceived a need for a new troupe. Maloe told me that most of the troupes were established *da bo* (there above), referring to the other parts of Lentegeur near *Makkha* Petunia Street. Yet there was nothing in their area of Lentegeur.

As a fairly new troupe the members of Las Vegas have had to prove that the troupe is not a 'fly by night' troupe. This points to the fact that many new troupes are formed every year but not many survive. Las Vegas has had to prove not only its longevity but also its worthiness in being 'competition' to other troupes. Thus, often times Maloe or some of the other executives would say we need to show them we will make it to the 5th year. Often times their debut year, in which they were placed 3rd in the competition, was used and conjured up reflectively by many of its members, as a validation of their potential to be one of the most successful groups. Reflecting on being an executive member Sohail says being an executive member brings on added responsibilities and challenges, one of the challenges is promoting Las Vegas in the Lentegeur area.

Thus, Las Vegas is a fairly young troupe, and would only be celebrating its 5th anniversary this year, one would think that because 'the title' of my thesis states: 'changing faces' of the *klopse*, I would have chosen an older established troupe, seeing as it would then appear to be more rich in historical data and life stories. I had the option of following an 'older more established troupe', after Maloe had introduced me to the troupe captains of older established troupes. However, I had already felt at home in Las Vegas and the rhetoric 'what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas' bonded me to Las Vegas. This rhetoric points towards the fact that in its short time of existence troupe members had left but returned again. It also pointed towards the pseudo familial belonging nature they were trying to cultivate.

On the other hand a further elaboration is needed for my decision. One of the themes that Baxter (1996) and Martin (1999) touched upon in their writings on the *klopse* was one of displacement after the forced removals from District Six. Salo (2003:349) writes that the Group Areas Act, which forcibly removed not only coloured people but the rest of the population from the areas declared “White-only” by the apartheid government, “compelled them to live in racialised ghettos like Manenberg”. Many of the choir members are from Lavender Hill and some are from different areas in Mitchells Plain, and the children choir are from Netreg, Kalksteentfontein, which forms part of the Cape Flats.

Furthermore, Salo (2003) argues that despite the forced removals people rebuilt their lives, and social networks were increased. Similarly with reference to the *klopse*, Martin (1999) argues that troupes were formed once more in the new areas to which people were forcibly moved. In the case of Las Vegas it pointed towards the dynamic creativity of re-building. Furthermore, although not on the surface an ‘old established troupe’, the members it drew had years of involvement in other older established troupes. As well, the membership of Las Vegas pointed towards Baxter’s (1996) contention of a ‘nuanced participation’. On a more personal level I had grown attached to Las Vegas and its members and my very own conscience would not have survived if I were to leave them for a troupe that would appear more ethnographically rich. What follows next is a description of the makeup of Las Vegas.

4.4 Organized chaos ‘discipline’: the makeup of Las Vegas

The title to this section I took from Martin’s (1999) notion of organized chaos, at first glance it seems chaotic but a second glance reveals the organization. “We need discipline”, these were the words that Mushri more commonly known as ‘Pang’ would often say in reference to the often times chaotic atmosphere of Las Vegas. However, this was not only a commentary on Las Vegas as a troupe. General populace commentary about the *klopse* often runs along the lines of *hulle is deurmekaar* (they are chaotic) as illustrated by mother’s comments above and in Chapter two. *Deurmekaar* is not only a commentary on the perceived lack of organization but also a commentary about the perceived nature of the *klopse*, as filled with gangsterism.

However, although on the foreground the marching through the streets of Cape Town may seem as disorganized frivolity, it is kept organized by the captains in their visibly indicative seniority gear and the law enforcement who are visible during *tweede nuwe jaar*.

The makeup of Las Vegas consists of general membership, which is drawn from friends and families as well as from the general populace in the Lentegeur area. Las Vegas is hierarchically structured and consists of an executive board, coaches and captains. The executive board consists of :

Jamalodien (Maloe) Masoet as the director,

Musshri 'Pang' as the life president,

Ebraheem Adams as Vice President also known as Hiema,

Sohail Beukes as Vice Chairman,

Amina Masoet, Maloe's wife as Treasurer

Shamiel Breda a quiet somehow reserved man as the Public Relations Officer

Riedewaan Narker Club Coordinator

Faldielah Gerber as Trustee

Salie Thomas as the Trustee

Ebraheem Harribi as the Club Captain

Rughshana 'Shana' Boltman as secretary

All the people named above formed the core part of Las Vegas. They were the people I interacted with mostly. They were to be the people with whom I would have as I termed it 'conversations'. Each one of them brought the different facets of Las Vegas to the forefront that is the frivolous, the studious, humorous, reserved and gendered. Las Vegas is further divided into a Brass Band, adult and juvenile Choirs, Drum Majors and the general members who also formed the soldiers.

4.4.1 The band

The band was tendered from The Young Golden Temptations, a youth band from Morgenster an area in Mitchells Plain, which is quiet close to where I live in Montclair and to Lentegeur. Young



Figure 6 some of the young members of Young Golden Temptations

Golden Temptations is headed by Armin and his wife and is a rather young band. It opened its doors in April 2011, thus this was their first year. Armin had approached his ex-band master and together they decided to open the band for money. He stated: “No seriously I did it for money”. When I inquired further he elaborated that often time troupes would take advantage of the bands with regards to payment. “Then they would pay you, then they don’t. The players need money you cannot play for free, what do you have to eat for the whole day and many of the members are young”, he further elaborated. When I asked him if the band is only open for the season, he replied no, they will re-open in April. This is in order to practice and teach music to the younger members and those who want to join. Thus it doubled up as a sort of music school as well. This was similar to the youth band Impronto that practiced at Moh’s place. All of this cannot be seen in isolation, but rather in the broader development of bands and musicians, which involved the professionalization of music (Martin, 1999) as well as the discourse of youth development.

4.4.2 The choir:



Las Vegas’s choir consisted of the Lavender Hill Choir, a Malay Choir which Maloe’s brothers were part of as well. But for the carnival season of 2011-2012 Las Vegas decided to ask the Young Ideas, a Malay choir to help them with their choir and song renditions. Young Ideas is headed by the coach Ebrahim. Ebrahim and his two brothers Bronnie and Achmat were born into the Malay choir culture through their father. Their father wrote many comics and combines for the Malay choir, The Evergreens, and when they were seven they were introduced into the choir. “It goes from generation to generation like our father carried it over

to us” said Ebrahim. The three brothers saw each one of them as bringing something unique. Very passionate about music and the history behind the songs it was with them that I especially spoke about the history of the song *Waalendorp* the choir sang for one of the singing categories in the competition. During competition and practice sessions Bronnie would often direct me to troupes, that I should see or he would sometimes hold the camera and shoot.

4.4.3 Juvenile choir

The juvenile choir consisted of mostly young children from Netreg and Kalksteenfontein, two coloured townships on the Cape Flats. They were between the ages of seven and twelve. They were affectionately known as *Whitey se kinnners* (Whitey’s Children). Whitey’s children form part of the juvenile choir but not all the children are his biological children. Thus when they refer to the children as *Whitey se kinnners* it is to denote his social role as father to the children in the choir. He pointed out to me that their parents entrusted them to him during the activities of the carnival season. The images below are of some of the juvenile choir members, having something to eat in their full regalia in between the competition at the stadium. The juvenile choir would sing the juvenile section in the competition and go on the parades with Whitey.



Their presence also spoke of the shifting trajectories of carnival which included making the carnival a family event against the discourses of *deurmekaar*.

So not only did Las Vegas consist of members who originated from different geographical locations but also encompassed different organizations. I soon realised during my research that this meant, different voices coming to the forefront or the silence of some voices. Often times there would be politics between the different groups concerning money, gears and “feeling (un) appreciated”.

4.5 In the field

I followed Las Vegas during the carnival season 2011/2012 this was followed by interspersed returns. My main approach in this research was to document what Las Vegas members do during the build- up to *tweede nuwe jaar*, a march in the city centre generally assumed to have ties with the manumission of slavery, and the competitions that would follow. During the beginning phases of my research I attended the rehearsals and participated in activities, such as fetching the gears in Worcester, an area outside of Cape Town. This was all part of ‘becoming Las Vegas’, although I will subsequently problematize it. After being introduced to the troupe, most members would approach me and have conversations with me, thus the different voices will appear sporadically in the write up.

Towards the middle of the competition I found myself spending more time with Amina, Shana, Maloe and Pang, Asma, Faldielah as well as Kentucky. This is not taking away from the rest who assisted me through the research process, by watching over me, guiding me and informing me. This is where Bronnie of the Malay choir Young Ideas was especially helpful. The Las Vegas girls as Amina dubbed them which included Faldielah, Asma, Shana, Amina and Lameez provided the female companionship in a mostly male dominated environment. Sohail, Aitchie and the two Hiemas provided the teasing aspect, yet leadership at the same time, and Shamiel and Vallie (Maloee’s older brother) whom although quiet and reserved provided insights.

I decided to focus on the stories of Amina, Maloe, Shana, Pang, Kentucky, Sohail and Mr. Mathews. Their stories bring out the nuanced participation that Baxter (1996) argued. It brings out the age differences, hierarchy and gender aspects. In conjunction it speaks towards the concept of ‘sense of belonging’ not only in Las Vegas but in the *klopse* troupe and the performing of a ‘Rainbow Nation at the stadium. The very first person I was referred to was Kentucky, the mascot of Las Vegas, a jovial character Kentucky (Theodore) seemed to

embody the quintessential idea of a *voorloper* or mascot. He is very interactive with a lot of people in the troupe as Kentucky and some even joked that he is Las Vegas

Kentucky (Theodore) grew up in Val Halla Park an area on the Cape Flats. He attended Primary and High School in Val Halla Park. When he was in High school his family moved to Lavender Hill because his mother and father received a council house. Thus he has been living in Lavender Hill for 24 years. He states that he has been with the klopse since he was 10. He makes reference to the fact that when he was 23/24 he would have to 'zoom' between klopse gear and church gear and that although he liked church he was still part of the klopse. He sings in Las Vegas's choir but he is also part of the Malay choir in Lavender Hill alongside Maloe's brothers Vallie and Aytchie. It is through being involved with different troupes that he got to know the 'Masoets'. I wrote his two names down because the first time I was introduced to him he kept on insisting that I should refer to him as Theodore. Upon later enquiry he stated that Kentucky and Theodore are both the same person as well as different people. According to him at home he is Theodore but outside he is Kentucky. And it was Kentucky the 'klops' ou that people knew. "I will not leave Las Vegas Las Vegas and the Masoets are like family to me" he stated. He referred to instances when he would be walking in Lavender Hill and the gangsters would say *dai is n klops ou los hom yt*, which means that is a klopse guy leave him alone.

Amina alongside Shana was one of the first people that assisted me. She is a 38 year old woman who is a home executive. Although she never grew up with the klopse she says she grew to love the sport through her husband Maloe. When they got married 20 years ago she became part of the culture she never grew up. She is the treasurer of the troupe. When Las Vegas was started they had another person in this troupe and when that person left Maloe approached her to be the treasurer. The decision was run through the board which resulted in her being selected as treasurer. To Amina Las Vegas is more than just a klops they see to the less fortunate and make each and everyone feel like they are part of the family. At the same time she says it has been difficult 'being a lady in a man's world' here she is referring to her position as a woman in the klopse as well as being an executive. Nonetheless she makes her voice heard in meetings through giving her opinions. However, with time the 'guys' men treat her more like a sister and it is like being with her brothers.

Shana like Amina was very helpful. She would sometimes suggest ways of looking at things, *is ma net an idea* (it is just an idea) she would often say. She lives two doors from Amina and

Maloe. She is a 33 year old educated woman who is very vocal about her position as a woman in the klopse and as an executive member. She feels that women should become more active in the klopse “en hulle monde oop maak”, (and open their mouths) “because they form an important structure in the klopse”. She remembers when she was younger she could not participate in klopse activities. Back then it was deurmekaar and her parents would say “meisiekind, ienagiets kan met jou daar gebeur” (girlchild anything can happen to you there). There used to be fighting and shooting but now things have become more organised and disciplined especially at Vygieskraal, she says. With this change she became more involved in the klopse and served as a secretary at another troupe before joining Las Vegas. She decided to leave that troupe because her voice was not being heard. She was expected to just take minutes. However, she found that at Las Vegas things are different, “ you get to raise your opinion and everyone gives you a hearing”.

Sohail *is Shana’s brother-in law and lives two doors from Maloe as well. He is 42 years old and is a senior technical assistant for the city of Cape Town. He recalls that since he was a young boy he had a passion for music making and singing. His says that his family was not so into the coons thus it was a personal passion. There was a time that he left the coons for the Muslim brigade because it went against the religious ethos of the muslim brigade. But after his accident he saw Las Vegas for the first time and was drawn to the troupe because of its character. After he spoke to Shana, Amina and Maloe about Las Vegas what stood out for him was the family orientated nature and that the ‘vibe’ was different. Since then he cannot imagine himself with another troupe.*

Maloe *is a talkative 39 year old ware house manager and has been involved in the klopse for more than 30 years he says. He was one of the core members to start the troupe Las Vegas. He grew up with the klopse, ‘playing klopse’ with his mother’s washing pales. Growing up his family and everyone was involved in the klopse and the Malay choir. Before Las Vegas he was with the troupe Woodstock Starlites one of the older established troupes. As a fairly young male he was as old as some of the other troupes when he decided with the others to start Las Vegas. This brought on chagrins from the older troupes and troupe captains who would refer to him as die laaitie, die laaitie,(this boy this boy). However on their first year they won a lot of trophies and proved themselves. This he credits due to the help of Sohail, Haroen, Amina, his older brother Vallie and Pang amongst others.*

Pang is a 54 year old shoe designer and does not like to talk a lot. He says that most people in the klopse always talk however he likes to do things. He is one of the people that promotes the idea of discipline and running the troupe like a business. He finds that it is good enough to enjoy oneself but at the end of the day to be a success you have to run the troupe like a business because everything costs money these days. He is one of the people who is constantly looking for sponsorships for Las Vegas. Prior to Las Vegas he was not as involved in the klopse as he is now but when Maloe approached him to help with the troupe he decided to help because Maloe is family and that is how he sees Las Vegas as a family, as something to be part of.

Mr. Mathews is a very passionate man in his speech. I remember one day when we were sitting at Nandos¹⁸ how passionate and excited he became when he spoke about klopse that the rest of the diners turned toward us. He is the director of the Kaapse Klopse Karnavaal. He is 64 years old and has been in the klopse for 63 years. He was one of the influential men who helped in making one board and removing the tender system. He is very passionate about promoting the carnival as a cultural event and the potential it has for helping with youth development. He is also very interested in making the event more inclusive and a family affair and believes that in order for this to happen “we need to work with the city”. In the influential book by Martin he was one of the people that assisted Martin and continuously help students with their research

Because I was interested in the public culture of the klopse, I repeatedly visited and documented the *Ghoema* and Glitter exhibition. I interviewed one of the artists Roderick Sauls, who was part of the *Ghoema* and Glitter exhibition and actively participated in workshops organised by the District Six Museum. I perused newspaper articles, various websites and the city of Cape Town online publications in order to ascertain the nature of the klopse in these publications and the marketing and aesthetics involved there.

In addition to the on-going participant observation, I also conducted interviews such as above, oriented towards their positioning in the klopse. But most of my fieldwork was based on participating in carnival activities and having informal conversations during the competition and carnival season not only with Las Vegas members but other troupes as well.

¹⁸ A south African fast food establishment

It was during these instances that the importance and significance of certain carnival aspects would come to the forefront, such as the gears, money issues, and role divisions.

I was able to gain first-hand experience and observe the makeup of the troupe behind the parades and the competitions. This was all part of what I term 'becoming Las Vegas'. Whilst helping fetch the gears in Worcester it resulted in me returning home early the next morning from Worcester. During that particular episode Shana and I was helping the seamstresses making button holes, Shana said to me "*Nou weet jy hoe dit is om klopse te wies, mense sien nie die nie*"(now you know what it is like to be *klopse*, people do not see this). Here Shana was referring to the nitty gritty activities of the *klopse*. This included helping with the panama hats, gluing ribbons onto it, and helping Faldielah make last minute bows in the bus on our way to the stadium.

However, although I termed it as 'becoming Las Vegas', I never fully was Las Vegas. I was still a researcher, embodied through my camera and the questions I asked. Thus, I used photography and video-recording to process and represent my data. However, I mostly used photography to represent and process my data in the write up. In presenting my data, I edited the images through lightening it and creating soft edges around the images. The lightening effect was done in order to capture the mood of the day and the vibrancy of the event and activities. The soft edges were made in order to create a flow between the text and the images. My main reason for employing these techniques were in order for the images not to stand apart from the text instead the text and the images had to speak to one another.

This also influenced my choice of layout. I have wrapped the texts around some of the images. I employed this method following Pink's (2001) argument that the usage of visual methods in ethnography is becoming increasingly interconnected with one another and offers potential to a greater understanding of social phenomena. Photography was crucial in this regard in order to discuss the visual aesthetic aspect. Video-recordings were used in order to process and analyse my observations at a later stage. It would have been beneficial to have developed it into a visual write up in the form of an ethnographic film to capture and represent the movement and sound of the data. Pink (2001) states that the technology we use informs our sense of identity and that the information that participants will share will vary greatly depending on the type of visual tool used. Thus in the context of the *klopse*, which is a public festival that has a public image, carrying a camera implied many meanings.

4.6 Reflexivity

Whilst doing research, reflexivity was important, yet it proved difficult. Davies (1999) defines reflexivity as a process of self-reference, whereby it refers to the ways in which the results of research are affected by the researcher. After each and every day of rehearsals or meetings I would try to sit down and analyze the activities of the day. In the case of road marches and competitions this would prove difficult. Most evenings I would come home exhausted, physically as well as mentally, from rehearsals and road marches. On one occasion which I will name the Worcester occasion word had spread that we had return home near the next morning. Maloe and Hiema then teased me saying “*gry se dai ding sy maak nou n appearance*” (you say that thing she makes her appearance now).

I carried a small book with me, at times it would be my phone on which I would type ad-hoc reflections. I used the video recordings as well to analyze activities. Because the rehearsal times and competitions were spaced out it allowed me time to reflect on what I would like to focus or ask. Informal interviews or as I termed it ‘conversations’ were held during rehearsals and competitions. Most of these conversations would be about the day’s activities in order for it to fit in with the carnival time. This also helped in attaining ‘facts’ about competition categories while we watched each category or prepared for a category I would discuss it.

I decided to have more structured interviews, which is more time consuming after the carnival season. During carnival, time is precious. Mr. Mathews asked as well “can we do this after the competition you know now its carnival time?”. This allowed me time to reflect on what I had observed and needed clarification and more elaboration on. The questions I asked were tailored to each one and certain situations. I based this on the dynamic composition of not only Las Vegas but other *klopse* troupes as well. I would inform them of what I was thinking of writing in my research and sometimes they would engage with it. This was especially evident in Shana who would say to me “*dis ma net an idea*” (it is only an idea), as well as Bronnie of the Malay choir. He would sometimes take hold of the camera and lead me to troupes he thought was interesting. After rehearsals he would sometimes do ‘ad hoc’ interviews where he would ask members “what do you think of the *klopse*”. At one point Kentucky said to me that he does not like the fact that I allow Bronnie to hold the camera. I asked Kentucky why, to which he replied no then he takes control and it is your camera and you know what you want. I then explained to Kentucky that I was allowing

Bronnie to hold the camera and shoot some stuff because it allowed me to see how people would pose for Bronnie as opposed to me.

My gender was not a specific problem in establishing contacts with the women or men. Often times I would sit in Lameez's car with the other women and they would involve me in discussing private and personal things. They then eventually called me *mopkop*, (mophead) with reference to my hair. This teasing aspect also translated back to my age. They treated me as a young sister because at the age of 24 I was younger than all of them. The men would mostly discuss carnival things, this fed into the rhetoric of sports and seeing carnival and the competition as sports. My position as researcher afforded me with the 'right' to move between the two genders freely. This was counter to what I noticed. Men would mostly congregate together and women together. However women like Amina and Shana because of their positions moved freely between the gendered groups.

I also had to reflect on how I affected my research situation. On the surface it would seem I had the same experiences as they had, I was coloured, have a working class background, grew up on the Cape Flats and spoke Afrikaans as they do. This made it easy in establishing relationships and to some extent made me an insider. However, at the same time my age, religion and the fact that I did not grow up with the *klopse* and was researching it distinguished me. It is with this that I move towards the next section

4.7 The Not so down the road researcher: Doing anthropology at home

When Mr. Mathews agreed to me to doing my research at the stadium he proceeded to say that it was a good thing that I am doing this research. He further stated that many international students are doing research about it, but there seems to be a dearth of local students, "our own people are not interested in their own culture". Here I assumed Mr. Mathews was referring to coloured local students, because the event had been ethnicised as coloured.

How did the pre-conceived, 'our people, our culture' play out in my research? At first many of Las Vegas members thought I was from overseas doing research. They would speak to me in English. However, after I told them that I am from Cape Town and more specifically that I was living in Bokmakierie they realised that I am in fact local. After the initial "ooooe Bokmakierie"; this was a response to the perception of the rough neighbourhood

Bokmakierie is generally regarded as, they spoke to me in Afrikaans. Maloe, Pang and Hiema would speak to me in English and Afrikaans interchangeably, to which Amina replied in Afrikaans, “I don’t know why you guys are still speaking to her in English, she speaks Afrikaans”.

When I made it expressly clear that I am from South Africa, from Cape Town and from Mitchells Plain but living in Bokmakierie many of the members especially from the choir would ask me why I am studying this? I should know about it. The assumption was that I was coloured and thus I should know about carnival. My ‘confession’ of being local shifted their interaction with me as well, especially the young band members. A more relaxed interaction took place. Here my ability to speak Afrikaans, which is my mother tongue, was crucial in distinguishing me as one with them as oppose to the ‘other’. At the same time, the fact that I was doing research still appeared as an oddity. However, it should be noted that this did not happen simultaneously when I ‘confessed’ I am local but it happened with time through ‘becoming Las Vegas’.

I live in Mitchells Plain, was seen as a coloured woman and lived ‘just’ five minute drive away from the *klopskamer* of Las Vegas, yet our worlds were different. Montclair, the area where I have lived for most of my life, is a far cry from Lentegeur, where street culture is alive, and where the *klopse* would march. Montclair has a mainly black populace where the streets are quiet and no *lappies* (coloured pieces of cloths) of troupes hang in the streets as they line the streets of Lentegeur. Similarly, it was a different world to Lavender Hill, Kalksteenfontein and the other areas in Mitchells Plain from where Las Vegas gleaned their membership.

Thus although I see myself as coloured, and the carnival has been associated with a working class ethos, once again Baxter’s (1996) ‘nuanced’ participation featured. Hence, I found it difficult to apply Cheater’s (1987) distinction of anthropology at home. I in fact found that at the beginning the supposed home was not home to me. Cheater (1987) argues that doing anthropology at home can be seen as doing citizen anthropology. On a formal side citizenship could be seen as the formal obligations and rights one has, but more specifically within non-western democracies as “constructive engagement in societies” (Cheater, 1987:165). This is different from native anthropology which often brings up essentialist notions like those I

mentioned in the beginning. Narayan (1993) argues that ‘native anthropology’ brings up essentialist notions, where a native anthropologist is thought to forward an authentic point of view, unproblematic from the community, regardless of differences in class, gender or education. I had no constructive engagement in *klopse* activities, thus one could then not say I was doing citizen anthropology.

Most members of Las Vegas and other troupes had long years of engagement with the *klopse*, through family like Maloe and Mr. Mathews or through marriage like Amina. “It has always been in my family, my father used to walk in the *klopse* and so I got into it”, these were the kinds of sentiments people would put forth. In fact one week day evening after the carnival season had finished Maloe, Amina and I were in the *klopskamer*. Maloe asked me how it had been as an outsider seeing the whole *klopse* business. This was after he had told me coons were part of his culture but that it was not part of mine, because I had not grown up with it or been active in it as he had. Here it is evident that although I had been part of Las Vegas at the same time I was still a researcher.

I relay my experiences back to Cheater’s (1987) assertion that citizen anthropology refers to doing research in societies where one has constructive engagement. Through participant observation and the notion ‘becoming Las Vegas’, which hinges on the idea of performance and becoming, in time I had come to do anthropology at home that is citizen anthropology. At the same time the distinction that existed of me as a researcher pointed towards the continuum of citizenship, whereby one does not assume one absolute ‘identity’ but perform various identities.

4.8 Challenges encountered

Om honest te wies ek kon nie deal met hoe moeg ek was toe ek vir Las Vegas ge follow het nie, die march and practices, ek is nie gewoonte an die nie (to be honest I could not deal with how tired I was during the carnival season, I am not used to it)

This was one of my confessions to Shana, to which she replied and said: “*ja klopse is nie speletjies nie jy moet orals is*” (yes *klopse* are serious business you have to be everywhere). At a superficial yet bodily challenge one of the challenges I had to overcome was my fitness levels. However, it spoke of a bigger challenge, transport. Most of the fieldwork I conducted was during the evenings. For this I needed transport which at times was a challenge.

However, this was where Pang among others in Las Vegas would step in and give me a lift home or come and pick me up.

Other challenges I encountered were the use of the word ‘coon’ to many of those who participate in the *klopse* and carnival the word coon holds no personal derogative connotations and they use the word interchangeably with *klopse*. In fact some were aware of the history about the term and knew that that was the reason why the word minstrel was being used. I had already illustrated in chapter 2 that Baxter (1996) and Martin (1999) used the word coons in their write up for the same reason as stated above. However, in my case it was a challenge to use the word, this was based on my own upbringing. Although not exposed to *klopse* activities, I had been exposed to the word *klopse*.

On another personal level I encountered challenges to refer to someone as ‘*Boeta...*’. *Boeta* is a term that is often used to refer and address older men. I had grown up using the word ‘Uncle...’ or ‘Mister...’ for older male members. Saying the word sounded foreign to me and I feared that I sounded foreign. Other challenges that were experienced were how to present the data. Carnival brings up sound, motions, smell and taste as well as feelings. Through my video-recording camera I was able to capture the sound, movement and motion and visuals. However in the presentation I was left with a still image and text which took away all the other senses and feelings.

4.9 Ethical considerations

“Anthropology's research questions, methods and approaches give rise to close and often lengthy associations between anthropologists and those with whom we conduct research.” This is an excerpt taken from the *Ethical guidelines and principles of conduct for anthropologists* (2005), thus concomitant to the association we build in our private lives certain ethical concerns are involved during this process of building associations.

It is from informed consent that entrée to the field is then acquired and that was how I approached my research. However, I had to obtain informed consent on different levels. My entrée informed consent gave me open access to focus on Las Vegas. In turn my informed consent on specific participants gave me consent to their stories, viewpoints and feelings. Subsequently I also had to obtain informed consent from Mr. Mathews to have access to the stadium and the competition. Thus, access involved different levels. Firstly access to the

stadium and competition which enabled me to move in spaces where ordinary participants are not allowed, this included the VIP section and the field where the troupes were performing. With this informed consent, which gave me freedom of movement, I obtained informed consent to video-record the competition. At the competition there are prohibitions on certain recording devices. Small hand held digital cameras are permissible however bigger cameras that have a recording function is not. This rule is implemented because at the stadium there is a camera crew that records the competition, the footage is then sold.

Mr. Mathews asked for a document setting out what my research objectives were. Thus I was transparent in my request for informed consent and emailed it to him. As stated, I informed Las Vegas, the board, my Mother and whomever I would have informal conversations with, what my research was about. At the same time obtaining informed consent was not a once-off event but a continuous process, especially concerning permission for the use of photographs, and to capture and record footage.

The *klopse* carnival is a public event which is filled with people taking photos of their favourite troupes. Initially I foresaw no problems in taking photos and recordings. The exception I foresaw was the instances during practice. I had thought that practices were secretive and would thus have a problem recording there however this was not the case. It was a particular instance that brought it home to me, ‘the power of the camera’ and the need for continuous informed consent. Pink (2001) states that once one has determined that visual methods will be used in a research study, one needs to choose the technology wisely. The use of camera informs our sense of identity, and when technology is introduced the information that participants will share will vary greatly, depending on the type of visual methods used. As said, this was brought home to me when I was snapping away and recording in the bus during a road march. A young girl seeing me snapping away turned to me and said “please don’t take photos of me”. At another time she would say “now you can take photos of me”. Through this interaction I learned that there is a constant negotiation of the use of the camera in interaction.

As a public cultural performance that relies heavily on public image, my initial thought was that it would be highly doubtful that the troupe members would ask for anonymity. However, after informing them of my research some members would ask me not to include their names stating “*jy kan dai neerskryf maar moet nie my naam skryf nie*”, you can write that down but do not write down my name. In those cases I would write ‘some people’ say. Anonymous

statements would be said in the highly emotive stressful times of the carnival season, where politics arose. This also played out in my interactions with various members. After having spent some time with one person I would be asked afterwards by the others, “what did he/she say”. In cases like this I would make a general comment that did not refer to them.

Although I would inform whomever that asked what I was doing, the general populace notion at the stadium and to some at Las Vegas was that I was shooting a documentary, although I continuously informed them of my purpose. With camera in hand I stood out, however, it was not the fact that I had a camera, there were others who had cameras and camera phones at the marches, but the model of the camera set me apart. As well as the fact that I just seemed to be taking pictures of everything and shooting anything, parallel to the questions which followed. With the perceived notion of shooting a documentary came the perceived notion from other troupes at the stadium that I would be able to get them sponsorships. Thus although I strictly informed them that I am just a student doing a project it still remained, the camera had marked me

4.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I noted through self- reflexivity how I had to ‘become Las Vegas’ through participant observation. I argued that it hinges on the notion of ‘becoming’ through performance. Although I was becoming Las Vegas I still had the identity of researcher, which I performed through the camera and my questions. My dual status speaks to broader notions of citizenship that is on a continuum of multiple identities being performed.

Chapter 5: Performing the story (s) of ‘the Rainbow Nation’ at the stadium

5.1 Introduction

Part of my participant observation was attending the month long competitions at Vygieskraal. The month long competitions were the culmination of the stress and anxieties of preparation for the competition. At the stadium, underlying the sounds and colours, are the politics of tradition, change and innovation. In contrast to the famous *Tweede Nuwe Jaar* parade through the streets of central Cape Town, which is watched by crowds of diverse spectators, the demographic composition of the audiences in attendance at the stadium appear to be mostly coloured people. Furthermore, because of the generational and family aspect of participation in *klopse*, the audiences consist of mostly friends and family members of the troupes.

Most reports about the carnival and the *klopse* in local newspapers like The Argus and Cape Times focus on the march through the CBD. In contrast, local community newspapers like the Plainsman, and tabloid- like newspapers like The Daily Voice and *Die Son*¹⁹ provide reports on the competitions. I argue that this makes the competitions an almost localized racialised and ethnicized exclusive event. Yet at the same time this argument of an exclusive event is countered by looking at the different sets of aesthetics that are at play during the competition, as the politics of tradition, innovation and change intersect.

In this chapter I look at aesthetics in connection with what Meyer (2009:6) stated as “our total sensory experience of the world and our sensitive knowledge of it”. The body is of importance here and what Meyer calls aesthetic formations. Thus, in this chapter I look at the troupes as aesthetic formations through the stylization of their bodies. I look at how the concept ‘Rainbow Nation’, coined by Arch Bishop Tutu is performed in terms of the Aristotelian view of aesthetics as proposed by Meyer (2009), through the stylization of the bodies and the exhibition category.

Furthermore, following Askew (2002) I use the concept performance as a means of exploring how ‘the Rainbow Nation’ is performed at the stadium. I base this on the visual aesthetics and level of participation, this includes the inclusion of ‘non- coloured’ participants in the competitions and the growing active participation of women. I frame this within an argument that competitive music making plays a part in ‘community’ making. This I draw from writings on competitive music making in East Africa that argues that competitive music making is a significant community shaping institution in East Africa. However, instead of

¹⁹ The Sun

looking at it in terms of ‘community’, I look at it in terms of aesthetic formations, which refers to the processual nature of being through the senses (see, Becker 2011, 2012). This brings up a sense of belonging that can be viewed at multiple levels. In looking at the performance of ‘the Rainbow Nation’ I look at the performativity of ‘the Rainbow Nation’. I am especially interested in the stories that are performed, whose stories are performed and how is a sense of belonging mediated through the embodied aesthetics of performance. Following Becker (2011) I explore the different meanings of performance at the competition. Before continuing further I will now provide a vignette on the opening day of the competition and explain the competition.

5.2 At the stadium: first day of competition 3 January 2012

When Las Vegas arrived at Vygieskraal stadium, many of the other troupes were already there. While the audience members filled in and took their seats, the participating troupe members filed in from an opposite entrance. We divided into two lines: men on the one side and women on the other side. We were searched by the security personnel for alcohol substances, weapons or cameras.

As I stood with Lameez and some of the Las Vegas members from Stellenbosch, they made comments about the gears of the other troupes. They marvelled at the colours, design and glitters to be found on it. They were



Figure 7 the gears of a troupe that Lameez and the women were admiring

particularly enamoured with the gear pictured on the left hand side of this page. They stated that it had everything a gear needs, it had the rosettes, and the umbrella is very creative. Troupe members from different teams greeted each other. One could hardly hold down a conversation before being interrupted by a greeting and a “Hello how are you?”.

Babies were held in the arms by mothers or pushed in strollers and wore little satin jumpsuits. As the competition would progress, through the January month, I would notice that Aytjie’s, young granddaughter Chelsea would wear a different outfit every week.

Today was the first day of competition and it was being kicked off by the *klopse jol*. The *klopse jol* is a march around the track that includes dancing and moving to the beat of the *ghoema* and the sound of the brass instruments. Terence from Stellenbosch who had joined

Las Vegas for the 2011/2012 carnival, had asked a friend to play the Banjo along with him for the *klopse jol*. Whilst he and his friend tuned their Banjos, the brass instruments were blown in preparation for the *klopse jol*. Some of the members embodied the opulence of the name ‘Las Vegas’ through wearing pink wigs, like Lameez did, or a deck of cards as sunglasses.

Even in between this preparation, which consisted of Shana, Soheil and Hiema amongst the other Captains getting everyone in formation, there was still interaction with other troupes. Before they went onto the track the troupe lined up in formation. The *voorlopers*, which are the drum majorettes that leads the troupe, consisted of the two junior boys and the older male lined up first. This was followed by the jingles and the banjos, *Ghoema* drums and the Brass instruments and lastly the rank and file, which are the ordinary members.

As they waited for their name to be announced by the master of ceremonies (Mc) the band played some tunes. The *voorlopers* practiced their dance moves, jumping around pulling their faces, pursing their lips while darting their tongues out. Hiema was helping with hoisting the board. When their name ‘Las Vegas’ got announced. The Mc followed this by saying “what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas!”. In response the *voorloper* jumped to attention, the Banjo players strummed their strings, the *Ghoemas* got hit, and the jingles jingled in the air.



Figure 8 the Board of Las Vegas

Following them down the track, I could see how their movements became one, except for the *voorlopers*. The *voorlopers* were dancing to their own tune. Those playing the instruments were doing a half march on the spot as if their feet were shackled down together. The revellers jumped to the beat of the drums, to the rhythm of the banjo and the sound of the brass. In that instance similar to the march in the inner city streets, following the routes and embodying the roots, history and memory were inscribed upon their body and feet.

Before they went onto the track there were discussions that they should show a “*regte jol*” (a real jol) because they had banjos with them. In local parlance *jol* means party, thus in this instance they had to indicate a sense of having a good time. As they *jolled* down the tracks the crowd cheered and a few blue caps could be seen amongst the supporters in the stands. Those were not the only colours that showed allegiances to a particular troupe, amongst it were banners stating Cape Town Hawkers, one of the oldest troupes, and Sea Winds a well-

established troupe who had won the coveted trophy many times in the recent past. Most of the supporters in the stands appeared to be women and children. When we got to the last part of the track the older male *voorloper* who had been *jolling* in front came to me. He asked me if I had seen how he *jolled*, giving his best he had inserted a bit of his own into as well he stated. This was despite the fact that his gear was not on par with the other *voorlopers*. And so they exited from the track into the sounds, sights and smell of carnival from behind the stands and the track.

5.3 Vygieskraal stadium

The stadium holds certain politics with regards to the space (s). From the moment one enters the stadium, delineated spaces greet you. The entrance the troupes enter from is a different entrance to the one the



Figure 9 The track of Vygies Kraal stadium.



Figure 10 supporters in the stands

audience members enter from. Thus here to distinction is being drawn between audience members and performers. The audiences are mostly friends and families of the troupes. Within the stage area there is a barricade separating performers from those not performing at the specific moment, and in

the stands you will see the supporters wearing their troupe colours as seen in the image below.



The supporter stands are then further divided into a V.I.P section. The image on the left shows a little boy within the V.I.P section. Although the

barricades were in place the bodies would always push against it. The master of ceremonies countlessly warned troupe members and audience members not to lean against the barricades too much. One could situate the carnival body pushing and the barricades within the

discourse of *deurmekaar*²⁰. In response to this Mr. Mathews states that we need order in order to prevent chaos and congestion. Similarly, as I have noted in Chapter four, Pang feels that order and discipline need to be in place concerning the organization.

One particular Saturday I was sitting with Hiema and some of his friends in the stands. We watched some of the troupes do their exhibitions, which is a thematic synchronized display



of the entire team across the whole stadium. The *Atjas* were doing their exhibition when suddenly we heard screaming from the stands. Some of the *Atjas* had made their way to the stands, transgressing the spaces of order it brought carnival back to the competition. Thus, a push and pull existed between order and disorder.

Often times I sat in the VIP section capturing images, and word would spread that I am sitting there. I would then get teased about it. Yet this teasing meant something bigger than the distinction between ordinary supporter and those in the V.I.P, it has a history attached to it. Martin (1999) states that during apartheid white audience members sat in these enclosed areas, thus these barricades still signified the hierarchical institutions which carnival is supposed to invert and subvert. In the next section I will look at the history of the stadium in order to contextualize it in the performance of 'the Rainbow Nation'.

5.3.1 The history of (the) stadium (s)

An attempt to revive the coon carnival at Green Point Track — traditional home of the carnival since 1906 — has been unsuccessful.

The Amenities Committee of the Cape Town City Council has turned down an application by the Cape Original Minstrel and Choir Board - a new organization - for the hire of the track on January 1, 2 and 9, 1971 [...]

²⁰ Out of order, all over generally it refers to mayhem

“No to Coon Carnival at Green Point”, Cape Times, March 7, 1970.²¹

The extract above indicates that the Green Point Track, seen as the traditional home of carnival, was no longer in use for competitions by the 70s, due to the bureaucracy of the apartheid state. According to Martin (1999) it had been demarcated as a white area and the DCD (Department of Community Development) in Pretoria had refused to grant a permit for multiracial audiences to attend coon carnivals, as seen in the extract from *The Argus* January 5, 1971: “City Coons Want to March through the Streets Again”. Subsequently this meant that troupes had to go via bus, train or lorry to Hartleyvale, in the southern suburbs, and Goodwood, in the northern suburbs (Martin, 1999). In 1971 a carnival was organised for the first time in Athlone by the Cape Coon Carnival Board of Achmat Hadji Levy (Martin 1999), this was met with further restrictions on marching.

It was only in 1979 that competitions were held again at the Green Point stadium (Martin, 1999). Permission had been granted by the DCD for the carnival to be held at the Green Point stadium. Mr Gasant Levy, the secretary of the Peninsula Coon Carnival Board, is quoted saying that they had to apply to the department for permission because it is situated in a proclaimed white Group Area and the troupes are from the coloured race group. Acquiescing to the rules and laws concerning the stadium indicated that troupes yielded more to the authorities in that regard. I argue following Martin (1999) that submitting to the authorities in that regard could have added more towards the hostility of the politically conscious elite against the perceived caricature. Furthermore, I argue that one could read the stadium and the yielding towards the laws upon it as an antithesis towards the fight for a democratic society.

However, although they were allowed to have a competition at the Green Point stadium it was not until 1989 according to Martin (1999) that troupes were allowed to march the traditional route to the stadium where the recently formed board the District Six Original Coon Carnival Board held their competitions. This also saw the later rebellion of captains of about 25 troupes who contracted themselves to a new body ‘Cape Town’s Original Coon Carnival Board’ (“This Year, It’s a Carnival with a Difference”, *Week End Argus*, January 1/2, 1994). Presently the competitions are held at Vygieskraal and Athlone stadium by the two Boards the Cape Town Minstrel Association and the Kaapse *Klopse* Karnaval. The existence of the two boards is due to the break- away of Mr. Stemmet of the CTMA from the KKKKA. Thus two things transpired, firstly the break- away of the Cape Town’s original Coon

²¹ Chronicles of the Coons

Carnival to two separate boards and the elimination of the competitions at the Green Point Stadium

The question then of course is, how can the stadium which I argue was the antithesis to the liberation movement of fighting against all that was apartheid be seen as a site where the performance of the 'Rainbow Nation' takes place? Before I move to that, I will now look at the different sections of the competitions and how the concept of aesthetic formation and styling come into play.

5.4 The competition

The competition starts on the 3rd of January, thereafter it continues every Saturday during the month of January. Several categories are judged on each Saturday for the different age groups. On the last day of the competition the winners of the different categories in section two are announced. Section two refers to the division of troupes into section one or section two, with section two being the top section. The carnival then ends with troupe members dancing and singing on the field, showing off their trophies and marching in *Makkha*.

5.4.1 Grand March Past



Figure 11 Las Vegas Members practicing the march before being called onto the track

The Grand March Past is a parade that has military styling to it. Before the competition Las Vegas members were practicing the march at Moh's place. On the night of the march they were still practicing it at the stadium. Some of the younger members did not want to partake in it they stated that they could not march and do not know how to

march. At the end some of them got coaxed into doing it. From personal experience I knew it to be a daunting category, one needed to keep in rhythm to the beat of the drum because one of the judging criteria was on how synchronous movements were. Thus, the Grand March Past is a pseudo military style of marching around the track to the beat of a drum played by a member of the troupe.



Figure 12 Kentucky in his gear with a top hat made of cardboard

5.4.2 Best dressed

Best dressed as well as the ‘board’, a Styrofoam board with a motif, is judged on the first day of the competition, whilst the

troupe does their *klopse jol*, a more energetic march, around the track. Before Las Vegas

went onto the track there was still a flutter of checking that everyone is wearing the uniform. Earlier on our way to the stadium, Faldielah and I had been busy making bow ties. In the best dressed category the troupe gets judged on how good and beautiful their gear is. Uniformity is judged as well: white shoes, white shirt, a hat and a bow tie. In this case the neatness of the gear would be judged, although one could be creative by wearing top hats such as what Kentucky is wearing above. The basic premise was that one should wear the Panama hat, jacket, pants, white shirt white shoes.

Almal moet wit skoene an het

Everyone should have white shoes

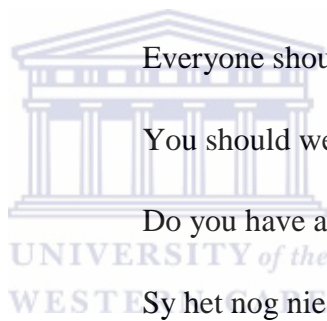
Jy moet wit hemp dra

You should wear a white shirt

Het jy n wit hemp

Do you have a white shirt

Sy het nog nie n bow tie nie



These statements I noted down signify how randomly one would hear these statements coming forth from, Amina, Shana, Faldielah and many others. With this being said although uniformity was judged, creativity was still present as seen in the images below.





Thus during this segment the creativity of the board, the beauty and uniformity of the gear and the quality of the *voorloper's* dance gets judged. As mentioned above one could get creative but the basic white shirt white shoes and bow tie had to be present, if you were wearing a suit. Maloe pointed out to me that one could let it slide on *tweede nuwe jaar* ,here he was referring to not wearing the full gear however, during competition it was serious business. The images above especially the one with the young women points toward the creativity that is involved in the gears and stylization. Thus on the one hand there are the rules that state white shirt, pants and jacket however instances like this indicates how creativity is negotiated.

Although the designs of the gear indicate creativity and how one wears it points towards a sense of creativity, politics surrounds the choosing of the colours and the design. This was particularly evident with reference to Las Vegas's gears. Although subscribing to the colour combinations of brightness and satin, some of the members were not happy with the cut and the design. Referring to the gears that Lameez and some of the women were admiring, those were the designs that were admired for creativity and having the traditional rosette, a rose made of ribbons. Kentucky was especially vocal about it, he pointed out that Las Vegas's gear did not look like a real gear, nonetheless he wore it because he loves the game. Similarly the male *voorloper* compared his gear to those of the *voorlopers* of the other teams. Their gears had bright sequences and diamante's on it, whereas his paled in comparison. He then stated that he wore the gear because he loves the game. Similarly, he incorporated elements

of creativity in how he wore his gear by adding different colour earrings each Saturday to his ears and trying different makeup on his face.

Kentucky further discussed the gear, it seemed that to him the gear served as a vehicle to compare the first year when they started and the present. “You should have seen our gears then” said Kentucky to me he concluded that those were real gears, when Las Vegas was still filled with energy, but this year it seems that the gear was indicative that organization had become too lax.

5.4.3 Singing categories

The singing categories consisted of juvenile and adult sentimentals, which are love songs; and English and Afrikaans *moppies*, which are comic songs; English and Afrikaans combined chorus; and a Coon song, a jazz tune. In Chapter two I had already discussed that the language of ‘the coons’ was English, embodied through the sentimental songs that were the hits of the time period. This year the song Party rockers by the American hip hop Duo LMFAO, Waka Waka, Michael Buble and as well as Barry Manilow was popular. A continuous reference to modernity, technology and professionalisation is evident through the performance of these international hits. One particular troupe entered to the jazzy song Georgie Peorgie, accompanied by a live band on stage. The crowd went wild, screaming and waving their supporter banners. It seems that the criterion for choosing a song to perform was based on the audience’s ability to relate to it due to its popularity. The song that had made the top charts on the radio would make its way to the stage. In 2012 the hip hop dance song Party Rockers featured prominently in the competitions. The crowd went particularly crazy for the Fabulous Playboyz, who had James Bhemgee, South Africa’s got talent winner as a soloist. Singing his winning song *Nessum Dorma*, the crowd gave him a standing ovation with a deafening applause.

Las Vegas had chosen as their English combine the love song ‘I’m your man’, by the American 90s Rhythm and Blues (RNB) boy band ‘All 4 One’. During one of the practice sessions Asma kept repeating to me that this is her favorite song and that she plays it every day. It became evident here as noted above that the songs and renditions of it needed to be felt real to the audience and be part of their reality. However, although sometimes the song would be a good song, and well sung, the crowd would not be as receptive as they were with Bhemgee. This points towards how the competition and carnival is always in dialogue with society and technology. During the competitions there were digital drum sets on stage, the

shuffle ‘a new dance craze’ also by the RnB duo was done by the *klopse* members. Yet this popularity of new modern music is nothing new, already in previous years Martin (1999) argued that the repertoire of songs always kept up with international music fashions.

On the other hand, whereas the sentimental consists of rendering songs in English with no local lyrics, there are the Afrikaans *moppies* which are thought to have slave roots and is highly regarded in the competition. Through using the melodies of well-known songs and inserting lyrics that are particular to local experience there is a continuous process of creolization in the event, with a flow of materials from outside to fuel local contests to create this feeling of authenticity (Hannerz, 1987 cited in Barber, 1997).

The singing categories are judged based on pronunciation, the quality of the voices, and with regards to the choirs includes the harmonizing quality of the different voices. This in turn led to the reason behind hiring professional choirs and singers, which is reflected in the choice of bands as well.

5.4.4 The best band

The move towards professionalization was evident in the bands as well. The best band is judged on the quality of the rendition they chose to perform. Many bands have developed as music schools, separated from the *klopse* and aimed specifically at the youth. The mostly youth makeup of the band mediated the discourse of social development/upliftment and youth development.

In all of these categories there is creativity, innovation and modernity involved however this is not without the coupled nostalgia and politics of tradition and history. The competition is thus a site of innovation, creativity and modernity. There are two particular instances which I would like to point towards. I will start with the one, which I entitle ‘the story of *Waalendorp*’.

5.5 The story of *Waalendorp*

The song *Waalendorp* was written by the late Herbie Van der Schyf in 1996 for the Malay choir team: The Evergreens. Herbie then brought it over to the Malay choir: Young Ideas, whom in turn brought it over to the *klopse* troupe: Las Vegas. This movement of the song and composing of the song speaks of two things. Firstly songs move between *klopse* troupes and the Malay Choirs, and composing songs yields monetary benefits. There is also a need to have prominent coaches and singers in the troupes. One example is Moenier Adams, who was in the Afrikaaps production. Earlier I referred to hi coaching youngsters from Paarl for the

klopse troupe Star Lites. Thus there seems to be a business of composing, coaching and singing within the event that yield monetary benefits to the coaches, composers and singers, and for the troupe the prospect of winning a particular category by contracting a specific person.

The song of *Waalendorp* speaks about the history of slavery at the Cape. How cultures grew from it, through people, through music and musical instruments. Thus through the song, memory and history was being performed, drawing on musical elements within a musical rendition. The composition was one of melancholy and often times during practice the coach would say “sing it with emotions people”. The melancholic tune already set the mood and emotion yet he wanted the emotion from their voices and the story to be told through their voices.

About an hour before they had to go on stage to sing the Afrikaans combine and English combine, I asked the coach Ebrahim about the piece and his constant repetition “sing with emotion”. He was standing with several other members of Young Ideas and pointed towards them that maybe they could answer that to which one of the young men answered that it is a story about history, culture and tradition. He continued further and stated that to them *Waalendorp* is about the story of slavery and that through singing it they are able to carry it over to the next generations. When I asked him about his emotions whilst singing, he replied that he felt happy and sad at the same time because although the slaves had it really bad yet still they rejoiced. Thus through singing the song they are able to tell the story. This seemed to be the angle from which the rest were coming as well. When I asked the rest about the song, they all seemed to say that it is the story of slavery and that it speaks about the Cape “yet we still stand here” said one. They interpreted “sing with emotion” as singing from the heart. One particular young man said that through singing it one “pushes the past through”. Thus in this case, for these young men the story pushed through them, through their voices and emotions.

Through a discussion of the various categories I have shown how creolization and creativity still features in the aesthetics of the carnival. My question is, how do the creativity, innovation, history and modernity and tradition translate into the performance of a Rainbow Nation and thus a sense of belonging? How does the creativity of the gear, the performance of memory and history through song translate into the performance of ‘the Rainbow Nation’?

5.6 'the Rainbow Nation' discussed

In Chapter Two I discussed how through the imagery of troupes wearing the new South African flag on their gears; through their music lyrics, which spoke about hope, and embracing the new South Africa, the coon troupes like the rest of South Africa was performing a euphoric new Rainbow Nation after the first democratic elections. This was filled with a story of hope through their bodies. The question of course is what kind of Rainbow Nation story is performed presently by the *klopse*. In the following section I specifically focus on the exhibition. I then look at the different bodies present at the stadium focusing specifically on the increasing presence of female participation. Drawing on Salo (2003) I argue that through the exhibition a “reconfigured localized” citizenry and sense of belonging was performed through an “engagement with specific aspects of global” as well as localized issues.

5.7.1 The exhibition

The criterion of the exhibition is that one must utilize the whole field and that choreography should be synchronized. During the exhibition the possibility for creativity is high. Whilst the exhibition is being judged, the troupe’s band plays its song and is judged as well. In one of their meetings, Las Vegas had been discussing the theme for their exhibition. However, it seemed that within all the flurry of preparing for the competition and carnival season the exhibition had slipped through the cracks of preparation.

“Which topic was big” asked Vallie, Maloe’s brother, “we must figure out what topic was big”, continued someone else. Topics such as gangsterism and drug abuse were suggested. However, on the day of the competition a set theme had not yet been developed. Nonetheless Las Vegas was still determined to be visually creative. Hoola Hoops, poles and flags had been organized with the help of Shamiel. The previous evening the choreography had been figured out during the choir practice session and on the day of the exhibition Las Vegas amongst other troupes was practicing their choreography. They had attempted to do socially relevant themes that spoke about their reality and South Africa’s reality however, because of time constraints they were unable to execute it fully.

Yet the question posed by Vallie “which topic was big” and the subsequent suggestions of gangsterism and drug abuse caught my attention.

It pointed towards the social ‘ills’ of society which could be read further towards ‘the limits of



liberation'. However, at the same time 'the Rainbow Nation' or the idea of 'the Rainbow Nation' as consisting of different ethno-racial (Becker, 2010) was being performed by some troupes during the exhibition. The image above is of the troupe 'Rainbow Nation', I used the image in an attempt to somehow discuss the exhibitions in relation to the whole concept of "the Rainbow Nation" as consisting of ethnoracial differences. However, at the same time other topics and themes were also present which I will discuss below.

On the Saturday of the exhibition, themes ran along the line of drugs, gangsterism, to 'be proudly South Africa' and Stop Child abuse. Emancipation of Slaves at the Cape was also one of the themes. The history of the *klopse* as discussed in Chapter Two has ties to slavery, thus through the exhibition the story was being told. No words were being used, rather in the exhibition accompanied by the music of the band, which was judged separately, the carnival body became in scripted with the story of the past and of the present and the stories that has made headlines. As Vallie pointed out through the choreography a story has to be told. Boards or pictures would then be used to convey the story. One could say that following Turner, the exhibition was a reflection upon society and 'what is big'. It was a space in which the troupes and the audiences could reflect upon their own realities.



Sometimes the themes would be universal issues, as seen in the following image.

Commenting on pollution through the boards this exhibition consisted of an earth ball and was localized by the South African flag. The theme is further embodied through the body

and stylization of the body, as seen in the image above these young men were supposed to be 'quarantine workers'.



Figure 13 Some of Rainbow Nation Troupe members dressed as 'traditional Africans'



Figure 14 This troupe had the emancipation theme



The image at the top shows a group of women dressed in what is assumed to be 'traditional' African dress. This was from Rainbow Nation's exhibition. During the exhibition the group of women danced and waved the South African flag. Here there was a definite embodying of 'the Rainbow Nation' through the understanding of ethno- diversity, which were embodied in their dress code and supported by the name of the troupe: Rainbow Nation.

The second picture on the top right shows the troupe with a banner giving the date of emancipation of slavery. It thus makes a clear reference to slavery, the carnival's connection with it, and its creole past. At the same time it made a statement which emphasised Khoisan. It commented especially about Hangberg, an area in Houtbaai, which had been making headlines. Media coverage had been around land rights and often time violence in some form ensued. In the midst of it, Khoisan identity and indigenous rights arose. Thus through this exhibition, freedom, emancipation and struggle was embodied. I will discuss this later in this section.

The three images above are particularly interesting. It reflects distinct themes; the idea of the ethno- diversity of South Africa, creolization and the essentialist statements of Khoisan and 'Rainbow Nation diversity' are mediated by the history of slavery and creolization. It is

particularly through the creativity of the exhibition in an event that has creole roots that this mediation can take place. Below I discuss this in relation to the different bodies.

5.7.2 The different bodies of 'the Rainbow Nation'

Gendered performance the growing active participation of women

In the previous section I looked at how the new stories, following the euphoric Rainbow Nation, is being performed through the exhibitions. In this section I look at the concept of inclusion through the different bodies present at the stadium. I locate the presence of the different bodies within the larger South African socio-political context of national transition. I do this following Bruinders (2011) who did research among the Christmas choirs. In a chapter which looked at gendered subjectivities and female participation, Bruinders (2011) specifically located the women of the Christmas Bands within the framework of national gender transformation.

The post 1994 Rainbow Nation period was characterised by openness and a restructuring of the social fabric. Bruinders (2011) saw this as a window of opportunity for women in what she deems as an extremely patriarch event: the Christmas bands. According to Bruinders (2011) the general perception was that the Christmas Bands movement consisted mostly of men and only in the 1990s started including women as fully participating members. However, similar to Baxter's (1996) research about the *klopse*, Bruinders (2011) found that the involvement of women were more complex and nuanced. At the same time writings on the *klopse* seem to have gendered the performance to one of the masculine. This is embodied and stylized in the gears and the designs, which are what one would associate with male attire. The only visible sign of femininity and a stylization in design of clothes, and feminine behaviour were the *moffie*.

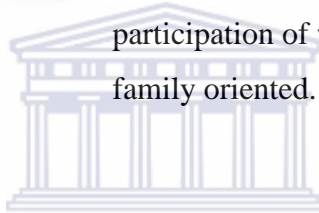
Bruinders (2011) argues that 'the decidedly male character' of the Christmas bands could be located in the prevalence of clubs during the earliest days of British colonialism at the Cape. This was significant for preserving a masculine culture and acceptable masculine behaviour which started with the establishment of prestigious city clubs for men. This in turn set off emulation by lower class men (Bruinders, 2011). It was only in the 1990s that an increase of participation of women or rather visible participation was noted, previously participation was mostly in the form of supportive roles.

Jeppie (1990) argued that the gendered participation was due to what was expected of women and their gender roles. But before the transition of the 1990s in 1988 the Cape Times already reported that for the first time in its history the carnival would be organised by two women: Anne Carstens and Lisa Hogarth, and for the first time one troupe: the famous New Blue Girls, will be captained by a woman.



15 Lameez before a hectic 9nine performance

In my participation with Las Vegas and at the stadium in 2012 I came across women participating in different roles, as ‘soldiers’ ordinary members, as supporters and as cooks in the stalls. Women came with their children, walked with their children and pushed their younger children who wore miniature gears in strollers. Some say that with the growing participation of women the event became more family oriented.



It was also within the singing category that the Kaapse *Klopse* Karnaval had its first ‘female soloist’ at the 2011-2012 carnival season. Thus, a growing visible participation and presence of women in the competition were taking place. Mr. Mathews points out that the creation of this section forms part of the Kaapse *Klopse* Karnaval’s stance of non-sexism, which he relegates to an inclusion of everyone in the carnival.

The image above of Lameez with a Pink Wig became her gear ‘look’ for the competition and marches. Instead of wearing the Panama hat she opted for the wig. Soon after, one of the other women bought herself a blonde wig to wear with her gear. Here one could read a growing stylization of the gendered female form. This I saw especially in the newly ‘female soloist’ sections being performed. Some would wear their gear but ‘spruce’ it up with pearls and dangling earrings, or they would roll up the sleeves of their jackets which made it look more fashionable, seen above on the right hand side. Some even went so far as to wear



dresses, as seen in the image to the left of Las Vegas's soloist. Thus here one sees a growing performativity of the female gender taking place by women.



Yet the visibility of the gendered female garb had been present before and still is present, most notably through the *moffies* the drag queen artists. The

difference here was that in contrast to the feminine performance of the *moffie* the feminine performance of the women participants did not hinge on parody. In the preface to *The Journal of Homosexuality*, Lorber (2004) points out that the core elements of drag are performance and parody by exaggerating gendered dress and mannerisms with enough little incongruities to show the 'otherness' of the drag artist. Not being private cross dressing or wanting to publicly pass as the opposite it is in the exaggeration of the feminine that the parody lies, states Lorber (2004).

To refer to the visible participation of women and the visibility of the gendered female form as an indication of the growing participation would be like window dressing. To put it bluntly, one could interpret it as 'here you can sing, you can walk see we allow women'. In South Africa's employment sector true inclusion is seen in terms of affirmative action. Out of Las Vegas's eleven executive board members three are women, Shana as secretary, Faldielah as Trustee and Amina as treasurer. Furthermore, whilst walking around the stadium I came upon the captain of the Hangberg troupe, who is a woman. Thus, a transformation which was already noted in 1988 in the Cape Times was taking place, whereby women are increasingly assuming active participation instead of solely supportive roles. Yet the roles that women take are one of dualism as both supporter and active member.

The Khoisan of Hangberg and the Gugulethu group/continuous creolization

As was made evident above with regards to the group of women in ‘traditional dress’ reference to ‘the Rainbow Nation’ as we understand it as comprising of different cultures was



16 Rainbow nation

present in the exhibitions. The image on the right above alludes to how I felt the moment

I captured the image. Amongst the flurry of the troupe members of the Jordan Community Entertainers, this man in what one would assume to be Khoi-San clothing walked stately, to which the crowd went wild with applause and delight. I believe that they went ‘wild’ because in that context his presence was a novelty in the exhibition. At first I thought it was one of the *klopse* troupe members dressed in that particular way for the exhibition, however, it turned out that he identified himself as Khoi-San.

Martin (1999) quoting Boonzaier et al (1996) states that with the colonisation of the Cape and the opening of the agricultural frontier in 1657, as well as the multiplication of European settlements in the interior it caused the disintegration of pre-existing Khoikhoi. How does the term Khoi-San then fit in here? Adhikari (2010) argues that there seems to be a generalization of naming Khoi San or Bushman. He points out that San and Bushman are used to refer to hunter gatherer people of Southern Africa, whereas Khoikhoi refers to the pastorilists, who later lost their cattle (Adhikari, 2010). There was a degree of mixing and inter-mixing between Khoikhoi and San, which he then argues makes the use of Khoi-San sense.

In Chapter Two I had discussed how the early formation of carnival was borne out of the mixing of different people and cultural traits, which included the local indigenous Khoi-San groups. However, with the changing aesthetics the minstrel figure came to symbolize carnival, in turn these earlier other influences became almost obsolete in representations and presentations of the carnival. This in turn reflected broader ‘coloured identity’ politics as well.

Thus the claimant of Khoi-San by Christy the herbalist, the man who identified himself as Khoi-San, comes with broader identity claims in the Western Cape. Some people who were or would have been previously classified 'coloured' have taken to identifying themselves with a slave past. Others like the Khoi-San-revivalist movements were trying to re-invent a Khoi-San ethnic identity. The politics of Khoi-San ethnic identity was especially evident in Hangberg, an area in Houtbaai. Christy, also known as the herbalist, and another young man were dressed in what they described as their traditional clothes. They pointed out that the reason they were here, dressed in this way, was in order to show their culture and the coloured people's culture. Christy further went on to explain that they wanted to show people who they are and their lifestyle through their clothing. When I asked how they came to play for Jordan, they replied that Jordan had approached them and the rest of them who played in the band. At the same time there were members in the band that did not identify themselves as Khoi-San. Some questions ensued which involved myself also being questioned, because I refused to say I am Khoi-San. One of the band members, a young man who does not identify himself as Khoisan, said that "Christy them" were showing their culture and history by being part of the troupe and by doing this they were showing that the Khoi-San are still alive.

The same young man pointed out the Hangberg situation, stating that they as a community came together although it was violent with many people getting hurt. Ms Fadwa the troupe leader pointed out that it all dates back to the fight for Houtbaai when people started to recognize their heritage, land and roots. She states that people of Houtbaai are coming to recognize themselves as Khoisan. Previously people did not want to be known as 'Boesman' because of the shame attached to it. When I asked her how people's reaction had been to Christy. She said that people, especially younger children, screamed Mr. Bones²². She said that she would reply and correct them by informing them that he is Khoi-San. Some people even approached them and they would inform them accordingly.

It is evident here that a Khoi-San identity is being claimed and performed at the stadium through drawing on various aesthetic strategies. The Khoi-San identity performed is seen by some as an ethno-identity different from 'coloured', thus it hinges on the idea of Rainbow Nation equals ethno differences. However, the claim made by Ms. Fadwa "that people of Houtbaai are coming to recognize themselves as Khoi-San" could be read in another dimension of 'coloured identity' politics that I referred to above. Khoi-San claimants have

²² Mr Bones is a South African comedy film that shows a traditional healer dressed in 'traditional' clothes. The main protagonist's name in the film is Mr Bones.

most noticeably been made in the recent production *Afrikaaps* (see Becker & Oliphant, draft paper). The production traced the roots of Afrikaans to the Khoi-San and slaves of the Cape, as visual and musical aesthetics converged in the performed production of history in authenticating a recently asserted linguistic and cultural identity.



Whilst roaming around the stalls I saw this group of young men who form part of the Vulindlela Cultural Group from Gugulethu. They had been in the exhibition for the Woodstock Starlights and played the drums and danced. When I asked them how they felt being part of the exhibition they said that it was a good feeling to contribute and show their culture at the carnival. Black artists are regularly hired by troupes to participate, however participation still seems to be largely drawn from coloured people. In Chapter two I discussed how in the past there was a definite lack of black participation because of the influx control law that prevented many black people from living in the city centre, and how at that time the carnival had been a largely inner city affair. I

argue that in the same way the presence of Christy was possible through the creativity of the exhibition, their presence should also be seen in light of the inclusive stance carnival is taking.

More specifically the continuous referral made by Vulindlela and Christy “that it feels good to show their culture”, “they wanted to show their culture” points towards what Becker (2010:3) argued that “from the 1990s onwards Global discourses of multiculturalism along calls for Africanization has replaced in South African public culture the previously homogenised notions of modernity with ethno-racial claims to diversity” and that the performance of difference is even more salient, as is evident by the Hangberg Troupe and Vulindlela.

Furthermore, their presence and performance makes a definite connection with the creole nature of carnival’s aesthetics and the process of creolization that Martin (1999) argued for. Drawing on different cultural elements in the exhibitions and due to the carnival’s creole nature the carnival and competitions prove to be inclusive through the creativity of the exhibition. The question I then ask is, how does this inclusivity fit into the “our culture”

discourse that was evident in the *Ghoema* and glitter exhibition. I argue that, the presence of the different bodies in the exhibition at the stadium points towards a creolization that is still retaining exclusivity. Here I would like to compare it with the active participation of women that is countering the ‘mostly men, with women as supportive’ aesthetic. At the moment, although the different bodies are included through supportive roles, the dominant ‘ethnic’ nature of the carnival is still coloured.

Conclusion

In this chapter I looked at how the competitions at the stadium are becoming increasingly inclusive. I explored how ‘the Rainbow Nation’, a concept coined by Arch Bishop Tutu in 1994, is performed at the stadium and I explored the stories of ‘the Rainbow Nation’ that was being performed. I explored this through discussing the inclusion of ‘non- coloured’ participants in the competitions and the growing active participation of women. I argued that this inclusivity is made possible by the creativity and innovation that is sought after in the exhibition. I also read this in connection with the transformation era that made this inclusivity possible.

I traced the story of ‘the Rainbow Nation’ from the 1994 elections, when a hope for the new dispensation was performed through songs like the Disney Aladdin song “A whole new world”. During the competition the story of ‘the Rainbow Nation’ hinged on the localized limits of liberation and the more universal concerns of pollution. Yet it also performed a story of ‘the Rainbow Nation’ consisting of different cultures as seen by the Gugulethu group and the Khoisan of Hangberg.

Chapter 6: 'Ga julle *Makkha* toe vanaand?'²³: re-routing/rooting carnival through the body and the senses.

6.1 Introduction

On the 2nd of January 2012 I descended from the bus with members of Las Vegas onto the edge of the city centre. Our blue and cerise satin suits added onto the plethora of colours, sounds and smell. Barriers were erected along the route that the carnival proceedings were to follow. Various City of Cape Town departments, Fire Services, Water Services, Solid Waste, Arts and Culture, City Health, Sports, Recreation and Amenities as well as the South African Police Service, were on hand. Official guards lined up along the streets to keep things in order and control the pedestrian traffic flow. Professional cameras for news coverage lined the streets. They recorded the stomping feet, and dancing bodies of the annual *tweede nuwe jaar* march, a day generally associated with the manumission of slavery. Thus, many of the people I spoke to on that day brought up the significance of the day within the framework of slavery. Furthermore, although there was the physical presence of order and modernity the event embodied metaphorical meanings of history, and the continuous annual appropriation of the city centre space. Martin (1999), Baxter (1996) and Jeppie (1990) have all argued the significance and importance of the appropriation of the public space in relation to the carnival in Cape Town. This is seen in relation to the forced removals from the city centre and that through the annual march, through the city centre streets, the spaces are re-claimed. Similarly, in the same breath some of Las Vegas's members referred to the historical significance of marching through the city centre which they saw as connecting them to their history.

In light of all this, through the event and route a history of Cape Town as a slave city and the effects of forced removals was being performed. It was also a day on which one could "let loose" some informed me. On that day we started at the edge of Sir Lowry Road and marched through Darling Street into Adderley Street. We passed *The Grootte Kerk*, which is the first Dutch reformed church to be built in South Africa. On the same road stood the old Slave Lodge building. By the time we had reached Adderley Street the dusky twilight evening sky, lamp posts and festive lights that lights Adderley Street during the Christmas festive period, lighted our way. All along people were gathered. They cheered behind the barriers. We made our way up Wale Street towards Bo-Kaap. Among the array of smiling faces cameras were

²³ 'are you going to makkha (mecca) tonight' this was a phrase I often heard in relation to Petunia street.

once again flashing. At the end of the march we gathered in front of the buses which had transported troupes from various areas on the Cape Flats. These are the areas to which many had been forcibly moved to during the Apartheid's forcible Group Areas Act removals. The sky was dark. The once gleaming, glimmering satin suits we had received the day before and had dressed ourselves in were smudged and 'revelled worn out'. Yet energies were still high as we gathered in front of the buses and questions abound; "*gha julle Makkha toe vannaand* (Are you (plural) going to *Makkha* tonight)?".

I opened this thesis with a vignette of Las Vegas's marches through the different areas on the Cape Flats, and argued that through marching in the different areas, the Cape Flats is made home. Thus instead of focusing on the appropriation of the city centre space, I think that based on my march during the carnival season that marching in 'areas' is more interesting for comprehending the contemporary spatial practices and politics. I juxtapose this with the rhetorics of displacement and desolation that filled carnival discourse after forced removals, which were discussed by Martin (1999) in good detail in his book, and Baxter (1996) in her thesis. More specifically compared to Martin's (1999) and Baxter's (1996) findings it seems that during my research, now eighteen years later, the discourse of desolateness seems to be lessening. This became evident through enquiries such as; "*Gha julle Makkha toe vanaand?*" (are you (plural) going to *Makkha*), when referring to the carnival festivities that happens in Petunia Street in Lentegeur. At the same time I argue that the historical and continuous significance of *tweede nuwe jaar* march is still present.

With a pre-supposition that music making creates a sense of belonging, I argue that through marching through the different areas and streets on the Cape Flats a sense of belonging is performed. I found the idea of 'the carnival body' in Bakhtinian (1984) terms applicable here. Bakhtin (1984:19) saw the carnival body as a "collective ancestral body of all the people", and through being part of the carnival body people "become aware of their sensual material bodily unit and community". I argue, following Bakhtin (1984), that the carnival body with its aesthetics in the different spaces of the Cape Flats and the City centre mediated a sense of belonging for the various members.

In order to argue this I first look at the place that the Cape Flats occupy in local parlance. I then connect it to the discourse of displacement. At the end of the section I move towards arguing that the Cape Flats is made home through the marches. In this section I will specifically focus and discuss the concept and role of the *tafel and buses* in making the Cape

Flats home through the marches. With regard to Petunia Street known as *Makkha* during carnival season I thus ask, could it not be that by calling Petunia Street in Lentegeur *Makkha*, a sense of belonging is being performed in relation to space? As oppose to the desolate landscape that fills discourses, aesthetics and rethorics, a positive affirmation and re-proclamation of a space: the Cape Flats, is being performed during that time period. At the same time I argue that through marching in the different areas on the Cape Flats and in *Makkha* the carnival is made more exclusive as oppose to the inclusive marches in the City Centre and marketing of carnival.



Figure 17 Image taken at the District Six Homecoming centre during the heritage day 2012

6.2 'A place of desolateness': moving towards re-rooting/ re-routing

The areas within which Las Vegas did their *voorsmaakie* are areas to which many people were forcibly removed. In sensationalized media representations, areas such as

Bonteheuwel and Lavender Hill as well as Kalksteenfontein are still associated, first and foremost, with social problems such as unemployment, violence and gangs. I captured the

image above on Heritage day at the District Six homecoming centre on Buitenkant Street.

Emile Jansen, a Cape Town based hip hop artist and activist, was commentating on the media representations of the Cape Flats in relation to the two posters in the image. Media representations of the Cape Flats, such as the headline in the image above on the left, “Flats Moms *Pomp*²⁴ to Feed Kids”, highlight these social problems and oftentimes it is done in a sensationalist way.

It is to these areas on the Cape Flats, of which Bonteheuwel, Lavender Hill, Kalksteenfontein and Mitchells Plain forms part, that many people especially from District Six were forcibly relocated to under the implementation of the Group Areas Act during apartheid. Thus, in the city of Cape Town, the “Cape Flats” occupy a special place whereby it is much more than a geographical space. It refers to a social and historical space, which is intimately connected to the local history of the last fifty years. In current exhibitions such as the ‘*Ghoema and*

²⁴ A crass way of referring to sex

Glitter' exhibition and District Six museum, one often sees images that demonstrate the impact of apartheid by focusing on the memories of the affected communities before they were forcibly removed from the city centre.

In relation to carnival it occupies a similar position. In Martin's (1999) research he found a lot of nostalgia, for the pre-group areas carnival. This nostalgia included statements by people that they had lost interest in the *klopse*, because it was not the same anymore. In addition, it resulted in constant comparisons: 'before' and 'after' Group Areas. This state of melancholia was especially evident in the responses of the participants in Baxter's (1996) work. In Baxter's study (1996) which was an attempt to look at how carnival is remembered she noted that pre-forced removal accounts of carnival indicate a change and continuity discourse. Based on oral accounts of participants of the 1960s and 1970s she found a romanticization and glorification of the carnival's past when the event and its participants were still part of the inner city (Baxter, 1996). In a later article Baxter (2001:92) indicates that oral accounts make claimants that towards the end of the 1970s "everything changed for the worst", which led to a moral decline.

As already referred to, all of these changes happened within the context of the growing apartheid regime and is especially encapsulated within the period of the implementation of the Group Areas Act. This most poignantly resulted in the battle for the march on the streets of Cape Town. This battle was embodied in the bureaucracy of the apartheid state to parade through the streets of the city centre. However, in the same breath the bureaucracy of the state, regarding where and when the troupes may march, was nothing new. Martin (1999) states that from the 1930s and probably earlier troupes required licences issued by the City Traffic Department to practice and parade in the streets, but it was only in the 1960s and 70s that this was really enforced. Following this was a decade long fight for the city centre streets.

After a decade of fighting for the city centre street, the *klopse* marched through the city centre for the first time in 1988 (Cape Times December 1987, January 1988). They marched along the traditional routes to Green Point. (Martin, 1999). Martin (1999) argues that despite all of these negative effects and perceived changes, there was endurance. At a deeper level argues Martin (1999) the traumatic negative effects of forced removals tore a social fabric. He was referring to a communal culture of sharing experience of which he argued the carnival formed an integral part of. Here he was specifically referring to the fact that with people

being moved to far- flung areas like Mitchells Plain it made the organization of the troupes difficult.

However, the work of anthropologist Elaine Salo (2003), who did research among the people of Manenberg, one of the poorest and most violent coloured townships, on issues relating to personhood, indicates a re-making of social networks. She argues that one cannot deny “that in the forty years since the first removals, social webs have been painstakingly re spun in the dumping grounds” (Salo, 2003: 348). In his introduction to an edited book; ‘Burdened by Race: Coloured identities in Southern Africa’ Adhikari (2009:xxi) argues that although these areas conferred a sense of marginality on the people, it did not mean that they had no agency in giving meanings to their lives and “creatively interpreting their role and place in society” (Adhikari, 2009: xxi). However, in present media discourse as seen in the example given by Emile, the Cape Flats are still seen as a place of desolation although there is an undeniable sense of creativity visible. For instance, when one takes a drive through Mitchell’s Plain, in many places one sees people extending their homes. New residential areas are being built for young families. On the other hand, while parts of Mitchells Plain may be burgeoning, other areas such as Bonteheuwel, Lavender Hill and Kalksteentfontein are still associated first and foremost with social problems. Moreover, commentary such as those made by Emile against media representation, points towards a broader creative engagement involved in claiming the Cape Flats as home through performance and the arts.

What is of most interest to me is the change that Baxter (1996) noted in the concept of the route. As pointed out in Chapter Two, Baxter (1996) argued that the route changed from a circular inclusive route within the boundaries of neighbourhood communities into a pre-established, non-negotiable one directional affair. Following a ‘performance as catharsis’ route she argues that it caused a rupture in the metaphoric process of the route as a journey narrative, whereby the heroines or heroes return to their communities wiser and more mature. I argue that through the *voorsmaakie* and marching in the areas first, before going to the city centre or competition, which then culminates in going to *Makkha*, a return to the circular route is taking place.

6.3 Voorsmaakie to tweede nuwe jaar: returning to a circular route

In the beginning of this chapter I described the march on *tweede nuwe jaar* in the city centre and the significance thereof but during the month long competitions, Petunia Street in Lentegeur become alive as well. Thus, before going to the competition and into the city

centre for *tweede nuwe jaar*, Las Vegas marched through areas such as Kalksteenfontein, Lentegeur, Manenberg and Lavender Hill. Writers such as Salo (2003) refer to these areas as townships because after all they were just apartheid enforced areas on the fringes of the city. Although I do agree with Salo (2003) on this, I use ‘area’ instead of township to indicate the making of home and ownership through the carnival body.

There was a sense of pride in marching in ‘your’ area. In one instance when we were on our way from Milnerton, an area on the West Coast, to Lavender Hill Kentucky said teasingly to the younger members “*Ons gaan nou Lavender Hill toe ken gjy vir Lavender Hill?*” (We are going to Lavender Hill, do you know Lavender Hill). The nearer we approached the more excited and talkative Kentucky became, “*Nie dai is nie Lavender Hill nie dai’ is*” (No that is not Lavender Hill, that is) he informed me pointing in the direction of Lavender. This was due to the fact that I had shot some footages and images in the opposite direction of Lavender Hill.

Alongside the road the women would either stand at their gates smiling laughing and moving their body along to the beat of the drums and *ghoemas* and the sound of the brass. Some ventured from their gates and doorsteps to dance along and mingle with the Las Vegas troupe. Whitey and some of the Las Vegas members greeted those they knew. Shana, Amina and some of the other women held onto the younger children of Las Vegas, as they reveled along. Revelling in this instance points towards the merrymaking and socializing aspect of marching. Carnival intermingled with the everyday as Las Vegas members bought refreshments from a *hyswinkeltjie*²⁵, which is an informal shop run from a house. A dual sense of pride was evident, whereby local residents would look forward to seeing the troupes marching on the roads. I argue that this established a communal feeling of belonging through the marches. One other aspect that established a communal feeling was the *tafel* which I will discuss in the following section.

6.3.1 The *tafel*

When we got onto the busses again, the next stop was Milnerton. I felt it was a strange choice of area to go to. Milnerton, an area along the West Coast, was a far cry from the Cape Flats areas we marched through. The mood changed and became subdued when we arrived at a quiet street filled with trees and high walls; behind it big double storey homes stood. “*Is*

²⁵ In many of the areas such as Kalksteenfontein one would find *hyswinkeltjies*. *Hyswinkeltjies* are often started as a means of supporting the family within an area that has high unemployment rates

iemand hier se baas wat hier bly” (someone’s boss lives here) said someone on the bus. “*Hey julle moet julle gedra nou hier*” (hey you(s) need to behave here) said someone else. In response some of the men in the bus laughed. I later learnt that it was Shamiel’s employer that lived here. It seemed as if the inversion and subversion of the Bakhtian (1984) carnival was inverted and subverted back to the norm.

The procession down the street was very subdued, no revellers came out to revel along, mingle, and greet. No shiny satin multi-coloured *lappies* hanged on street poles. Two local children came out to watch and followed the troupe. Soon their parents followed as well. However not in a revelling way, it seemed more out of concern for their children. When we arrived at Shamiel’s employer’s home, a white double storey home, we stood in the drive way and made music, to which the elderly man sat and listened. He thanked us afterwards. However, most of the revellers had not joined, instead they stood aside or sat on the pavement²⁶. There were talks about a *tafel* which were to be provided. The *tafel*’s literal translation refers to a table. However, in the context of the *klopse* and carnival the *tafel* is more than just a table. It refers to the opening and beginning of new relations and friendships. In Bakhtian (1968:9) terms in relation to carnival the feast related to time and that



Figure 1 Las Vegas Band member enjoying his take of the *tafel*

“moments of death and revival, of change and renewal always led to a festive perception of the world.”

Thus the *tafel*, through the sense of taste and smell, embodied the renewal of friendships and belonging for the next season. I argue that although their subdued behaviour was reflective of a history of class

and racial politics which were further reflected in the chagrins that they should behave, the lack of a *tafel*

further alienated the communal feeling of carnival and the inversion of everyday politics.

Later, during the stop at Lavender Hill a *tafel* would be served that consisted of juice and curry which Amina and some of the other women were dishing onto plates. Cold drinks were poured into Styrofoam cups and the musicians laid down their instruments. After our fill of laughter, food and conversation the instruments were picked up once again and the revelling continued back towards the busses. However, at the house in Milnerton no *tafel* had been

²⁶ sidewalk

served, a few biscuits had been served, thus the communal feeling was missing. Furthermore, no *lappies* hanged in the neighbourhood indicating the renewal of the festive season, new friendships, new ties and a sense of belonging.

6.3.2 The buses: a vehicle of the circular route

The buses were not always part of the carnival. Prior to the implementation of the Group Areas Act people could walk to the march in the city centre. Thus, the buses came to symbolize one of the changes brought on by the implementation of the Group Areas Act. Presently with participants in far flung areas, for example with regards to Las Vegas whose members all come from different areas on the Cape Flats, the availability of buses proves invaluable. Firstly, it connects them to the city centre. Secondly, it connects them to the different areas on the Cape Flats in which they can march and create a sense of communal belonging. Lastly, the buses play a key figure in transporting troupes from the city centre to *Makkha*. Thus a return to the circular route is not only embodied in the marches through the different areas, in the city centre and then finally in *Makkha*, but it is aided by the buses as well.

Although Baxter (1996) continuously argues for a perspective that sees the continuous change and ‘becoming’ aspect of carnival, I argue that her assertion that the Group Areas act changed the circular route, locates the metaphoric process of the parade and the march to geographical area instead of the body of the marchers. Yet at the same time the re-rooting and re-routing of the carnival is not a new phenomenon stated Mr. Mathews the director of the Kaapse *Klopse* Karnaval to me when I once spoke to him about Lenteguur and *Makkha*. According to Mr. Mathews carnival has always evolved with the people, in order to accommodate the people. In broader carnival literature one could refer to the ‘diaspora of the diaspora carnivals’ that have sprung up in the UK as in the case of the Notting Hill carnival (see Cohen, 1993) and noted by Green (2007) with reference to Trinidadian carnival. Mr. Mathews went on further to state that although it re-routed it always touched upon the important parts, as it made its way to the Green Point track. It follows now the route through the CBD but goes to *Makkha* because that is where the people are he said. Thus as I had argued in the introduction, the significance of the *tweede nuwe jaar* march is still there. At the same time the marches in the different areas culminating in *Makkha* points towards a continuous making of the Cape Flats as home instead of the displacement discourses.

6.4 Discussing 'Gha julle *Makkha toe*': Petunia Street a.k.a *Makkha*



The image above is a night time scene of Petunia Street in Lenteguur during carnival. While the sun was up stalls selling food and lighting paraphernalia would start setting up for the nightly return of the various troupes and its awaiting spectators. Various troupes marched down Petunia Street and onlookers enmeshed with the troupes as they *jolled* along ending at Moh's place. The captains of the troupes acted as human barriers once again, because most onlookers did not give way to the troupes. "*Die mense willie pat gie nie*" (the people do not want to give way) was the common refrain that would be shouted across. Satin and tracksuit tops filled the visual and physical space, brass instruments *ghoema* and drums filled the sound, accompanied by the jingles, as the bodies tried to push forth, to finally break at Mo's place. At a later discussion with Shana she would say to me that she much preferred the march in the city centre because there is more control and it is much safer for the children. Similarly Mr. Mathews echoed this sentiment by stating that control is needed at *Makkha*. Thus, in contrast to the march in the city centre there does not seem to be much control at *Makkha*.

Young teenagers smoked hookah pipes, whilst the younger children asked their accompanying adults to buy them boerewors²⁷ and Chinese made masks from the stalls. People screamed fanatically when they saw their favourite troupe, whilst those who had double story homes overlooking the street gathered on their balconies to look down upon the street. When Las Vegas made their way through Petunia Street they were met with negative shout outs "*ag hulle speel nie lekker nie!*" (Ag they are not playing well), "*wa's D6 inpronto*" (where is DSix inpronto) someone else asked. The feeling amongst the crowd was that the sound quality of the band and the performance was not well. Morale was low, yet Las

²⁷ A sausage in a roll like a hotdog

Vegas pushed forth and revelled down towards Moh's place, where Moh and a few other people were sitting on their chairs on the pavement. Across them local shops were still open to the booming business that was happening.

This section thus indicates that a positive re-appropriation of Lentegeur was taking place. This was embodied by the *klopse* troupes revelling through Petunia Street and the rhetoric of *Makkha*. As I have indicated in this chapter with the forced removals from District Six many accounts filled that it had a negative impact on the organization of the *klopse*. The spaces to which people were forcibly removed received negative connotations of desolateness yet instances such as this indicates an active re-appropriation and claiming of a space.

When I asked some of Las Vegas members the reason why it is called *Makkha* one of the reasons I received was that like *Makkha* it is filled with people. It is in the rhetoric of *Makkha* that I see this claiming of space. In the Islam faith Mecca or *Makkha* is a place that is holy to all Muslims. A journey that all Muslims should undertake in their lives if they are physically and financially able to is the Hajj to Mecca. It is a ritual that is designed to promote the bonds of Islamic brotherhood and sisterhood, which makes Muslims feel the real importance of life here on earth and the afterlife. During this pilgrimage they wear simple plain pilgrimage clothing (<http://www.religionfacts.com/islam/practices/hajj-pilgrimage.htm>).

Yet the history of Mecca is one of displacement, banishment through the story of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and his wife Hajira (Hagar). A dry and uninhabited place the Prophet Ibrahim was instructed to bring his wife Hajira and their child Is'mail to Arabia from Palestine in order to protect them from the jealousy of his first wife. He left them alone there on the instructions of Allah, with only a few supplies of water and food, however, the supplies ran out. The story then follows that out of desperation, borne from dehydration, Hajira prayed to Allah for deliverance which was followed by Is'mail striking his foot on the ground from which water gushed forth. This in turn meant that they could trade water with passers-by. When Prophet Ibrahim returned to check on them he was amazed to see them running a profitable well

(http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/practices/hajj_1.shtml).

Allah then instructed the Prophet Ibrahim to build a shrine dedicated to him. After many centuries, Mecca became a thriving city thanks to its reliable water source. Gradually, the people began to adopt polytheistic ideas, and worship spirits and many different gods and the shrine of the Prophet Ibrahim was used to store idols. In the year 628 the Prophet Muhammed

set out on a journey on the instructions of Allah to restore the faith of Islam. He set out with 1400 of his followers and this was to be the first pilgrimage in Islam.

How does the reference *gha julle Makkha toe?*, fit in this? Would it be presumptuous of me to compare it with *Makkha* and what *Makkha* stands for? I asked myself. Could it be that like the deserted uninhabited *Makkha* became a flourishing city occupying a special place in the Islam faith, the *Makkha* of Petunia Street symbolizes this same catharsis? I argue that this catharsis is embodied through the marching bodies through the different areas on the Cape Flats, including the march in the city centre. In a paper in which she looks at the mapping of the city through the carnival body, Wentzel (2011) argues that the contemporary minstrel mapping of the city with music reclaims and reconfigures the architectural meaning of the city. In this she sees mapping as bringing together elements of space and place with politics.

I ask as Baxter (1996) had ‘what significance does the coon performance play in social relations’ especially after the forced removals. Work done by Knauer (2008) who examined Afro-Cuban cultural practices in the form of rumba in New York City indicates that in terms of the migrants who first arrived on the shores of New York it could be argued that cultural performances afford those who participate in it a means of building social relations. In terms of Las Vegas which was started four years ago, it drew its memberships from Lavender Hill, Kalksteentfontein Bonteheuwel and Lenteguur. Like the dispersed, its members build social relations through being an active member of Las Vegas. Yet through this building of social relations a sense of belonging is being mediated as well. At a broader level I argue that the marching of the carnival body through the various areas of the Cape Flats points towards a re-claiming, re-routing and re-rooting. A catharsis is reached as new stories and memories are mapped through the bodies.

6.5 Conclusion: mapping the route to *Makkha* to a time period of re-proclamation of a space

The title of this conclusion was inspired by the reminiscence theatre festival information session I attended at the District Six Homecoming centre. This festival incorporated carnival elements such as *klopskamer* and *tafel* to engage with memory, slavery and emancipation. This was all done to re-imagine/ imagine public spaces in Cape Town.

It was especially the concept of mapping the street through performance and the employment of the aesthetics such as the *tafel*, *klopskamer* and the movement of bodies through the city street that drew my attention. My basic argument in the preceding sections were that through

proceeding through the different areas, from which Las Vegas drew its membership, the carnival body was mediating and creating that sense of belonging to the various members. In this instance the buses that became the symbol of the effects of the Group Areas Act became a vehicle to map out the new sense of belonging.

Writers like Jeppie (1990) and Martin (1999) have pointed out the importance of the appropriation of public spaces in relation to the *klopse* marches. By marching through the city centre they symbolically re-claim the city centre during carnival from which they were forcibly removed and relocated. In the same way, through proceeding through the different areas which culminates at *Makkha* Las Vegas and the other troupes were re-rooting and re-routing the carnival body, making the Cape Flats home. In this way they were re-imagining, re-claiming the space through their bodies, through the sounds and through various other aesthetics.



Chapter 7: Conclusion

In this thesis I explored the embodied aesthetics of performance in the making of belonging in post-apartheid South Africa. I pursued it through a focus on the *klopse*, which forms part of the New Year's carnival in Cape Town. I mapped how from its inception the carnival aesthetics changed and came to represent something new and different as the participants engaged with the changing South African and Cape Town society. Moreover, through mapping the changing aesthetics I argued that a decidedly 'working class coloured event' was developing alongside processes of creolization.

I located my study within a post-apartheid South Africa where over the past two decades a rise of 'the Rainbow Nation' discourse which emphasised diversity, ethnic diversity and difference (Becker 2010) is evident. Acknowledging that identity politics and the performance of difference are even more salient and brings up questions of belonging and citizenship, this thesis explored the embodied aesthetics of performance in the making of belonging in the post-apartheid South Africa.

Aesthetics was used in an Aristotelian way as proposed by Meyer (2009) in which the body as a whole plays a role in how we sense, understand and experience the world through our five senses. Thus, looking at the changing aesthetics of the carnival, in Chapter Two drawing on Cohen (1993) I followed the changes through exploring it as part of a socio- historical process. Engaging with Martin's (1999) seminal comprehensive work on carnival and Jeppie (1990) and Baxter's (1996) earlier studies I highlighted how at different time periods the *klopse* came to represent something new and different. It became evident through my exploration that a decidedly 'working class coloured event' was developing alongside processes of creolization (Martin, 1999). This would prove to be one of the key debates surrounding carnival, 'if a working class event could be seen as coloured culture'. The chapter concluded by pointing out that despite all of the socio-political factors the *klopse* still remained and have taken on a new face through the diversity rhetoric of the post-apartheid South Africa.

Thus in Chapter Three I looked at the *klopse* in public culture by focusing specifically on the 'Ghoema and Glitter' exhibition and marketing of the *klopse*. I looked at how the *klopse* is increasingly viewed as an embodiment of local culture and Cape Town culture. The proliferation of a slave account was looked at within the context of the growing heritage discourse that has seen a transformation in museums and heritage practices. This is seen also

in ‘the Rainbow Nation’ rhetoric of inclusion. I further compared how the notion of creolization is utilized by both marketing strategies of tourism, District Six museum projects and the ‘*Ghoema and Glitter*’ exhibition.

Subsequently in Chapter four I highlighted ‘becoming’ Las Vegas and focused on the research process. I gave a sense of ‘who and what’ Las Vegas is, through providing a descriptive account of the troupe. I also explained how I gained access to the troupe by engaging with notions of anthropology at home. Through drawing on my personal history I engaged as well with Baxter’s (1996) argument that carnival participation is more nuanced than ascribing it to ‘coloured working-class event’.

One of the main aims of this thesis was to engage with the notion of ‘performing ‘the Rainbow Nation’’ through embodied aesthetics. Thus in Chapter Five I used performance as an empirical-based analysis. I viewed the competition as a clearly framed event set apart from everyday reality. At the same time, I used performance as an analytical category of ‘performing ‘the Rainbow Nation’’ (Becker et al 2010), which I drew from Askew’s (2002) aptly first named “Performing the Nation” work on the emergence of the Tanzanian state. In this chapter I looked at which Rainbow Nation story(s) were performed and how it is performed at the stadium competitions. A growing participation of women was evident at the stadium as well as the inclusion of ‘non-coloured’ participants. I explored how ‘the Rainbow Nation’ ideology of inclusion is possible at the stadium due to the importance placed on change and creativity in the competitions’s exhibition category. Thus, I looked at how the processes of creolization are still evident, through looking at the aesthetics that is at play, in the stadium.

On the other hand Chapter Six demonstrates how through the marching carnival body (Bakhtin, 1984) the carnival is re-rooted and re-routed in making the Cape Flats home and thus creating a sense of belonging. This I engaged with through focusing on the role of the buses and *tafel* in the carnival. This sense of belonging and making of the Cape Flats home embodied the exclusionary aspect of belonging, as the carnival is more localized through the marches in these specific areas and the culmination in *Makkha*. This is in contrast to the broader public culture and the marches in the city Centre.

Throughout this thesis the concept creolization was evident in the carnival and in the framing of the City. The rhetoric of ‘the Rainbow Nation’ has a clear cut idea of diversity that gives preference to a diversity of ethno-racial identification (Becker, 2011). These ethno-identities

are then in turn viewed as authentic and clear cut. On the other hand the concept of creolization and creole rests on the flow of cultural traits and is opposed to separatism (Martin, 1999). However, it became evident in chapter three that it is used in the same way as the clear cut ethno-racial identity. On the other hand the creativity that was evident in the exhibitions at the stadium is a return to the creole nature of the carnival. Thus, the creativity of creolization which is open and against separatism allows for the mediation of inclusion and a sense of belonging. In this case I argue that the embodied symbolic enactment (Becker, 2011) of creolization, which is the ‘open flow of cultural traits and ways’, is to be considered as a key mediator of creating a sense of belonging in Post-Apartheid South Africa.



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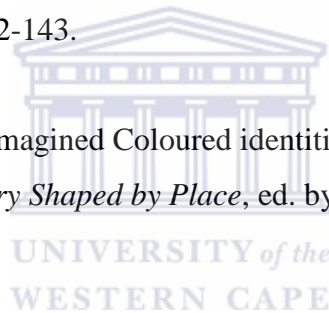
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