LIMINALITY, TRANSFORMATION AND *COMMUNITAS* AFRIKAANS IDENTITIES AS VIEWED THROUGH THE LENS OF SOUTH AFRICAN ARTS FESTIVALS: 1995 – 2006

ESTHER VAN HEERDEN

Dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (History)
at Stellenbosch University

PROMOTER: PROF AM GRUNDLINGH
CO-PROMOTER: PROF CS VAN DER WAAL

MARCH 2009

DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

The study analyzes the reconfiguration of Afrikaans identities in post-apartheid South Africa as mediated by two prominent Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals, namely the Klein Karoo National Arts Festival and Aardklop. Fieldwork was conducted in the two host towns – Oudtshoorn and Potchefstroom. A variety of research methods such as archival research, participant observation, semi-structured interviews and informal conversations were employed.

The arts festivals emerged during a time of perceived crisis for particularly Afrikaans communities in the 1990s, when Afrikaans and the arts were in need of being renewed. The study compares and contrasts the Afrikaans-oriented arts festivals to the former Afrikaner *volksfeeste* in order to illustrate the marked contrasts between them. Whereas the *volksfeeste* were designed to advance Afrikaner nationalism in a narrow sense, the newly established Afrikaans-oriented arts festivals were envisioned as inclusive celebrations. Both festivals were established to advance the arts in Afrikaans, to redeem Afrikaans, given its tainted reputation as the language of apartheid, and to help bring about national reconciliation. The study traces the historical development of the two festivals in relation to these aims.

The literature indicates that festivals as liminal events facilitate conditions during which festival-goers are united in celebration and experience a sense of community or social *communitas*. The study utilizes the notion of liminality – the process by which the ordinary is rendered extra-ordinary during festivals. Six conditions of liminality are distinguished: extensive planning and preparation, different senses of time, the alteration of everyday routines, re-discovery and re-appropriation of private and public spaces, the activation of festival spaces and the reworking of rules. It shows how liminality, rather than being self-evident, was carefully constructed.

The study assesses the festivals' potential 'to bring people together' against this background by looking at three possible means of social transformation: through the experience of the arts, through the use of public space and through encountering Afrikaans. The assessment reveals the discrepancy between official festival policy and practice. The tensions that existed – between 'high culture' and 'popular culture', centre and periphery, and inclusion and exclusion – hindered social transformation. The festivals nevertheless contributed to the establishment of a temporary sense of belonging or *communitas* amongst some festival-goers. Although Afrikaans was central to most manifestations of social *communitas*, festival-goers celebrated 'being Afrikaans' in diverse ways. The study concludes that these festivals were characterized just as much by the presence as the absence of social *communitas*.

Key words: festivals; celebration; language; the arts; liminality; social transformation; *communitas*; identity.

OPSOMMING

Die studie analiseer Afrikaanse identiteit en wat dit beteken om Afrikaans te wees in post-apartheid Suid-Afrika binne die konteks van twee prominente Afrikaanse kunstefeeste, naamlik die Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees en Aardklop. Veldwerk is in die twee gasheerdorpe – Oudtshoorn en Potchefstroom – onderneem. 'n Verskeidenheid van navorsingsmetodes soos argiefwerk, deelnemende waarneming, semi-formele onderhoude en informele gesprekke is ingespan.

Die kunstefeeste het tydens 'n krisistyd vir spesifiek Afrikaanse gemeenskappe in die 1990s ontstaan toe beide Afrikaans en die kunste vernuwe moes word. 'n Vergelyking word tussen die Afrikaans-georiënteerde kunstefeeste en die voormalige volksfeeste getref om die duidelike kontraste tussen die feeste aan te dui. Die oogmerk van die volksfeeste was om Afrikanernasionalisme te bevorder, terwyl die nuut gestigde Afrikaanse kunstefeeste inklusief moes wees. Beide feeste het tot stand gekom om die kunste in Afrikaans te bevorder, Afrikaans te herskep (gegewe die taal se negatiewe reputasie as die taal van die onderdrukker tydens apartheid) en om nasionale versoening teweeg te bring. Die studie verken die historiese ontwikkeling van die feeste in terme van die doelwitte.

Die literatuur voer aan dat feeste, as liminale gebeurtenisse, omgewings skep waarbinne feesgangers met mekaar verenig kan word en 'n gevoel van gemeenskap of *communitas* ervaar. Die studie wend die begrip liminaliteit aan – die proses waardeur die alledaagse ongewoon gemaak word tydens feeste. Ses voorwaardes van liminaliteit word onderskei: beplanning en voorbereiding, verskillende gewaarwordings van tyd, die aanpassing van alledaagse roetines, die herontdekking en herbenutting van private en openbare ruimtes, die aktivering van feesruimtes en die verandering van reëls. Dit wys hoedat liminaliteit, eerder as om vanselfsprekend te wees, versigtig gekonstrueer word.

Die studie, gegewe hierdie agtergrond, takseer die feeste se vermoë om 'mense bymekaar te bring' deur te kyk na drie moontlike metodes: deur die ervaring van die kunste, deur die gebruik van openbare ruimtes en deur die belewing van Afrikaans. Die studie lê die diskrepansie tussen amptelike feesbeleid en praktyk bloot. Die spanninge wat bestaan binne die feeste – tussen 'hoë kultuur' en 'populêre kultuur', sentrum en periferie en inklusiwiteit en eksklusiwiteit – het sosiale transformasie belemmer. Sommiges het nietemin 'n kortstondige gevoel van *communitas* ervaar. Alhoewel die viering van Afrikaans sentraal tot die meeste manifestasies van sosiale *communitas* was, het die feesgangers 'Afrikaans wees' op diverse maniere gevier. Die studie kom tot die gevolgtrekking dat die feeste gekenmerk is deur beide die teenwoordigheid en die afwesigheid van *communitas*.

Sleutelwoorde: feeste; taal; die kunste; liminaliteit; sosiale transformasie; sosiale *communitas*; identiteit.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wonderful ideas blossom, friendships are made or renewed, sparks fly, oil is poured, and in the general conviviality the Festival spirit finds its fullest expression. To bring people of goodwill together to share food and wine and old and new ideas is surely the best way to celebrate.

(Butler 1991a: 308).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

> The festival creates the opportunity to bring people together who did not know each other in the past. Gradually during the past ten years we moved from one extreme point to a communal grey area. There are so many common interests in Afrikaans … We are a significant number that speak Afrikaans … We must fully occupy the space that we have as budding Afrikaans community. We now hope that Afrikaans, which divided people in the past, will unite people (quoted in field notes).

The festival referred to was the Klein Karoo National Arts Festival. The speaker was David Piedt, the festival's chairman at the time, who spoke at a function in Oudtshoorn during which the annual festival programme was released. The year was 2004. South Africa as a country celebrated ten years of freedom since the first democratic elections. The festival – the country's first Afrikaans-orientated arts festival – fittingly celebrated its tenth year of existence.

It was the start of my fieldwork and I was simultaneously excited and daunted by the months of research that lay ahead. Although I did not know it at the time, David Piedt, whom I quoted in my field notes, addressed what was eventually to become one of the core research questions of the study: 'To what extent do the arts festivals that emerged after 1994, with Afrikaans as lingua franca, serve to bring people together?' The state authorities under apartheid, after all, employed language as a means of division rather than unification:

> The assumption that the different languages also imply different – and perhaps irreconcilable – differences between the people, their customs, and their aspirations, has been fundamental to apartheid society (Hauptfleisch 1997: 3).

Like many other Afrikaans first-language speakers, I was slightly concerned on that evening about the state of Afrikaans in South Africa, given the attenuation of the language in the public sphere. I certainly did not view myself as a *taalvegter* (protagonist for Afrikaans). I believed that Afrikaans would naturally survive as long as there were people who cared about and spoke the language, and were given the opportunity to do so. But like many others, I hoped that

Afrikaans would survive as more than a language of private use (see Brand 2005a; Jeffreys 2007).

I wanted Afrikaans to remain a vital, versatile language with higher functions; a spoken and written language with academic, scientific, judicial and commercial value that I could freely use in both my public and private engagements. The willingness to assert my language rights was coupled with a sensitivity to the need to strengthen all the official languages of the country, along with Afrikaans, and the recognition of the importance of multilingualism, especially in the post-apartheid context. As a young person in my mid-twenties, I was only then becoming aware of the somewhat troubled history of Afrikaans and the negative connotations that the language had acquired under apartheid.

This introduction does a number of things. It firstly defines arts festivals and looks at both the global and the local increase in such celebrations. The following three sections set the scene for the study by describing the 1990s as a transitional period that engendered a crisis of identity for many South Africans. The discussion focuses on the conditions under which Afrikaners had to adapt to the new SA and different responses within specifically the 'white' Afrikaans community to South Africa's democratic transition and the Afrikaners' loss of political power. The sense of crisis was evidenced in the widespread and pervasive fears about the attenuation of Afrikaans in the public sphere.

The struggle to develop Afrikaans as a full-fledged, public language since the late nineteenth century was inseparable from the emergence of an ethnic consciousness amongst Afrikaners and the growth of Afrikaner nationalism. Since the nineteenth century successive language movements championed the Afrikaans language as one of the most salient features of the Afrikaner people. While the apartheid authorities appropriated Afrikaans as a means to express an 'authentic' Afrikaner identity, the Afrikaner *volksfeeste* (people's festivals) helped to mould and consolidate such a constructed identity.

The twentieth century testified to the growing vitality of Afrikaans – it fully replaced Dutch as spoken language; became standardized; achieved official state recognition; built up a literary corpus; was adopted in Parliament and the civil service; and became the prime medium of

instruction in lower and higher education. But the advances of Afrikaans were propelled by a system of racial discrimination. From the 1970s onwards the incestuous affinity of Afrikaans with a morally corrupt political regime during the apartheid era led to its being increasingly stigmatised as the language of oppression. It also led to the estrangement of Afrikaners from 'non-white' Afrikaans speakers.

It was within this context of crisis that the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals arose in the 1990s. The following section introduces these festivals. The remainder of the introduction sets out the problem statement of the study; introduces the key concepts; and positions the study in relation to contemporary identity and festival research that has been undertaken in South Africa. The chapter concludes with a section on methodology and an outline of how the chapters will unfold.

1.1 The use of the term 'Afrikaners'

A note on the use of the term 'Afrikaners' in this study is fitting here. Historically the term has been used in a diversity of ways, of which only a few will be considered here. It was used in an ethnic sense in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to refer to people of common descent – predominantly colonists of Dutch, German and French origin. During the nineteenth century the term was sometimes employed in an even narrower sense, for example, incorporating only those within the borders of the Transvaal republic. But it was also employed more broadly in the same century to refer to Afrikaans speaking and English speaking 'whites' who were permanent South African residents. During the twentieth century the use of the term reflected different political motives: the unification of all 'whites' in a South African nation or the mobilization of exclusively 'white' Afrikaans speakers. From the mid-twentieth century the term denoted 'white' Afrikaans speakers as an exclusive group that wielded political and economic power under apartheid.

From the 1980s onwards there were renewed, but largely unsuccessful, attempts to make the term more racially inclusive by extending it to 'coloured' Afrikaans speakers. Nowadays there is a limited tendency to view everyone who speaks Afrikaans or identifies themselves as Afrikaners – regardless of their race, political orientation, religion or sexual preference – as Afrikaners or *Afrikaanses*.

This study, except where indicated otherwise, uses the term 'Afrikaners' to refer to the category of 'white' Afrikaans speakers who believe that they possess a distinct language, history, religion, heritage, tradition, values, culture, identity and ethnic awareness (Swart 1987: 8). The term is used to indicate 'emic' understanding (that which is meaningful to the actor/insider), rather than analytically. Similarly, wherever racial categories such as 'white', 'coloured' and 'black' are employed in the text, this is done in order to capture the historical and continued relevance of such classifications within the context of the Afrikaans-orientated festivals and within the debates and discourses that surround them. These terms do not imply homogeneity in any of these categories; on the contrary, the study recognizes the numerous points of similarity and of differentiation that constitute a complex collective such as the Afrikaners.

1.2 The reconfiguration of identities

It is generally accepted that the new South Africa has led to the reconfiguration of identities, opening up 'new possibilities of being'. According to Melissa E Steyn (2001: xx), South Africans, in the light of the social revisions that the country has undergone during the past two decades:

> … are selecting, editing, and borrowing from the cultural resources available to them to reinterpret old selves in the light of new knowledge and possibilities, while yet retaining a sense of personal congruence.

While one should be wary of reifying the apartheid and post-apartheid periods in terms of the fixity/fluidity of identities, there is a strong sense that identities are being challenged, renegotiated and possibly reconfigured to a greater extent than under apartheid. Such identity processes, which play out on a variety of fronts, are mediated by different forms of art and cultural expression (Wasserman and Jacobs 2003: 16). Identity is played out in public and in private, as well as in highly visible and in more subtle, seemingly insignificant everyday encounters and interchanges. This social quality of identity makes festivals apt settings for investigating the 'play' with identity/identities.

1.3 Arts festivals in South Africa

Arts festivals in South Africa share certain defining characteristics. Hosted annually on a more or less fixed date and stretching over a number of consecutive days, they seem to be scheduled, well-bounded social occasions. They usually attract a combination of amateur, semi-professional and professional theatre practitioners, musicians and visual artists. Free and paid performances across a broad spectrum of genres are showcased. The 'arts' within the context of arts festivals:

> … refer to but are not restricted to all forms and traditions of dance, drama, music, musical theatre, visual arts, crafts, design, written and oral literature all of which serve as means for individual and collective creativity and expression (White Paper on Arts and Culture Heritage 1996).

Noting the multiplicity of events, Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (1998: 59) describes festivals as "multi-sensory, multi-focus events that require selective 'disattention' or highly disciplined attention in an environment of sensory riot".

For most of its history the Grahamstown National Arts Festival (NAF) has been the most prominent arts festival in South Africa.[1] Since its inception more than thirty years ago, the festival has received both national and international acclaim. Until recently, no South African arts festival could match the scale of this annual event or compete with the festival's artistic variety, the attraction of widespread media attention and the generation of revenue.

However, since the onset of the 1990s the dominance of the NAF has been challenged by a proliferation of festivals in South Africa that parallels the global increase in public celebrations (see Boissevain 1992a; Getz 1997; Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1998; McDonnell, Allen and O'Toole 1999). Significantly, an estimated 45 of these arts festivals were Afrikaans-orientated. The primary focus of this study is on the two largest and, until recently, fastest growing Afrikaans

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[1] The festival's name changed over the years. For the first few years the festival was known simply as the Grahamstown Festival. It later became known as the Five Roses Festival because of their sponsorship and between 1984 and 2001, when Standard Bank was the prime sponsor, it was known as the Standard Bank National Arts Festival.

arts festivals: the Absa Klein Karoo National Arts Festival, popularly known as the KKNK (*Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees*) that debuted in 1995 in Oudtshoorn, followed by the Aardklop festival in Potchefstroom in 1998.[2]

The KKNK and Aardklop have undergone phenomenal growth since their inceptions. An internal report of the KKNK indicated that the festival's turnover grew from R1.5 million in 1995 to R18 million in 2005. This represents an increase of 1200%. Ticket sales at the KKNK escalated from 30 314 in 1995 to 128 927 in 2000 to about 191 252 in 2005. Tickets to the value of R1 million were sold in 2005 in the first few hours after the festival was officially opened to prospective festival-goers to buy tickets (Wicomb 2005: 1). An estimated 240 000 people attended the festival in 2006 (Groenewald 2007a: 1). Similarly, Aardklop experienced an annual growth of 50% from the first time that it was hosted in 1998 up to 2000 (Nieuwoudt 2000a: 17).

Both festivals soon became hallmark tourist events.[3] Clearly the festivals resonated strongly with the thousands of festival-goers who annually travelled to the host towns from across the country and even from abroad to experience these festivals. Questions naturally arise: 'Why were the festivals established?', 'What do they celebrate?', 'Why are the festivals so popular?', 'Who attends these festivals?', 'What does attendance entail?', 'What possible identity implications does attendance have?' None of these questions, which are all addressed in this study, can be answered straightforwardly. The sections that follow serve to contextualize the study.

1.4 A period of transition

During the 1990s, when the two Afrikaans arts festivals originated, South Africa was undergoing a monumental transition as a country. Some (see Moriarty 2003; Landsberg 2004) view the transition from apartheid to democracy as coinciding with the negotiation process between the

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[2] Absa made a decision to become the headline sponsor of the KKNK in 2005. "Over a period of five years until 2010, the bank will invest R19.4 million in the festival" (Groenewald 2007a: 1). The name of the festival was changed to the Absa KKNK in 2006.

[3] These are "events that become so identified with the spirit or ethos of a town, city or region that they become synonymous with the name of the place" (McDonnell, Allen and O'Toole 1999: 11).

ruling National Party (NP) and the African National Congress (ANC) that extended from 1989/1990 to 1994.[4] According to this view, the first democratic elections held on the 27th April of 1994, which ended the 'white' minority rule that has been in force since 1948, marked the completion of the transition.

Others allow for a broader time span by extending the transition period to incorporate the interim period, lasting from 1994 until 1999, during which a Government of National Unity governed South Africa and the 1996 Constitution and Bill of Rights were gradually put into effect (Steadman 1994). Yet others choose to include also the basic political reforms of the late 1970s and 1980s in their consideration of the transition process in South Africa that eventually led to the dismantlement of apartheid (Shaw 2001). Some studies (including this one) continue to classify South Africa as a "transitional society" (Burgess 2002).

South Africa in the 1990s, regardless of the perceived duration of the transition, was clearly undergoing a 'rite of passage', a phrase used by Arnold van Gennep, to describe individuals' ritualised transition from one stage in the life cycle to the next. Drawing on a wide range of 'cross-cultural' data, Van Gennep illustrates how rites of passage, which are often linked to culturally defined life-crises, consist of three distinct, yet interrelated ritual phases: separation (pre-liminary), margin (liminary) and aggregation (post-liminary).

The individuals undergoing a rite of passage, such as an initiation into adulthood, are physically and symbolically detached from a fixed point in the social structure and surrounding society in the first phase (they are secluded from the everyday scene); in the middle phase whoever passes from one state to another is held in a special situation for a certain length of time, virtually "wavering between worlds" (Van Gennep 1960: 18), and in the third and final stage, endowed with a recognition of a new biological status or social position (and the corresponding rights and obligations), they are reincorporated into society that itself undergoes changes as a result of the transition. This scheme has been applied not only to individuals, but also to significant social transitions such as those marked by festivals (see Leach 1961).

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[4] Between 1990 and 1994 significant political developments occurred – the state of emergency was lifted, the ban on political parties was lifted; political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, were released (1990); both the ANC and the government ceased armed action (1990-1991); an open negotiation process was launched (1991); all racially discriminatory legislation was repealed (1991); and an Interim Constitution was adopted (1993).

South Africa, judging by Van Gennep's scheme, was recognizably in the liminal phase during the 1990s – a phase said to be characterized by a relative breakdown in social structure and a measure of chaos and uncertainty. Many South Africans looked to the future with a mixture of expectation and trepidation. According to Stephen John Stedman (1994: 1), the early 1990s was a "period of great uncertainty when old rules had collapsed with no clear sense of what would replace them".

Similarly Thomas A Moriarty (2003: 93) describes the early 1990s as "an epic struggle between order and chaos"; a struggle that was purportedly resolved with the democratic settlement in 1994. Afterwards some political commentators in the press, gripped by unbridled excitement over the changes taking place in the country, variously hailed South Africa as a 'new country' (Accone 1995: 1); a 'new world' (kaNdlovu 1995: 1) and 'a new society' (Bertheim 1995: 5).

1.5 A time of crisis

However, this study contends that throughout the 1990s South Africa was still in many senses in the midst of a transition – not only politically and economically, but also socially. This is evident from the sense of crisis that continued to prevail throughout the decade and thereafter. Perhaps the perceived crisis was not as severe compared to the political turmoil of the 1980s; this was a decade marked by heightened interracial tensions, civil unrest, the imposition of international sanctions and the institution of a nationwide state of emergency in 1985.

It was a well-known fact that the negotiation of South Africa's transition from white minority to black majority rule was an "almost endless series of crises" (Moriarty 2003: 99) as deadlocks between the negotiating parties threatened to derail the process. There was therefore a general sense of relief in the country in 1994 over the peaceful elections and the negotiated democratic settlement.

But 1994 has certainly not brought an end to the 'crisis', however one conceives of it. Apartheid policies over the past few decades enforced strict social and spatial separation between people, resulting in entrenched racial, ethnic and linguistic divisions. While the peaceful elections and the negotiated democratic settlement (described as 'miraculous' by some political commentators) signalled the end to institutionalised apartheid, South Africa remained a deeply divided society.

Post-apartheid South Africa challenged these entrenched divisions to an extent. According to Steyn (2001: 101), "In the present time of flux in the country … social identities are unfixed, decentred, and social signifiers are contested by competing interests". Many authors (see Du Pré 1996; Palmberg 1997; Steyn 2001; Wasserman and Jacobs 2003; Kitshoff 2006) consequently interpret the transitional period in the country as a time of crisis for South African communities. Steyn (2001: 155) is one author who classifies the experiences of her respondents (all of them 'white' South Africans) as "unmistakably stories of crisis". Neville Alexander also uses the word 'crisis' when discussing identity concerns in South Africa. According to Alexander (2002: 83), South Africa's transition has:

> … catapulted all its traditional communities into a crisis of identity. This is most noticeable among the so-called coloureds and whites. Among, the latter, it is especially the Afrikaans-speaking group that has been destabilised.

The 1990s was certainly an extended crisis time for *behoudende* (conservative) 'white' Afrikaners. All participants at a so-called Afrikaner *volkskongres* (people's congress) held towards the end of 1994 stressed that it was a *krisismoment* (crisis moment) for the Afrikaners. It is justified to assume that the attendees voted against democratic reforms in the 1992 referendum and boycotted the national elections in 1994.

The crisis or struggle for survival centred on the diminished capacity of 'white' Afrikaners to protect and advance their *volkswese* (ethnic being), in other words their perceived unique and essential 'cultural and national identity'. The power transfer in 1994 exacerbated the longstanding fears of conservative Afrikaners that the 'African masses' would overrun them. And, as reflected in the congress proceedings, they were also anxious about the present and future disregard of the Afrikaners' heritage and history. They protested that all that was emphasized under the new dispensation was the guilt of the Afrikaners in sustaining apartheid.

The new dispensation ushered in a period during which virtually all the accepted Afrikaner values such as racial superiority and distinctiveness based on 'whiteness', the doctrine of Christian Nationalism and the emphasis on Afrikaner freedom, self-realization and separate development in order to protect the *volkseie* (people's own – the idea of a national character)

were called into question to a much greater extent than under apartheid. The role of the government, the church, the courts and various cultural organizations and institutions in the upholding of apartheid were scrutinized and critiqued.

The demise of the National Party, for decades the political home of Afrikaners, was foreshadowed in the 1994 referendum, when the political party won little support. Afrikaners in the new South Africa were left leaderless and dispersed between different political parties. The loss of political power meant a corresponding loss of status for Afrikaners.

The South African Constitution mandated the government to take active steps to redress the injustices of the past. National holidays that were celebrations of Afrikaner history were abolished or changed, and Afrikaner monuments were removed as part of the reparation process. The replacement of Afrikaner place and street names, as facilitated by the South African Geographical Names Council (SAGNC), was a particularly sensitive issue for many 'white' Afrikaans speakers.

These were not the only challenges that confronted 'white' Afrikaners in the new South Africa. Since 1997 the ANC (African National Congress), the governing party in South Africa, switched from a rainbow or reconciliation to a transformation agenda. Although transformation was inherent in the Freedom Charter and Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), the emphasis shifted to affirmative action and 'black' economic empowerment to ensure broader and meaningful participation in the economy, under the leadership of Deputy President, Thabo Mbeki. Transformation was posited as an integrated socio-economic process to redress the injustices of the past.

Afrikaners as a result had to adjust to the newly instituted policy of affirmative action, aimed at achieving equity in the workplace. The categories designated for advancement included all 'people of colour', females and disabled people. Controversial sporting quotas, to accelerate transformation in sport, were introduced in the late 1990s. These gave much-needed exposure to 'black' sports men and –women. But the fact that teams were selected on the basis of race to

reflect the demographic composition of the country, rather than strictly merit, caused resentment.[5]

Crime levels in South Africa have also risen sharply since 1990 (Louw 1997). It was reported in the Afrikaans press that Afrikaans speakers were concerned about crime, which had reached 'alarming proportions' (Naudé 1995: 14). Henry Jeffreys (1995: 8), the current editor of *Die Burger*, called it the "single largest threat to democracy in South Africa".

1.6 Responses to the new South Africa

The difficulty of the adjustment of 'white' Afrikaans speakers to the democratization of South Africa was especially evident from their divergent responses to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The Commission, which operated from 1996 to 1999, was chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. It aimed to achieve reconciliation through the submission of personal statements, both by the victims of human rights abuses and the perpetrators of such crimes under apartheid. While many Afrikaners were indifferent to the process and to the public hearings that were conducted, others were shaken in their sense of identity and guilt.

Many authors (see Du Plessis 1993; Pont 1995; De Ridder 1995; Jordaan 1997) commented on a spirit of dejectedness, despondency and powerlessness that prevailed amongst Afrikaners as a result of the conditions under which they had to adapt to the new South Africa. This led some conservative Afrikaners to stress an urgent need to rebuild the self-respect of the Afrikaners. The challenging of *Afrikanerdom* on many fronts thus by no means eroded it. A strong isolationist tendency, as captured in the following statement, persisted after the dismantlement of apartheid: "Culture is exclusive, it is not possible to maintain [Afrikaner] culture if its boundaries are not sharp, evident … Culture separates its members from those who do not belong to that culture" (Marais 1995: 87).

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[5] Market research indicated that the majority of people who were aware of the quota system in sport objected to it (Nel 2002: 2).

Amongst extreme conservatives any form liaison with other 'cultures' was still regarded as disloyalty towards 'Afrikaner culture', which needed at all costs to maintain its homogeneity (Swart 1987: 14). Afrikaners, in accordance with these formulations of 'culture', therefore needed a space in which they could reassert their identity and their significance despite their minority status; a space where they could unashamedly be Afrikaners, something the *verkramptes* (conservative, right-wing Afrikaners) deemed impossible in the new South Africa. Already in the mid-1980s this led to calls for a *volksstaat* or independently governed Afrikaner homeland in South Africa (see Bruwer 1984). Orania, a town of 3000 hectares, was eventually established in the Northern Cape in 1991 with this vision in mind.

The conservative response to the new South Africa, however, was only one response. Reactions to the country's transition during the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century varied widely amongst 'white' Afrikaans speakers. This variation was captured by a question that Afrikaans speakers in the Afrikaans media grappled with at the time (and continue to grapple with to this day), namely 'What does it mean to call oneself an Afrikaner in the current South Africa?' Different authors have tried to distinguish between 'white' Afrikaners according to their reactions to the new South Africa.[6]

Significantly, these responses in themselves and suggestions for the 'ideal' Afrikaner response to the transition became popular discussion topics at the KKNK and Aardklop, the newly established Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals. Dr Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert, a former chairman of the Aardklop Board of Directors, for example, emphasized during a lecture series at the Aardklop festival in 1998 that Afrikaners would have to contemplate whether there was a future for the Afrikaners in the new South Africa (Nieuwoudt 1998: 3). The term 'Afrikaner', according to him, would have to be reformulated with a new set of values; a slow process that he felt the new dispensation allowed for.

The writer and poet Antjie Krog (1999: 13) made a speech in a similar vein at the *Sol Plaatje* lecture series at Aardklop the following year. She singled out six different Afrikaner types that

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[6] Hermann Giliomee (2005a: 8), for example, distinguished between the grudge-driven, guilt-driven and the principle-driven Afrikaners, depending on the degree and aggressiveness to which Afrikaners asserted their minority rights.

according to her were all, in one way or another, out of sync, with the new South Africa.[7]   She envisioned someone passionate about Afrikaans; someone who searched for new ways of being Afrikaans, without the traditional exclusivity and reticence (Jordaan 1999: 12).

It was reiterated within various contexts and in the media that certain positive aspects of Afrikaner identity, such as Afrikaners' diligence, could be retained while others, particularly the tendencies to exclusivity and isolation, had to be put aside.   The term 'Afrikaners' in itself continued to generate controversy and there were suggestions that it be replaced with a more neutral, politically correct term such as 'Afrikaans community'.   Discussions and debates about the place of Afrikaners in the new South Africa were symptomatic of a deep-seated process of self-analysis amongst certain 'white' Afrikaans speakers.

1.7 Afrikaans threatened anew

One of the topics of discussion was the tenuous position of Afrikaans in post-apartheid South Africa, given that the language was historically appropriated and politicized as a key identity marker of the Afrikaners vis-à-vis 'culturally different' others.   Afrikaners laid claim to Afrikaans, despite the fact that a diversity of people in South Africa, across the 'colour line', spoke Afrikaans.[8]

Afrikaans retained its status as an official language, albeit one of eleven, under the new political dispensation.   But many Afrikaans-speaking 'whites' perceived the changes wrought by the democratic transition in the 1990s as posing a renewed threat to Afrikaans.   Afrikaans was considered 'dead' by many, judging from press reportage.   Herman Wasserman and Sean Jacobs (2003: 18) refer to the "present cultural stigmatisation of Afrikaans".   It was by no means only conservative Afrikaners who felt concerned about the future of Afrikaans.   Afrikaans speakers in general felt the pressure on Afrikaans mounting.   Ton Vosloo, chairman of the Board of both *Naspers* and *Sanlam* (see Glossary) at the time, for example, observed:

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[7] These Afrikaners were the lefty Afrikaners, the special treatment Afrikaners, the self-imposed mission Afrikaners, the sentimental Afrikaners, the shocked Afrikaners and the embittered Afrikaners.

[8] Today Afrikaans is the first language of a large number of 'coloured' and 'white' people, as well as some Asian and 'black' people (Webb 2002: 74).

It is not to spread panic when one says that Afrikaner people are in a crisis with red lights flashing along their survival path. The examples of marginalization are numerous; the places where space to exist had been conquered, negotiated or established in own initiative are increasingly being questioned. This includes even the self-evident right to be served by the authorities in a language that is officially recognized (Giliomee 2003: 658).

People such as Ton Vosloo recognized that yet another language struggle would achieve little, given the exclusionary nature of previous efforts to protect Afrikaans.[9] A language struggle could easily be dismissed as 'white' Afrikaans speakers futilely attempting to reclaim special privileges for themselves. Post-apartheid conditions necessitated new, more effective ways of advancing Afrikaans. One possibility was to reach out to 'non-white' Afrikaans speakers – something that happened only to a very limited degree under apartheid, if at all.[10]

Stephanie Marlin-Curiel (2003: 69) believes that "in post-apartheid South Africa, Afrikaner cultural survival depends not only on a repudiation of Afrikaner nationalism, but on an emphasis on historical ties with non-white Afrikaans speakers". The author stresses the point elsewhere: "the promotion of an alternative, inclusive, Afrikaans identity may be a matter of physical, as well as cultural, survival" (2003: 72). There was therefore a need for public spaces in which Afrikaans speakers and South Africans in general could enter into conversation with each other.[11] It was within this context that the Afrikaans-orientated festivals emerged.

1.8 The Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals

Festivals, as pointed out by Victor Turner (1982) and others, often emerge or (in the case of established ones) experience sudden growth at times of crisis, when societies are being

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[9] Jaap Steyn (1980; 1984) shows how actions to preserve Afrikaans attained a negative reputation in the 1970s.

[10] "For most South Africans, the only social relationships or even mere interactions that crossed the population classification categories [under apartheid] were in some way related to work" (Frankental and Sichone 2005: 259).

[11] Some of the most visible transformations of the post-apartheid era were manifested in public arenas. These developments in the public sphere in turn renewed scholarly interest in how South Africans engage with each other in emerging and 'formerly' contested public spaces (see Karp, Mullen Kreamer and Lavine 1992; Mathers 1993; Mputing 1998; Gibson and Gouws 2003).

fundamentally reorganized. Afrikaners in former times of crisis resorted to *volksfeeste* (people's festivals) as a vehicle to consolidate the Afrikaners as a unified *volk* (nation). The former Afrikaner *volksfeeste*, which will be discussed more fully in a following chapter, served a number of key functions. The festivals had to instil in Afrikaners a sense of pride in their nationhood (Kapp 1975: 23). The *volksfeeste* were intended to enrich the Afrikaners culturally, extend knowledge about Afrikaner culture, bind people together, thereby strengthening Afrikaner culture, and to generate revenue (Swart 1987: 18). Another key festival aim was the protection of the Protestant religion (Swart 1969: 4). Festival attendance was essentially conceived as a 'cultural responsibility'.

These festivals, by customarily drawing attention to the achievements of Afrikaans as part of the proceedings, were simultaneously incorporated into the Afrikaners' protracted language struggle for the advancement of Afrikaans. Interestingly, the arts festivals that emerged in the 1990s – the KKNK and Aardklop – were so closely connected to Afrikaans that they were sometimes erroneously described as 'language festivals'. According to Temple Hauptfleisch (2007: 6), who was referring to festivals such as the KKNK and Aardklop:

> The Afrikaans-language festivals arose during what one could term the new 'language struggle' of the 1990s, when the Afrikaans-speaking population began to fear the extinction of its language and culture under the ANC-led 'new South Africa' dispensation and its expressed preference for English as a lingua franca for the country.

The festival originators of the KKNK and Aardklop indeed commented on a perceived 'crisis' in the language and artistic domains of South Africa; this is an issue that a separate chapter on the establishment of the two arts festivals will address in greater detail. They were keenly aware of the challenges, such as the attenuation of Afrikaans in the public sphere and the gradual loss of higher functions that post-apartheid South Africa, posed to Afrikaans. They claimed that the arts, broadly conceived, were similarly beleaguered. These circumstances, in fact, helped to set the stage for the unprecedented growth that the two festivals have undergone since their inceptions.

Both arts festivals were therefore primarily established to advance the arts in Afrikaans by offering entertainment of a high standard. They were also meant to boost the confidence of the 'Afrikaans community'. But it is important to distinguish between concerns about the survival of Afrikaans, on the one hand, and concerns about the survival of Afrikaner 'culture', on the other. Although the arts festivals were Afrikaans-orientated, the festivals were by no means exclusively Afrikaner-driven endeavours, nor did they arise solely because of a shared apprehension about the continued survival of Afrikaans.

Firstly, the festival originators were adamant that the festivals, despite the Afrikaans focus, were *arts* festivals rather than *language* festivals. Secondly, the festival originators' interpretations of a state of crisis revolved around the state of Afrikaans rather than around Afrikaner 'culture'. They were, as will become clearer in a later chapter, not at all in favour of connecting the language to a single group or denomination. Thirdly, the deep concern about Afrikaans had more to do with the chequered history of Afrikaans and the strong associations of the language with Afrikaner nationalism than with worrying language developments in the public sphere. According to the Gerwel report that was submitted in 2002 (Brink 2006: 15):

> Afrikaans became the language most closely associated with the formalisation and execution of apartheid … That history of association with racism and racially based practices is one that Afrikaans-speaking communities will have to confront and deal with. That is part of the challenge of healing, reconciliation and reparation our society will continue to face for a considerable time to come.

The only perceived way to inject Afrikaans with new life was to free it from the political connotations that weighed it down. The festival originators, perhaps idealistically and working with rather essentialist notions of identity, also envisioned the respective festivals as playing a reconciliatory role in post-apartheid South Africa – not only by ridding Afrikaans of its political baggage and uniting and strengthening the formerly divided Afrikaans speech community, but also by cumulatively bringing about a positive and lasting *transformation* in how South Africans at large engaged with each other. The arts festivals were thus presented as prime arenas in which Afrikaans-speaking communities could take up that 'challenge of healing, reconciliation and reparation'.

1.9 Problem statement

> If one is allowed to speculate about common feelings that arise from festivals, it is at least probable that these events trigger reactions in the community … Although it is difficult to know what such events mean to the individual citizen, she or he shares the experience of a collective event, even if only touched by it peripherally. The matter of collective identity certainly deserves deeper investigation, both theoretically and practically (Sauter 2007: 210).

This study is, broadly speaking, about the reconfiguration of social identities in post-apartheid South Africa as mediated by two local, Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals. The focus is on how 'white' Afrikaans-speaking South Africans, in particular, are re-imagining 'being Afrikaans'. The study also addresses a closely related issue, namely the extent to which the arts festivals facilitate social transformation by fostering a sense of community or social *communitas* amongst the multitude of people involved in them. The purpose of the study, given the preceding background, is threefold:

- to establish how arts festivals were conceived to bring people together, paying particular attention to the role of the arts, space and language;

- to examine the extent to which the arts festivals, as liminal social phenomena, in fact served as a cohesive force;

- and to trace how the Afrikaans festivals have developed, specifically in terms of reflecting Afrikaans identity processes and possibly social transformation, and how these changes were perceived and managed.

1.10 Theoretical foundation and introduction of key concepts

1.10.1 Festivals as liminal events

A festival takes place during a liminal period – a time set off from ordinary time (Leach 1961 cited in Ladurie 1979: 306). The work of the British anthropologist Victor Turner, who has expanded Van Gennep's formulation of liminality, is particularly useful when considering the

'transformative' potential of festivals. The idea that festivals might serve to unite people relates to Turner's notions of liminality and social *communitas*. A sense of community or *communitas* is purportedly achieved because of the extraordinary liminal conditions that prevail during festivals. It is therefore essential to critically examine both notions and to relate them to the contemporary Afrikaans-orientated festivals, something which has not been attempted before.

Although Turner's work (1967; 1969) on rites of passage is most immediately concerned with small-scale, pre-industrial societies, the author addresses key qualities of liminality that I believe are pertinent to the issue of social transformation within the context of festivals. The qualities which I will briefly highlight are: death-life associations; didacticism, experimentation and reflexivity.

Rites of passage are often rich in symbolism alluding to death and new life. According to Turner (1992: 133), "the liminal stage [in rites of passage] represents a stage of being in culture almost completely at odds with the ordinary and the mundane". Liminality isolates persons from all that is familiar to them. They find themselves in an unknown environment, often removed from everything that equipped them for functioning in their 'previous' lives. This environment divests them of their "previous habits, thought, feeling, and action" (Turner 1967: 105). As part of the 'destructuring' of identity during the intermediate liminal phase, those in a rite of passage are stripped of all exterior status markers such as property, insignia, clothing and rank, which leaves them in an ambiguous state, 'betwixt and between' the various statuses and roles assigned to them in ordinary life. They occupy an ambiguous position between the living and the dead as 'transitional beings', because they are not yet classified and therefore 'structurally dead' (Turner 1967: 95-97).

Initiates in many rites of passage have to submit unquestioningly to an authority that represents the 'community' as a whole. Liminality therefore serves a definite didactic purpose, for example, when elders guiding youths through an initiation impart group knowledge, values and understandings to the initiates who are open to being instructed (Turner 1969: 81). Instruction often proceeds in a nonverbal, symbolic form. As a natural consequence of their symbolic death, those who are finally reintegrated into their previous environment often act as if they are newly born and must relearn all the gestures of ordinary life (Van Gennep 1960: 81).

Liminality is also a time of experimentation and reflection. Turner (1974: 47) conceives of structure as "all that holds people apart, defines their differences, and constrains their actions". During the period of "structural erasure" (Turner 1992), the initiates escape the multiple rules, laws and stipulations that govern everyday life. The liminal, in contrast to the mundane that is already fixed in structure, is seemingly unlimited in its potential for creativity and innovation. According to Turner (1967: 97), liminality is a "realm of pure possibility whence novel configurations of ideas and relations may arise". Within liminality there is the possibility of discovering something not yet known. Novel thought and action become possible.

"The basic building blocks of culture are released from their customary configurations and recombined" during liminality, according to Turner (1992: 153). Liminality throws into question everything that is taken for granted in mundane life. Social order is "mocked, reversed, criticized, or ignored" (Turner 1992: 147). It challenges accepted ways of thinking and acting. Nothing within the liminal is expectable. While it is often the scene for the emergence of society's deepest values, it may also lead to radical scepticism about cherished values and rules (Turner 1984: 22).

By confronting persons with the unfamiliar (or the familiar in an unrecognisable form), liminality provokes free thinking, self-questioning, self-discovery and reflexivity. According to Turner (1969: 22), "people [in the liminal phase] are allowed to think about how they think, about the terms in which they conduct their thinking, or to feel about how they feel in daily life". Experiences of the liminal lead them to reconsider everything they previously had no need or sufficient time to reflect on. They are therefore able to develop freer and deeper understandings of the system from which they have been removed (Myerhoff 1982:117).

Turner (1974: 47) also broadens the concept of liminality so that it not only refers to rites of passage, but to "any condition outside or on the peripheries of everyday life". Pilgrimages, for example, have many of the attributes of liminality in rites of passage (Turner 1978: 34): transition, rebirth, homogeneity, equality, anonymity, absence of property, absence of status, uniform clothing, absence of rank, humility, disregard for personal appearance, no distinctions of wealth, total obedience to a leader and sacred instruction.

A few of the attributes singled out by Turner could equally apply to festivals, whether secular or not: release from the 'everyday' or mundane life; (sometimes) involving travel to a place which suddenly, transiently, becomes central for the individual; 'betwixt and between' experiences; (a degree of) homogenization between festival-goers; anonymity; (the possibility of) *communitas* (fellowship) and (opportunity for) reflection on 'basic cultural values'.

According to Turner (1978: 35), pilgrimages (and festivals by extension) are, however, best thought of as *liminoid* or quasi-liminal. Whereas the liminal is an obligatory social mechanism to mark the transitions from one state or status to another in 'simpler societies', pilgrimages (and festivals) are characteristic of modern societies. *Liminoid* phenomena are not conceptualised as religious routine, are less formalized, more open and attendance is voluntary. Among these Turner mentions theatre. Activities such as watching a play or listening to music are described as "moments of anti-structure" (Turner 1992: 135), in other words liminal or *liminoid* moments. This study, however, uses the more familiar concept of liminality only in relation to the arts festivals in order to avoid confusion.

Within small-scale pre-industrial societies liminality operates within fairly narrow limits. The initiates are encouraged to think abstractly about their cultural milieu, even question accepted wisdom, but ultimately they are given standards of reference that should guide them and enable them to cope with their new stations in life. Participants' knowledge that liminality is a unique situation also holds the potential boundlessness in check (Turner 1992: 153). And despite being allowed various freedoms and liberties, those exiting the liminal phase immediately become once more subject to custom and law (Turner 1967). Celebrations in pre-industrial societies are therefore seen as confirmations of the social order (Turner 1982).

But in complex societies liminality is less constrained. Liminality seems more open-ended. Instead of perpetuating the social order, liminality has the potential of effecting (long-term) social transformation. According to Victor and Edith Turner (1978: 2), liminality can:

> …. apply to all phases of decisive cultural change, in which previous orderings of thought and behaviour are subject to revision and criticism, when hitherto unprecedented modes of ordering relations between ideas and people become possible and desirable.

Meta-social commentary within festivals and carnivals can be subversive, providing "an independent critique of society … and hence a possible font of alternative ideas, values, motivations, and designs … for living" (Turner 1982: 28). Festivals moreover provide one of the modes in which people become reflexive and try to assign meaning to their behaviour (Turner 1987: 77).

David M Guss (2000: 9) also views cultural performance, which encompasses festivals, as periods during which "intense social transformation can occur". And, like Turner, he singles out the "reflexive quality" of festivals as one of the elements that makes transformation possible. "Central meanings and values" of a group are embodied and acted out during festivals, according to Guss, and reflection on these may deepen understanding, give rise to criticism and ultimately change. However, Guss acknowledges that the notion of 'group', implying unity and homogeneity, is problematic. Cultural performances are therefore always contentious and ambiguous.

Putting the festivals into historical perspective will entail examining how the 'setting apart' of festivals, which is assumed as self-evident in the festival literature, occurs. The notion of liminality – defined here as the extra-ordinary period during which festivals occur – will therefore be central to the analysis. The study will pay particular attention to the transformation of public space(s), festival time, the effect on residents' and festival-goers movements in the host towns and how such spatial transformations evolved over time.

1.10.2 Festivals as 'community events'

The integrative or 'community-building' function of festivals is fore-grounded in a significant body of festival literature. Many authors (see Boissevain 1992a; Bertran 1999), particularly those who base their research on small, relatively isolated communities, continue to view festivals primarily as a means to recapture and renew a sense of community. Georgia Seffrin (2007: 67) calls "the coalescence of a community" a festival's most traditional function. As 'community affairs', festivals therefore attain an increased importance at times when a blurring of boundaries challenges the perceived community coherence.

Similar festival studies illustrate how festivals contribute to the preservation of a community's 'cultural character' (Muxika 1999; Bertran 1999). Continued celebration of festivals in which the 'whole community' takes part is regarded as testimony to the vitality of a community (Cruces and Diaz de Rada 1992). Others maintain that festivals are important communicative vehicles to affirm ethnic identity (Kaeppler 1987).

The literature further maintains that festivals foster a sense of belonging. Jordan Bertran (1999: 241), looking at rural carnivals in Catalan-speaking countries, believes festivals act as a linking force between festival-goers: "the fact of belonging to a certain community is essential". According to Christina Nygren (2007: 279), "festival events can be seen as prime devices for promoting social cohesion and integrating individuals into society or a group, and retaining them as members through shared, reinforcing performance". Even when recognizing that there might be diverse ways of expressing 'belonging' during festivals (Cruces and Diaz de Rada 1992), the achievement of belonging is taken as self-evident.

Interestingly, the Afrikaans word *aardklop*, a neologism directly translated as 'earth-beat', alluded both to the unique atmosphere and 'heartbeat' of the countryside where the Aardklop festival took place and to the fact that South Africans are people 'of the earth'.[12] The name of the arts festival and the festival rhetoric seemed to imply that, in contrast to the predominant theorization of travel as one mode of displacement (see Clifford 1997), travelling to a festival location might bestow on attendees a sense of belonging.

The feeling of solidarity, according to the festival literature, derives not only from the public nature of the celebrations, but from the 'complete equality' that prevails. Festival commentators hail festivals for abolishing the "difference between high and low" (Von Goethe 1987), "barriers of aloofness and of intolerance are broken down" (Purton 1981: 1), "all human social rank is cast off" (Brandes 1988: 2) and people are "united as simple celebrants" (Da Matta 1984: 227). References to an invisible 'social body' are not uncommon in the festival literature, which characteristically idealizes a universal sense of oneness shared by all celebrants.

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[12] http://www.aardklop.co.za (7 January 2004).

Victor Turner's influential notion of social *communitas* probably captures the sense of oneness best. According to Turner (1992: 32), those who attend an initiation ritual or elect to go on a pilgrimage (or attend a festival) are 'dead' to the "negative alienating aspects of system and structure". A levelling and stripping process reduces them to "a sort of common human *prima materia*" (Turner 1992: 59). But moving into the liminal in their reduced state might simultaneously be the "germ of life" when they are metaphorically reborn, along with fellow initiates (festival-goers), into social *communitas*.

Turner describes *communitas* in varying ways: as "an essential and generic human bond, without which there could be no society" (Turner 1969: 97); as the "direct, immediate, and total confrontation of human identities which tends to make those experiencing it think of mankind as a homogeneous, unstructured and free community" (1974: 169); as a "commonness of feeling" (Turner and Turner 1978: 13) and as "true fellowship, or agape, or spontaneous, altruistic love" (Turner 1992: 33). Victor Turner's notion of social *communitas* resembles Benedict Anderson's (1983) influential notion of the 'imagined community', especially with respect to the purported lack of status differences between members. According to Anderson (1983), all communities are in a sense 'imagined', because community members, in spite of not all knowing each other or coming into physical contact, are aware of their underlying connectedness. The relationship between members "is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 1983: 16).

Of the three kinds of *communitas* – spontaneous, ideological and normative – the first two are of direct concern to this study. Whereas spontaneous *communitas* arises without deliberate construction, ideological *communitas* serves as the "blueprint for the reform of society" (Turner 1992: 59). Turner believes *communitas*, which exists outside of structure, provides an escape from all that is predetermined by questioning social structural rules and suggesting new possibilities (Turner 1974: 202).

The experience of *communitas* is typically intense and fleeting. It is characterized by spontaneity and immediacy. According to Turner (1969: 113), *communitas* is of the now. *Communitas* is by definition profoundly social. It implies a change in the quality of social

relationships (Turner 1992: 137). *Communitas* for Turner means a total, albeit temporary, absence of internal disagreement or strife.

It transcends all socially imposed distinctions between people such as rank, age, kinship position or gender, so that they are able to unselfconsciously and directly relate to one another on an equal footing. Pilgrims advancing towards a mutually recognized goal experience *communitas* through a "dynamic facing of the others, a flowing from I to Thou" (Turner 1997: 127). *Communitas* is an awareness of that which is mutually understood but difficult or impossible to express verbally.

Communitas does not depend on in-group, out-group oppositions, because it always strains towards universality and openness (Turner 1974: 302). But *communitas* is also nurtured in more limited contexts where the consolidation of a group's identity within *communitas* often ironically results in separating them from the surrounding society as an in-group. According to Turner (1992: 60), people who are similar in one important characteristic – sex, age, ethnicity, religion, profession – may:

> withdraw symbolically, even actually, from the total system, from which they may in various degrees feel themselves 'alienated', to seek the glow of *communitas* among those with whom they share some cultural or biological feature they take to be their most signal mark of identity.

While the possibility of *communitas* always emerges during liminal and *liminoid* processes such as festivals, according to Turner, it does not happen naturally. Turner (1992: 60) speculates: "certain kinds of liminality are conducive to the emergence of *communitas*", but he is just as vague on what these may be as he is on the explicit criteria for assessing *communitas*.

1.10.3 The social implications of attending festivals

While post-modern critiques of holism render such simplistic accounts of festival participation problematic, the belief that 'all festival-goers' are united during festivals persists. The festival managements and directors of the KKNK and Aardklop also expressly hoped, as stated before,

that the festivals would eventually give rise to a transformed society in which anyone could experience a sense of togetherness around the arts and Afrikaans.

This was an interesting goal, given that language is known to reinforce boundaries between people and even to serve as a means of exclusion. According to Richard Jenkins (1997: 10), "any cultural trait in common can provide a basis and resources for ethnic closure: language, ritual, economic way of life, lifestyle more generally, and the division of labour, are all likely possibilities in this respect". Shared language, according to Jenkins, is particularly implicated in ethnicity.[13] Steve Fenton (1999: 9) calls language an "undoubtedly powerful group marker" that is "frequently right at the heart of the boundary making process". Also according to Joshua A Fishman (1989: 7),

> At every stage, ethnicity is linked to language … There is no escaping the primary symbol-system of our species, certainly not where the phenomenology of aggregational definition and boundary maintenance is involved, when ethnic being, doing and knowing are involved. Initially, however, language is but one of a myriad of minimally conscious 'discriminanda'. Ultimately it may become a primary cause, a rallying cry, a prime concern and a perceived first line of defence.

The linkage of language and ethnicity suggests that the fostering of social *communitas* between all festival-goers attending the arts festivals was not necessarily as self-evident and uncomplicated as the festival literature would lead one to believe. The arts festivals, after all, took place while a public debate raged in the background over "whether Afrikaans speakers ... should be considered a cultural-historical community" (Brink 2006: 80), given the sharp historical division of the speech community.

This study, considered as a whole, offers a critique of the festival literature and Turner's work for presenting an idealized and overly simplistic account of festivals and by extension liminality

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[13] The term ethnicity as used in this study refers to "aspects of relationships between groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive" (Eriksen 1993: 4). "The fact that ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves" (Barth 1996: 295) is important.

and social *communitas*. The study looks at the reconfirmation, emergence and strengthening of social relations during these arts festivals. It is important to take note of:

> ... forms of community which are conceptualized first and foremost by reference to what is held in common by members rather than in terms of oppositional categories between insiders and outsiders ... What matters most, therefore is what 'we' have shared, not the boundary dividing 'us' from 'them'. In such circumstances, the identity and sense of community arise in the course of, and is conceptualized in terms of particular forms of social interaction (Amit and Rapport 2002: 59-60).

But rather than assuming that festivals straightforwardly unite people, the study will illustrate that the 'sense of oneness', 'the commonness of feeling', 'the true fellowship' that festival-goers are said to experience during festivals are exaggerated. No community – not even a community constituted in festival time – is homogeneous.[14] The study also questions whether people attending the festivals all experienced an identical sense of *communitas*. The study thus presents an implicit argument against essentialism – a generalisation of a group, 'culture' or other category based on the perceived properties of the category; properties that are seen as constant and unchangeable. Sometimes minorities can use such unwarranted generalizations to their advantage to solidify the group and to achieve political ends. There is a close connection between essentialism and ethnicity as two modes of representation:

> Ethnicity appears to come into being most frequently in just such instances when individuals are persuaded of a need to confirm a collective sense of identity in the face of threatening economic, political, or other social forces (Wilmsen 1996: 4-5).

Two dominant approaches to the issue of ethnicity can be distinguished in the literature. One is the primordial approach that views ethnicity as given, essential, inherent to a person, unchanging and largely independent of social contexts. People experience it "as an inherited constellation acquired from one's parent as they acquired it from theirs, and so on" (Fishman 1989: 25).

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[14] Wherever the term 'community' appears in the text, it is used to refer to a "collective connection [between people] that is not merely or even primarily instrumental" (Amit and Rapport 2002: 13).

The second is the constructivist approach which views identity as socially produced, malleable and changing. A prototypical social constructivist model of ethnicity emphasizes the following key points: dialectic between similarity and difference; the production and reproduction of ethnicity in social interaction; ethnicity as to some extent variable; and ethnicity as both collective and individual (Jenkins 1997: 40).

This study is aligned with the constructivist model. It favours an approach that recognizes the fluidity rather than the fixity of identities (Vail 1991; Wasserman and Jacobs 2003) and the agency of individuals in producing, articulating and contesting identities. Identities are not static; they are "shaped and reshaped by people under [certain] conditions" (Erasmus 2001: 23). Afrikaans identities are continuously defined and demarcated in relation to other social identities that are situated within wider networks of power relations. Although both language and race were taken into account as key identity markers of Afrikaans ethnicity, the study emphasizes that there is no essential idea of what it means to be an Afrikaner.

Festival research in South Africa has largely neglected the social implications of staging and attending arts festivals. Economic impact studies (Snowball and Antrobus 2001; Snowball and Antrobus 2003; Saayman, Saayman and Van Schalkwyk 2003; Snowball 2005; Saayman, Slabbert and Saayman 2006; Saayman and Saayman 2006) only assess the economic implications of festivals. Market research (see Van Zyl 2005) provides no information on the historical development of the festivals, the degree to which these events are contested or supported, or how these events might reflect and influence identity processes.

A noteworthy exception is a study by Kenneth Grundy (1993) in which the author examines the struggle for representation of 'black' artistic groups during the 1970s and 1980s at what was then known as the Grahamstown festival. Grundy (1993) has argued that those critical of the repressive political and social order seek alternative outlets for their voices and that arts festivals might provide vehicles for such protest. He shows how the character of the (National Arts) festival changed over the years. It changed from being primarily targeted at 'white', economically well-off English speakers to being more inclusive. However, Grundy takes no account of festival-goers' experiences.

Herman van Zijl Kitshoff (2006) offers a comprehensive overview of the origin and dynamics of the KKNK between 1995 and 2005. While Kitshoff concentrates on the overall ideological thrust of the KKNK, he does not look in a finely grained manner at the experiences of festival-goers and how perceptions about the festival might have changed.

South African identities under post-apartheid, on the other hand, have received widespread scholarly attention. A number of studies concentrate on 'coloured' communities in post-apartheid South Africa (James, Caliguire and Cullinan 1996; Erasmus 2001; Battersby 2003). The majority of studies that approach 'white' Afrikaans speakers, however, were conducted before the democratic transition and concentrate narrowly on the ideology of Afrikaner nationalism and the Afrikaners' rise to power (Moodie 1975; Du Toit 1983). Other writings propagate the establishment of an Afrikaner *volksstaat* (Bruwer 1984; Swart 1987). At Van Wyk's (1991) and Frederik Van Zyl Slabbert's (2000) accounts of their experiences as Afrikaners and Mads Vestergaard's (2001) study of 'white' Afrikaans speakers' positioning of themselves in the new South Africa are among the few publications, apart from the Afrikaans media, that allow for alternative formulations of Afrikaner/Afrikaans identities.

A reference sourcebook entitled *South Africa's diverse peoples* (Frankental and Sichone 2005) contains a section on 'Afrikaners in Post-Apartheid South Africa'. Ironically, despite acknowledging that "Afrikaners, like other ethnic groups, have diverse origins and are also differentiated on the basis of regional, economic, religious, and other factors", the authors' focus remains on "Afrikaner nationalism of the extreme variety" (Frankental and Sichone 2005: 213-214).

The study by Melissa E Steyn (2001), *Whiteness Just Isn't What It used To Be: White Identity in a Changing South Africa*, is one of the few identity studies set after 1994. Steyn argues that different narratives or constructions of 'whiteness' have emerged with the collapse of the apartheid regime. These narratives are examined on the basis of examples drawn from survey research. Whilst the study is insightful, a shortcoming is the fact that it offers a purely textual analysis. Generalizations are made about how respondents confront life in the new South Africa solely on the basis of their written responses. Steyn (2001: 135) asserts, for example, that a certain subgroup is establishing relationships with culturally different others, "immersing

themselves in the new order". A fuller exploration of what such immersion entails, how immersion comes about and how respondents' words correspond (or not) with their actions would have been valuable. Such information is only obtainable through participant observation.

Stephanie Marlin-Curiel (2003) also examines 'white identity' in an insightful academic article about a 'rave' that aimed to 'rehabilitate' Afrikaans and Afrikaner identity in the new South Africa. The intention behind the musical event was to bring Afrikaans-speaking musicians from varied racial and cultural backgrounds together, in an effort to remake Afrikaans into a cutting edge, versatile modern language rather than the language of the oppressor. Similar to the arts festivals, the organizers aimed to achieve this by allowing 'white' Afrikaans speakers to bond:

> … with black or coloured Afrikaans speakers, through shared genealogy of language and
> through shared marginalisation of Afrikaans language and culture in the present-
> day, post-apartheid South Africa (Marlin-Curiel 2003: 56).

Again a point of critique is that a sense of voice is absent in the article. The author makes claims about how "feelings of marginalisation, criminalisation and general nervousness about their place in the new South Africa are common among Afrikaners" and how "Afrikaners are feeling displaced" (Marlin-Curiel 2003: 59). But observations about peoples' interactions with each other at the rave are sparse and few respondents, apart from the event organizers, are quoted.

Steve Fenton (1999: 89) cautions that "to be comprehensively understood we need to examine ethnicity [or identity] … in the grounded experience of individuals, seen as actors in a series of face-to-face contexts". This study is indeed very much based on the 'grounded experience of individuals', whether festival-goers, festival workers or residents from within the host towns, as the following section on methodology shows.

1.11 Research design and methods

The biggest research challenge was to understand and to represent the arts festivals in their complexity, paying attention to key themes such as celebration, organizational process, festivals' use of space, temporality, liminality and issues of identity. My overall strategy was to approach the arts festivals from various angles - at different points in time, in different spaces, from

different vantage points, through various methods – and to be sensitive to variations, both within and between the two festivals. The attempt to understand and analyze the arts festivals in their complexity was undertaken at various levels: individual, cultural, social and societal.

1.11.1 Timeline of fieldwork

The study, as stated before, focuses on two of South Africa's most prominent Afrikaans arts festivals – the KKNK and Aardklop. They were selected because of their prominence and the fact that the KKNK was established as the first national Afrikaans festival in South Africa, while Aardklop was the first national Afrikaans festival in the north of the country. I also researched the National Arts Festival (NAF) – the country's older, most established arts festival. While the festival is not dealt with in depth in this study, it serves, where appropriate, as a useful counterpoint to the two more recently established Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals. The timing of the three festivals enabled me to spend time in each of the host towns, as the following time frame indicates:

Date	Festival	Duration of Fieldwork
3 - 11 April 2004	KKNK	February - April 2004
1 – 10 July 2004	NAF	June – July 2004
28 September - 2 October 2004	Aardklop	August - November 2004
25 March 2005 - 2 April 2005	KKNK	February – April 2005
27 September – 1 October 2005	Aardklop	2005
1 – 8 April 2006	KKNK	2006

1.11.2 Archival work

I undertook substantial archival work to determine how the festivals were constructed and what they entailed. Archival work was also essential to trace the historic development of the festivals and to explore how the festivals impacted on their surrounding environments and identity formation. Printed sources such as media and town council reports, promotional material, official festival newspapers, festival guides, festival maps and records kept by the festival

managements were consulted.[15] The internet, and in particular websites such as *LitNet*, where issues surrounding the arts festivals are debated online, provided another information resource.[16]

Unfortunately coherent documentation on festival planning was often non-existent or procedures were only haphazardly documented. Municipal records and official festival documents in particular were difficult to obtain. Information had a monetary value to the organizations (Gold and Ward 1995: 50), so commercial secrecy restricted access and made comparative research difficult. While the festival committees were generally cooperative, I was not allowed to attend certain management or board meetings.

1.11.3 Participant observation[17]

Participant observation was used to complement the media discourse analysis. Basic to participant observation is 'being there' and following up on promising interactions with the research surroundings (Richardson 2003: 74). Unfortunately there are no guidelines to sampling and recording of complex festive events, despite the fact that the difficulties of attempting fieldwork in such settings have been pointed out (Gillespie 1987; Brandes 1988).

An observation schedule and mapped vantage points guided my initial enquiry into various publicly accessed areas in the towns. My observations centred on the town centre, because the central business districts and streets are principal festival gathering places. I was particularly interested in the festivals' layouts, the "cluster and congestion points" (Worpole 1992: 75) where people gathered, and how the flows of people were channelled during and outside of festival times.

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[15] According to John Tosh (2000: 42), the press has a threefold value as a published, primary source: newspapers "record the political and social views which made most impact at the time", "provide a day-to-day record of events" and "from time to time present the results of more thorough enquiries into issues".

[16] *LitNet* is an independent Afrikaans journal that is published on the internet and managed as a joint cooperation by Lightprops 3042 and Media24.

[17] Participant observation or ethnographic fieldwork is a well-established, qualitative research method involving the researcher becoming immersed in the events being studied. Through direct participation and by acknowledging his/her own subjectivity, the researcher is able to develop a richer understanding of the field site(s) and to obtain a deeper insight into the actual experiences of respondents that quantitative research methods and archival work do not offer.

During the festivals observation strategies included participating in the early morning literary seminars, visiting the festival tents, exploring the book sales and arts exhibitions, and attending various live music and theatre performances. During evenings pubs and restaurants were frequented. Space is socially produced and constituted through people's interrelated spatial practices, rather than simply being an abstract container of action (Lefebvre 1991; Crang and Thrift 2000). The notion was further interrogated by calling attention to the activation of public space for festive purposes and the contestation of the festivals' use of space.

1.11.4 Interviews

Little critical attention has been paid in the literature to the voices of festival participants themselves (see Turner 1987; Abrahams 1987; Da Matta 1984). Even where the audience is taken into account, as in Angus Gillespie's (1987) study of the folk festival in America, attendees are roughly divided into three archetypes – the family, the *folknik* and the outlaw – and based only on direct observation.[18]

This study, given the preceding remarks on the festival literature, is unique in the central emphasis that it accords to the points of view of festival role players themselves. It also departs from current research by involving not only festival managements, but also festival-goers, festival workers and residents from within the host towns. This broader focus allows one to highlight tensions between management and ground level in social experience.

A research entry point was the establishment of close working relationships with members of the various festival committees, which were primarily responsible for the planning of the arts festivals. Simultaneously I involved local residents, especially those residents who were involved with service provision during festivals – town councillors, the owners of guesthouses, members of the police force, as well as journalists at the festival newspapers, stall vendors and business owners.

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[18] The family attends for outdoor recreation, the *folknik* is a snob who wants to be seen, and the outlaw is a noisy gang member (Gillespie 1987: 153).

Most of my interviews were semi-structured, which means they had "much of the freewheeling quality of unstructured interviewing" (Bernard 1988: 205), but were based on the use of an interview guide (see Appendices A-C). Interviews lasted an average of 40 minutes, but conversations often continued after the official interview was over. Interviews were conducted in Afrikaans or English, depending on the respondent's preference.[19] Since key informant interviewing is an integral part of ethnographic research (Bernard 1994: 166), follow-up interview sessions were held with selected respondents.

Interviewees were requested to fill in tick-boxes aimed at eliciting socio-economic data such as age, educational level, income, marital status and festival expenditure. As pointed out by Bill Davies (1988), attendance at an arts festival, characterized by an ambient atmosphere and hectic revelry, is not conducive to filling in a questionnaire or administering an interview schedule. During the festival I therefore conducted spot interviews, conversed informally with attendees and generally participated in the festival activities.

My research strategy was not like that of a market researcher, with whom I was often confused. Whereas the market research team commissioned by the KKNK devoted a maximum of ten minutes talking to festival-goers, I spent time with festival-goers as long as (their) time allowed. Whereas they avoided so-called speech-choruses – where more than one respondent answer questions simultaneously – I welcomed the comments elicited by group discussions. Whereas they were looking for concise answers, I routinely asked respondents to elaborate. Whereas they only concentrated on the current festival, I valued anecdotes and reflections on past festivals as part of my historical approach.

1.11.5 Introducing the respondents

The study distinguishes between the towns' residents, festival workers and festival-goers. While the tendency in the literature (see Boissevain 1992a) is to impress an insider/outsider division onto the relationship of permanent residents and festival-goers from outside the host towns – Ros Derret (2003: 4) calls it the 'host-guest gulf' – I found that the primary division within the

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[19] It is important to note that I translated all the comments of Afrikaans respondents, as well as the Afrikaans source material that I utilized, into English.

context of these festivals was between festival-goers as consumers and those who stood to gain economically from the festival. Further subdivisions existed between theatre practitioners, on the one hand, and festival-goers, on the other, and between permanent residents and outsiders to the host towns.

I spoke to a roughly equal number of male and female respondents. While I interviewed respondents across a broad age and 'racial' spectrum, the majority of respondents in Oudtshoorn and Potchefstroom were 'white' Afrikaans speakers. I interviewed residents from various residential areas in the respective host towns, including the bordering townships. This was important because of the spatial divisions (addressed in a following chapter) that existed within the respective festivals. Most respondents came from within the province in which the host town was located, in other words the Western Cape in the case of the KKNK, or the North West province in the case of Aardklop.[20]

1.12 Chapter outline

This first chapter introduces the study and the approach taken. The second chapter distinguishes four main claims that are made about festivals in the literature. The study as a whole will deconstruct these claims in turn by demonstrating that (i) festivals do not simply suspend the 'everyday', but rather that the 'everyday' is reworked and transformed in complex ways; (ii) festivals can have both a conservative or 'transformative' function; (iii) festival-goers are not necessarily united in celebration; (iv) and festivals do not automatically lead to renewal.

The third chapter is divided into three sections. The first section contextualizes Afrikaans speakers' pervasive fears about the continuation in post-apartheid South Africa of Afrikaans by indicating how Afrikaans became a core symbol for Afrikaner ethnicity since the nineteenth century. The second, related section examines the role that specific *volksfeeste* (such as the Day of the Vow and the centenary celebrations of the Great Trek) played in the rise of Afrikaner nationalism before the democratic transition.

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[20] Other research also indicates that the majority of festival-goers at the KKNK came from the Western Cape, whereas festival-goers at Aardklop are mainly from the North West province or Gauteng (Saayman, Slabbert and Saayman 2006; Saayman and Saayman 2006).

The third section attends to the National Arts Festival (NAF) in Grahamstown. The 1820 British Settlers Monument, completed in 1974, was meant to advance the legacy of the British Settlers at a time when most of the Nationalist government's resources were being channelled towards Afrikaans. From its inception the National Arts Festival, one of the events hosted by the 'living monument', was therefore characterized as predominantly English. The section provides an overview of the development of the festival, including the shifting position of Afrikaans within the festival. The chapter concludes that the NAF, rather than the former *volksfeeste*, served as a festival model for the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals that have been established since 1995.

The focus shifts to the KKNK and Aardklop in the fourth chapter and the perceived 'crisis conditions' under which the two Afrikaans-oriented arts festivals originated. The chapter argues that both of these festivals were established as a response to two related concerns, namely that Afrikaans and concomitantly the performing and visual arts in the country were under threat. The chapter also looks at a number of factors that contributed to the selection of the festivals' host towns such as their size, location, infrastructure and character. It argues that these were the pre-liminal conditions that preceded the establishment and staging of the respective arts festivals. The chapter also draws attention to the way that the festival managements attempted to reconcile the striving to protect Afrikaans, and by extension *Afrikaanse kultuurgoedere* (Afrikaans 'culture'), with the broader aim of achieving national unity and reconciliation.

The final part of the chapter highlights the continuities as well as the discontinuities between the newly established Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals and the former Afrikaner *volksfeeste*. The *volksfeeste* were explicitly used as a nation-building tool for achieving unity amongst a narrowly defined nation of 'white' Afrikaans speakers. The festival organizers of the Afrikaans arts festivals hoped instead that the festivals that originated after 1994 would help to unite all Afrikaans speakers, regardless of their 'skin colour'. The third and the fourth chapter, considered together, highlight the distinct differences between the two different orientations in harnessing festivals' perceived potential for achieving cohesion.

The fifth chapter employs the notion of liminality to examine the historical creation, functioning and development of the KKNK and Aardklop. It distinguishes six conditions of liminality and discusses each of these in turn: extensive planning and preparation, different senses of time, the

alteration of everyday routines, re-discovery and re-appropriation of private and public spaces, the activation of festival spaces and the reworking of rules. It was against this liminal background that social transformation could potentially take place.

The sixth chapter examines the extent to which the festivals, as liminal social phenomena, were envisioned to lead to social transformation and how the festivals have developed over time in relation to this stated goal. The chapter looks at two possible means of social transformation: through the experience of the arts and through the use of public space. The chapter, drawing from Victor Turner's work on liminality, highlights education as a key aspect in addressing the issue of social transformation. The chapter begins to critically assess the facilitation of social *communitas* festival time; an assessment that is continued in the remaining two chapters. It illustrates how the arts festivals facilitated social *communitas* at times by providing festival-goers with a common meeting ground and drawing some of them together through a joined love of the arts.

But prominent social divisions marked both of these festivals. These divisions are the focus of the seventh chapter. The chapter illustrates how the tensions that existed – between 'high culture' and 'popular culture', and centre and periphery – hindered social transformation. The chapter finds that, although the festivals became more inclusive over time, they remain divided events.

The eighth chapter is in a sense the pivotal chapter of the study, because it foregrounds the festival-goers' experiences to a far greater extent than the previous chapters. The chapter introduces another means of social transformation: transformation through encounters with and in Afrikaans. The use of Afrikaans was extremely prevalent during these festivals. The chapter explores various dimensions of this prevalence, ranging from the festivals' marketing campaigns to the production content to controversies that surrounded these festivals with regard to the centrality of Afrikaans. The chapter argues that, although the festivals allowed for different ways of 'being Afrikaans', Afrikaans was simultaneously a binding and a divisive factor.

The ninth and concluding chapter draws the key themes of the study together by once more reflecting on the extent to which these arts festivals succeeded in bringing people together. The

key concepts of the study, namely liminality and social *communitas*, are incorporated in this reflection.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the festival literature

2.1 Introduction

The format of the literature review is as follows: it takes as starting point four main claims that are made in the festival literature about festivals, engages with each claim in turn and briefly indicates how the specific claim pertains to this study. The claims are: festivals suspend the everyday; festivals have either a conservative or a 'transformative' function; festival-goers are united in celebration; and festivals lead to renewal. The study as a whole forms an extended critique of the festival literature and of these claims that are made with regard to festivals.

2.2 Festivals suspend the 'everyday'

Festivals are commonly depicted in the festival literature as establishing an alternative or enchanted world or even a temporary utopia in which the everyday order of life is suspended. According to Donald Getz (1997: 1), festivals' limited duration and festive ambience "elevates them above ordinary life experiences". It is possible, despite the historical variation between different types of carnivals, to identify an 'ideal type' of carnival that is exemplary in this regard. This section shows that the ideal type continues to fuel popular enthusiasm about carnival and enforces the erroneous notion that festivals are somehow completely divorced from 'everyday' life.

Carnival relates historically to the long-standing tradition of pre-Lent festivities in Roman Catholic countries (Cohen 1993: 3). While Lent was a period of abstention, piety and preaching in preparation for Easter, the preceding carnival was its antithesis: it "emphasized sins of the flesh, gluttony … It glorified feasting … and the release of sexual inhibitions … embodied unbridled pleasure, the joys of life and the dance, the pagan sins of the flesh" (Ladurie 1979: 308-310). There is freedom from all restraint during the carnival period of madness. A spirit of license reigns. Everything is supposedly done to excess. Marianne Mesnil (1987: 189) states that "it is a time permitting social actions that would be inconceivable outside the boundaries of a festival".

From the festival literature it seems that the transgression of everyday boundaries through visual, auditory, bodily, behavioural and other excesses associated with festivals paradoxically function as boundary markers, cordoning festivals off from everyday life. Reid Mitchell (1995) in his description of Mardi Gras Day in New Orleans, for example, emphasizes the intoxication, the explicit sexual overtones, and the extravagances of consumption, noise and speech essential to the celebrations. Abner Cohen (1993: 11) also singles out the "revelry, playfulness and overindulgence in eating, drinking and sex" during carnival. According to Cohen (1993: 11), "people are attracted to it, because it occasions release from the constraints and pressures of the social order … and allows forbidden excesses".

Roger Abrahams (1987: 178), in outlining American celebrations, contrasts carnivals with the everyday, claiming they "create their own energies by upsetting things". The topsy-turvy carnival world in the 'ideal type' of carnival reverses the 'natural order': rules and routines governing everyday life are broken, accepted values are inverted, authority is overturned, social roles are reversed and social relations are altered. Pretensions, formality and authority are denigrated by carnival (Muir 1997: 83). Everything is turned on its head and commented upon. Carnival assumes a mocking attitude by satirizing different social ills, publicly deriding the rich, exposing the secret vices of community members and questioning church doctrine.

Revellers are symbolically transformed by donning various, often elaborate disguises, masks and costumes.   Anonymous revellers freely and unselfconsciously engage in extravagant masquerades and processions without fear of retribution. Carnivals, as indeed festivals in general, allow one to assume a variety of playful roles outside the constrictions of everyday life (Lennard and Lennard 1984; Abrahams 1987; Mitchell 1995). Established oppositions between right and wrong, certainty and uncertainty, high and low, poor and rich, old and young, women and men, humans and animals, beautiful and ugly, government and the people and so forth are radically reversed. In fact, "all social manifestations find their 'carnivalesque' destiny in the assignment of an opposite, against which they are measured and relativised" (Schindler 2002: 105). Social hierarchies are temporarily dismantled. Those occupying the margins in society briefly assume centre stage.

The manifold transformations that occur in festival time are extended to space, but this is only rarely explicitly commented upon in the festival literature. Ros Derrett (2003: 33), in a manual on events management that refers to festivals, only considers space in passing, claiming that "static spaces become animated" during festivals and that further uses of spaces are thereby encouraged during festivals.

According to Roger Abrahams (1987: 178), "festivals seize on open spots and playfully enclose them. Spaces are found and are invested with the [passing] meaning of the moment and the power of the occasion". Victor Turner (1987: 76), writing about carnival in Rio de Janeiro, claims that carnival is the denizen of "a place that is no place … for the squares, avenues, and streets of the city become, in carnival, the reverse of their daily selves".

According to Roberto Da Matta (1984: 222), also commenting on carnival in Rio, "the urban world is set aside for Carnival". The commercial centre of the city is closed to traffic, people who usually leave for the beaches are now attracted to the city centre, the transport system is transformed into a "Carnival space", families camp out in the middle of the city, streets are brightly decorated, park benches occupied throughout the day and so forth. Carnival is described as 'crazy' because "all space is inverted, dislocated, and everything is called into question" (Da Matta 1984: 224).

Although the use of exaggerated language is customary to capture the 'carnivalesque' atmosphere, the images of complete disorder, chaos and lawlessness have been tempered in more recent writings on festivals. Victor Turner (1987: 84) points out how it "takes an awful lot of order to produce 'a sweet disorder', a great deal of structuring to create a sacred play space and time for anti-structure". Roy A Rappaport (1999: 218) similarly argues that festivals, including carnivals, do not lack structures of their own, and interactions between participants are ordered in accordance with generally acknowledged rules and expectations.

Stanley Brandes (1988: 168) emphasizes that during Mexican fiestas "inhibitions are released only under certain specified conditions". Brandes illustrates how inappropriate behaviour, exaggerated imitations of others and various performance antics all happen in a fairly predictable and controlled fashion according to broadly understood 'fiesta scripts' (festival scripts), within a

seemingly chaotic setting. Ironically, rules are sometimes instituted to uphold festivals' 'no rule' appearance (see Lawrence 1987).

The claim that 'festivals suspend the everyday' is challenged in Chapter 5, which deals with how the arts festivals were created. The chapter foregrounds the use of space in festival time – a previously neglected aspect in the festival literature – to illustrate the complex ways in which this supposed 'suspension' of the everyday, or the illusion of this, is brought about.

2.3 The conservative function versus the 'transformative' potential of festivals

Another pervasive tendency in the festival literature is to treat festivals, similar to other forms of leisure, as "structurally necessary breaks in routine that define and relieve the ordinary" (Graburn 1978: 19). Festivals purportedly help to maintain the smooth functioning of society by offering diversions that refresh people for the demands posed by the routines of productive labour and demanding social roles. "A collective binge brings on a collective hangover and sets the stage for vows of sobriety and getting back to work" (Bristol 1985: 34).

Octavio Paz believes Mexico's fiestas permit the continuation of normal, predictable social relations (1961 cited in Brandes 1988: 2). "Losing itself in formless chaos periodically, society emerges from these temporary episodes invigorated". During festivals – a time characterized by degrees of chaos and disorder – revellers once more realize the value of institutionalised norms and behavioural codes. Ironically, the virtual 'absence' of rules serves as a reminder and reinforcement of the very rules that regulate everyday life. The periodic expression of disorder also reassures participants about the stability of the social order (Brandes 1988: 169). While festivals might seem 'transformative' to a festival-goer caught in the midst of the festival action, some writers therefore maintain that festivals actually have a conservative function.

Even though festivals may be described as a "time of transformation" (Napier 1987: 216) – encompassing various transformations of space, circumstances (such as drastic breaks in routine) and self or being (when festival-goers feel themselves transformed) – transformations are not necessarily lasting.

Writers who foreground festivals' conservative function therefore conceive of them as acts of 'authorized transgression', kept firmly in check within specific places and times. Brevity after all characterizes all festivities and excesses occur but 'for a moment'. Once the carnival interlude is over, revellers, presumably rejuvenated by the temporary emotional release, need to resume their daily lives. The absurdity of carnival imagery, in particular, beckons an eventual return to normalcy. Carnival thus "dramatizes the importance of the return to order and sanity during the rest of the year" (Cohen 1993: 130). Festivals therefore actively promote social continuity.

The 'safety valve' theory varies from other functionalist explanations for festivals in highlighting a perceived structural conflict between the state or rulers and the citizenry or the ruled (see Cohen 1993). According to this theory of repression, variations of which continue to be influential, festivals actually serve the system or ruling class. Revellers are drawn from the leagues of the 'suppressed masses' that temporarily assemble, speak out and reclaim their freedom. During festivals "people's pent-up bitterness and hostility against their masters are spent, in effect, thereby, strengthening the political system and restoring social equilibrium" (Cohen 1993: 129).

Festivals thus provide opportunities for the release of built-up social tensions or what Max Gluckman (1963) called 'rituals of rebellion', but the flouting of rules and radical reversals serve only to stabilize the social order and reinforce the status quo. Focusing on the annual festival/fiesta cycle in rural Mexico, Stanley Brandes (1988: 2), for example, argues that the fiestas provide a respite from the rules, moral guidelines and constraints of everyday life, while reinforcing the sanctioning mechanisms by which people regulate their daily behaviour.

According to Roger Abrahams, festivals' subversive disorder and the questioning of authority is 'for fun' and should not be taken seriously: the transformation of the world and the individuals within it only affect the make-believe world and are not carried into the everyday. Abrahams compares festivals to firecrackers. The firecracker is "made for the moment of display only, destined to self-destruct, come apart, and disappear … festivals [similarly] 'go off', they are exciting and exist only for the seized moment" (1987: 174).

Edward Muir (1997: 20) argues that "liminal states offer an experience of what is potential but unrealised in normal life, a brief but intoxicating whiff of utopia or heaven". Despite drawing attention to the fleetingness of liminal states such as those contained by carnivals, Muir points out that the very experience of the liminal suggests the possibility of alternative models of social organization. Festivals, although they appear to be conservative, can make change – even dramatic social reform – possible through liminality (Muir 1997: 20).

The safety valve theory has indeed been challenged by instances where festivals gave rise to resistance, misrule and violent conflict that spilled over to the everyday, often with revolutionary consequences. Gustavo Remedi (2004: 63), analysing the historical development of carnival in Uruguay, shows how the carnival initially "created a space for subcultures to express themselves, but within a format that was regulated and subordinated by the official culture". However, over the years the format of the carnival changed so that in the 1980s it became aimed at actively questioning and resisting the social order with the aim of dismantling and transforming it.

Wendy Clupper (2007), in her analysis of the Burning Man Festival in the United States, for example, reiterates that the festival offers an escape of reality. A performance space is created wherein attendees can express themselves in a radical way. Clupper (2007: 223) argues that "the festival experience for attendees of the Burning Man festival in the United States has revolutionary potential when identity is temporarily constructed in a new cultural setting that disregards wealth". However, ultimately attendees return to their everyday 'commercialized' lives.

Numerous authors (see Ladurie 1979; Muir 1997; Schindler 2002) point out that instead of playing a reconciling role, festivals can be dangerous and anarchic. Abner Cohen (1993: 3), focusing on the structure and development of London's Notting Hill Carnival, in fact believes "every major carnival is precariously poised between the affirmation of the established order and its rejection". According to Cohen, carnivals can provide (politically) suppressed groups with a platform for political articulation and the venting of frustrations. The effect can be either cathartic, in which case it operates to maintain the established order, or it can lead to open protest, resistance and violence. While Cohen provides a more complex explanation for the

functioning of festivals than the safety valve theory allows for, he nevertheless views carnivals as a cultural movement that exists primarily in opposition to a 'dominant' culture.

Judging from some of the literature, carnivals are supposedly perpetually caught between resistance or cooptation by the state or ruling elites, who are fully aware of their subversive potential and therefore seek to control them. Gustavo Remedi (2004), examining the development of carnival in Uruguay, for example, shows how during the late 1960s and early 1970s the carnival was subjected to a strict code of conduct, morals, and norms that were sanctioned by the state.

Some festival studies (see Mach 1992; Schindler 2002) indicate how popular festivals were taken over by elites, who then manipulated them for political ends. Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (1988: 77) cautions that the staging of cultural performances by dominant institutions diffuses the oppositional potential so essential to festivals, thereby reinforcing the status quo. Indeed, state authorities sometimes appropriate festivals as a means of instilling faith in newly established nation states or rekindling faith in old ones (Guss 2000). Moyra Berne (1987), for example, analyses how the 1936 Olympics in Berlin were fashioned into a self-enactment of Nazi Germany. Similarly, Leslie Witz (2003: 5) shows how the official version of the tercentenary festival of 1952, which celebrated Jan van Riebeeck's landing at the Cape, was officially constructed to forge an exclusive South African nationhood based on whiteness and a European past.

Although festivals are undeniably frivolous and playful at times, they clearly also have instrumental dimensions. Antonio Riserio (1999), for example, indicates the political importance of Bahian carnival in helping 'blacks' to achieve full citizenship in Brazil. As a result, writers increasingly consider festivals also as powerful instruments of social change. According to Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie (1979: 316), focusing on carnivals in Romans, France, during the sixteenth century:

> … Carnival was not merely a satirical and purely temporary reversal of the dual social order, finally intended to justify the status quo … It was a way to action, perhaps modifying the society as a whole in the direction of social change and possible progress.

The claim that festivals have either a conservative or a transformative function is confronted in Chapter 6 of this study. The chapter finds that, by highlighting either the conservative function of festivals or their 'transformative' potential, festival studies generally fail to consider how the same festival might indeed support both tendencies.

2.4 Festival-goers are united in celebration

Festivals purportedly operate in a number of combined ways to sustain communal life and solidify communities: they foreground 'central community values' (Falassi 1987: 2), they allow 'everyone' (Manning 1983: 4) to participate in festival activities, they foster a sense of 'belonging' amongst celebrants (Cruces and Diaz de Rada 1992: 72), they provide 'neutral occasions' for celebration by occurring in public space (Boissevain 1992b: 152), and everyday 'social and economic inequalities' may temporarily disappear (Abrahams 1987: 163).

Robert Smith (1975 cited in Brandes 1988: 8) stresses the special significance of festivals to a nation, community or small group, and states that "one has the right to take part simply by virtue of his being a member; indeed it's often a man's [sic] participation which confirms him as a member". Alessandro Falassi (1987: 2), in similar vein, defines festivals as events in which "all members of a whole community, united by ethnic linguistic, religious, historical bonds, and sharing a worldview" participate. According to Falassi (1987: 2):

> festivals are closely related to a series of overt values that the community recognizes as essential to its ideology and worldview, to its social identity, its historical continuity and to its physical survival, which is ultimately what festival celebrates.

Falassi and others believe that festivals reconfirm a community's central values and sanction its institutions so that "the 'lifestream' of a community is renewed" (Falassi 1987: 8). Roger Abrahams (1987: 177) describes festivals as the "foci of community actions carried out in common, when the deepest values of the group are simultaneously revealed and made mysterious". Victor Turner (1982: 16) similarly states that when a social group celebrates a particular event or occasion, it also celebrates itself, in other words "it attempts to manifest … what it conceives to be its essential life" and group members in effect experience a sense of social *communitas*.

According to the literature, festivals affirm one's identity as a community member through sociability and communality with others (Mesnil 1987). Festivals have socializing functions attributed to them: they provide opportunities for social intermingling and participation in festive activities (Cohen 1993), attendance facilitates increased social competence by encouraging social interaction between strangers (Lennard and Lennard 1984; Cohen 1993), and old social contacts are renewed, whilst new ones are cultivated (Schindler 2002).

Without fail, festival participation is depicted in the festival literature as inherently renewing, exciting and fulfilling. Literary descriptions of festival-goers eating, dancing and singing together convey a sense of familiarity and ease. According to Temple Hauptfleisch (2007: 15), "to participate in a festival means to laugh, sing, and party, as one would at a bazaar or fete, for it is a gathering of people with shared interests". Judging by the carnival accounts of Da Matta (1984) and Turner (1987), all festival-goers, in addition to participating in the same festival activities, also move about in a similar fashion. They are rambling either in a carefree fashion or idly drifting, enjoying the act of walking without goal or single direction. And yet everyone in the "single crowd" shares the common goals of Carnival, namely the pursuit of pleasure and well-being (Da Matta 1984: 223).

The integrative, unifying powers of festival attendance, in the tradition of Georg Simmel's work on public space and social interaction (see Allen 2000), are partly assumed to arise from the relative freedom of access that public spaces offer and the relaxed social encounters with others in those spaces. "Festival itself conjures up notions of openness", according to Abrahams (1987: 178), "either through the opening of the doors of the community ... or through taking to the streets". Frank E Manning (1983: 4) similarly claims that "celebration is public, with no social exclusion … and participatory – actively involving the celebrant".

Many festivals are indeed outdoor celebrations. Carnivals, in particular, take place in the streets and market squares, and (in principle) invite broad, public participation. In fact, in the classical model found in the history of Western carnival, there was no separation between stage performers and the general public. Such a separation, according to Mikhael Bakhtin, would have transformed the festivities into theatre, thereby destroying the carnival spirit (Riserio 1999: 249). But the festival literature tends to draw a direct parallel between openness and public

space, as if the one necessarily implicates the other. Victor Turner (1987: 82) writes with reference to carnival in Rio de Janeiro

> During Carnival, those centres of Brazilian hierarchy, the house, the office and the factory, are emptied and closed. The whole city becomes a symbol of Brazilianity, of a single multicoloured family brought into the open, which is now transformed into a home.

Another illustration of the sense of belonging that is purportedly fostered amongst festival-goers at festival time is the use of 'home' as a metaphor. According to Roberto da Matta (1984: 222), also writing about carnival in Rio, the "city becomes personal, communitarian, and, above, all creative, allowing for the differences of neighbourhoods, classes, and social categories". Michael D Bristol (1985: 30) boldly asserts that festivals provide for the accommodation of difference. "The social group is all-inclusive and supportive. Festivity … [is] animated with the strongest possible feeling of solidarity and community affiliation".

While celebrating together does not necessarily mean that internal divisions between celebrants (such as different political allegiances) are resolved, according to the literature they are temporarily set aside. According to Norbert Schindler (2002: 134), by absolving everyday distances between people and establishing free, intimate and familiar interpersonal contacts, festivals create "a lived utopia of unconstrained integration in a momentarily indivisible social body". Festivals provide for the temporary dissolution of individual identity as festival-goers merge with a festival crowd.

The claim that 'festival-goers are united' during festivals is challenged in the second half of the study, in other words Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

2.5 Festivals lead to renewal

The festival literature commonly links festivals, especially those that accompany or 'bring about' seasonal or annual changes, to the idea of renewal. Carnivals, in particular, are said to dramatize a periodic death and rebirth as celebrants welcome the transition from winter to summer or from an old to a new year. The idea of cyclical renewal is central to the work of Russian writer Mikael Bakhtin.

According to Bakhtin, medieval carnival gave voice to a so-called folk or people's culture that was suppressed by the ruling classes (official culture) of the time. Carnival existed almost in a parallel dimension to the 'real world', which was controlled by the state and the church. Carnival came to represent a universal, utopian world in which festival-goers, thanks to the dissolution of hierarchical order and the abolishment of taboos, were temporarily liberated from the constraints of the regime. At the core of carnival is vitality, aliveness, as if the world is being charged with a life-giving current:

> During carnival time life is subject only to its laws, that is, the laws of its own freedom. It has a universal spirit; it is a special condition of the entire world, of the world's revival and renewal, in which all take part. Such is the essence of carnival, vividly felt by all its participants (Bakhtin 1968: 7).

According to Ronald Knowles (1998: 5), drawing on the work of Bakhtin, medieval carnival always celebrated cyclical renewal of life through the symbolic focus on the lower reproductive stratum of the body, the zone in which conception and birth take place. Carnival symbolically conveyed the idea that in nature the old needed to die in order to make place for the young (Muir 1997: 91). Carnival thus "dispensed fertility, for women and couples, crops, the community" (Ladurie 1979: 310).

During festivals or 'fiestas' society is said to return to a "womblike state", only to be reborn when the festival ends (Brandes 1988: 2). Festive renewal, apart from its agricultural and biological connotations, is clearly deemed socially important as well. According to Marianne Mesnil (1987: 191), carnival "reaffirms the cohesion of a social group to its communitarian structure through participation in a time of revitalization. Such revitalization is accomplished by the birth-death-resurrection cycle".

The notion that social cohesion needs to be periodically reaffirmed derives directly from the work of Emile Durkheim, who argued that society is able to revivify the sentiment it has of itself only by assembling as a group. According to Durkheim (1976: 348), social sentiments are "constantly combated and held in check by … the necessities of the daily struggle". Gradually they lose their force and need to be renewed. Feast days provide opportunity for the renewal of

collective energy, because they eclipse daily concerns, centring community members' thoughts upon "their common beliefs, their common traditions … the collective ideal" (1976: 348).

According to Victor Turner (1992: 135), approaching renewal from a slightly different angle, "human life … requires its moments of anti-structure as well as its days of structure if it is to remain healthy". Festivals function as a means for society of depicting, commenting on and critiquing itself. "By this means societies *renew* themselves at the source of festival joy [after having] purified themselves through collective self-criticism and jocund reflexivity" (Turner and Turner 1982: 203, my emphasis).

The claim that 'festivals lead to renewal' is addressed in Chapter 9.

2.6 Conclusion

All of these claims that are made in relation to festivals tend to simplify festivals, falsely reducing them to events with relatively straightforward 'scripts' that are easy to 'read'. Leslie Witz (2003: 9) cautions against reducing festivals to cultural texts to be read for meaning and offers an argument for 'interpretive openness' instead:

> The problems involved in reading meaning into performance and display become particularly apparent when dealing with festivals. At one level festivals are usually rich in symbolism, emphasizing "consensus and oneness rather than distinction within the community" ... Yet this richness in symbols and apparent unity is precisely why festivals are so difficult to read ... Conflicts erupt over numerous issues: involvement and intention, organization and spontaneity, design and response, participation and exclusion.

This study, in line with Witz (2003), examines the contradictions within the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals and the multiple conflicts that erupted between festival role players: over the festival planning and timing; over the cost of attending the events; over their economic and environmental impact; over the content of the annual festival programmes; over the representativeness of the various festival committees; over the inclusiveness of the events; over the symbolic meaning attached to Afrikaans.

Throughout careful attention is paid to the construction of the arts festivals. While events-management literature (see Getz 1997) provides ample information on facets such as the planning and location of events, taking into account different aspects such as visibility, accessibility, centrality, atmosphere and security, what is often neglected is the social dynamics behind the planning, construction and hosting of events. All these seemingly neutral spatial arrangements reflect, and implicitly comment and impact on, everyday social realities, inequalities and power relationships. The social and spatial construction of festivals also has implications for how people interact with each other at these events.

The festival literature tends to oversimplify festivals – depicting them as boisterous, care-free occasions during which festival-goers feel and act in unison and the 'social equilibrium' in the world is restored. But festivals are more complex phenomena than they might seem when taken at face-value and people ascribe different meanings to them. While the intentions of the festival organizers in hosting a festival are important, the (usually diverse) reactions evoked by the event are equally worthy of analysis. Moreover, some of the points made in the literature, such as the tension within festivals between maintaining and subverting order, seem to be contradictory. Part of the problem lies with the functional approach that is often adopted in trying to understand festivals. This kind of approach identifies a definite purpose and outcome for a festival, and the boundaries and content of the festivities are presumed to be clear-cut.

This study writes against the festival literature by showing how various functions can be fulfilled by festivals simultaneously and that any one definition and description will not be applicable to all situations. How the festivities are perceived and what the festivities entail depend very much on the specific contexts. The same festival may be conservative and transformative at the same time, depending on which aspect, person, situation and effect one is looking at. It is not possible to generalize about festivals in all respects, without turning them into caricatures. The following chapters and selected extracts from my field notes attempt to convey this complexity.

CHAPTER 3

The appropriation of Afrikaans by Afrikaner nationalism and the historical role played by the *volksfeeste* and the National Arts Festival in South African national life

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into three main sections. In order to put the widespread concern about Afrikaans and the eventual establishment of the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals in the 1990s into perspective, the first section indicates how the Afrikaans language attained symbolic value for Afrikaners over the past two centuries.[1]

The second section brings the central research question, namely the extent to which festivals serve as a cohesive force, to bear on the former Afrikaner *volksfeeste* (people's festivals). The section argues that Afrikaner *volksfeeste* before the democratic transition played a crucial role in the strengthening of an emerging Afrikaner identity. Afrikaner leaders, particularly in former times of crisis, indeed resorted to *volksfeeste* (and by extension the use of Afrikaans) as a vehicle to consolidate the Afrikaners as a unified *volk* (people). Even during times of peace, a constant sense of insecurity (based on real or imagined threats) led to the perceived need for Afrikaner mobilisation.[2]

The contemporary Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals, introduced in the following chapter, can only be fully understood against this background of threat, insecurity and mobilisation in which the *volksfeeste* featured prominently. The section is structured chronologically in order to provide a broad account only of the most prominent *volksfeeste*, as well as key events that impacted on these celebrations. Both cyclical festivals such as the annual celebration of the Day of the Vow and unique events such as the centenary celebrations of the Great Trek are

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[1] This section provides only a synopsis, given that there are a number of accurate, in-depth accounts of the rise in Afrikaner ethnic consciousness that include a consideration of the connection between Afrikaner nationalism and Afrikaans (see Scholtz 1964; Moodie 1975; Steyn 1987; Schmidt 1996; Giliomee 2003; and Kitshoff 2006, among others).

[2] Afrikaner leaders believed that Afrikaner interests could best be promoted through mobilization (Giliomee 1979: 113).

considered. This section indicates that, despite the relative continuity in the key function of *volksfeeste*, as mentioned above, the festivals evolved over time in response to the changing socio-political circumstances.

The third section introduces the Grahamstown National Arts Festival (NAF). The National Arts Festival was established in the 1970s in South Africa to promote an English heritage, in contrast to the former Afrikaner *volksfeeste*. The NAF dominated the festival scene in South Africa up to the 1990s as the largest festival in the country – both in terms of logistics and number of festival-goers. The following aspects with regard to the NAF are addressed: the origin and development of the festival, critique of the festival, the festival's adjustment to a changing South Africa, and the position of Afrikaans within the festival.

It is essential to consider both the Afrikaner *volksfeeste* and the NAF. The NAF will serve, where appropriate, as counterpoint to the two more recently established Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals, given that both were modelled on the NAF. Moreover, similar key issues confronted the NAF and the Afrikaans-orientated festivals. Three issues in particular had a strong resonance: the need to constantly reinvent the festival; the struggle for inclusiveness; and the relative importance and centrality of Afrikaans to the festivities.

3.2 The appropriation of Afrikaans by Afrikaner nationalism

3.2.1 The origin of Afrikaans

The Dutch East Indian Company (DEIC) established a refreshment post at the Cape of Good Hope in the mid-seventeenth century. The administration implemented a strict imperial language policy decreeing that "the natives should learn our language [in other words Dutch], rather than we theirs" (Alexander and Heugh 2001: 18). Most of the Company's officials spoke High Dutch, while the sailors, soldiers and artisans that the Company employed spoke a variety of seventeenth-century Dutch and lower German dialects.[3]

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[3] Information obtained from the Afrikaans Language Museum and –Monument in Paarl.

There were different groups within the settlement at the time. Among them were the local Khoi tribes that established trade relations with the colonists; the French Huguenots who came to the Cape after 1688 to escape religious prosecution; and young men from England, Germany and Scandinavia who were in service of the DEIC. Slaves were also imported to the Cape since 1658 from places such as Angola, Madagascar and the East-Indian Islands to help fulfil the labour needs of the Company. The slaves spoke mostly Malay-Portuguese or a variant of it.

Contact between these speakers of different Dutch, German and French dialects, the Khoi languages, Malay and Portuguese at the Cape, and their combined attempts to learn the simpler forms of Dutch, gradually resulted in the creation of a new indigenous language, namely Afrikaans.[4] Travellers to the Cape reported as early as 1671 that the language spoken there differed from Dutch.[5] Afrikaans is thus a Creole language with Dutch roots that originated within South Africa. Initially it grew especially among the lower-class and non-European part of the Cape population.

3.2.2 Afrikaans in the eighteenth century

Although the Cape Settlers of the period of the East India Company (1652-1795) derived from various countries in Europe, they had much in common: they were all white-skinned, adopted Dutch as lingua franca, adhered to the Christian faith, identified with Pan-Dutch traditions and occupied key positions in the Company's administration (Giliomee 1975: 2-3). Initially the Cape community was organized around the Christian faith and on status rather than along racial lines (Giliomee 1975: 3), but already at the beginning of the eighteenth century there were signs that the free burghers regarded 'whites' as a separate, and superior, class.

This initial division became more sharply defined over the years. By the end of the eighteenth century the free burghers increasingly referred to themselves as *Africaanders* in order to indicate a connection with Africa rather than Europe and to express their dissatisfaction with aspects of

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[4] Initially three main forms of Afrikaans could be distinguished – Cape Afrikaans, Orange River Afrikaans and Eastern Border Afrikaans. All three forms are recognizable in modern-day Afrikaans, although Eastern Border Afrikaans forms the basis of standardized Afrikaans (Van Rensburg 1997: 7).

[5] Information obtained from the Afrikaans Language Museum and –Monument.

the Cape administration (Kitshoff 2006: 48-49). There was no sense of ethnic unity amongst them, however, and this remained so to a large degree until the late nineteenth century.

3.2.3 Afrikaans in the nineteenth century

The official language at the Cape was Dutch until the British authorities annexed the Cape in 1806 to protect their trading route to the east. The British implemented an aggressive Anglicization policy under Sir John Cradock and later Lord Charles Somerset. The Language Proclamation of 1822 made English the only official language of the Colony (Scholtz 1964: 14) and over time English teachers and preachers were brought there. As a result English, as opposed to Dutch, officially predominated in government, commerce, courts and especially in education. This domination was more evident in the cities and large towns than in the rural areas. The religious sphere was the one sphere where English did not dominate because of the high status of the Dutch Reformed Church. The colonists of European descent valued Dutch as a liturgical language, despite the fact that many of them could no longer properly speak or understand it.

It soon became evident that Dutch had little chance of asserting itself against the force of English (Scholtz 1964: 183). By the 1820s it was noted that these colonists who were born in the Cape colony spoke 'a very bad sort of Dutch' (Kitshoff 2006: 49). This seemingly simplified form of Dutch was actually a version of Afrikaans – a language that (as the linguist and pedagogue Arnoldus Pannevis noted decades later) was sufficiently different from Dutch not to be considered a Dutch dialect. None of the versions of Afrikaans, which were widely and informally spoken at that stage, enjoyed a high status, though, and no uniform writing system was in place. Afrikaans was viewed as the language of the lower classes, because it was mostly the uneducated 'whites' and the 'coloureds' at the Cape who spoke it (Scholtz 1964: 169).

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century Afrikaans struggled to shed its reputation as a *kombuistaal* ('kitchen language'), a lesser, bastard language only suitable for informal interactions. Particularly the English press dismissed both Dutch and Afrikaans and propagated instead the adoption of English in all spheres of life (Scholtz 1964: 91). Many Afrikaners who were loyal to the British throne and saw English as a fashionable necessity agreed that Afrikaans

would eventually die out. But there were also those who shied away from both formal High Dutch and the language of their British conquerors and "fell back increasingly on their own Afrikaans Tongue" (Leach 1989: 31).

The first *Afrikaanse taalbeweging* (Afrikaans language movement) and the activities of the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* (Association of True Afrikaners) between 1875 and 1890, however, played an important role in legitimizing Afrikaans.

While Arnoldus Pannevis, mentioned earlier, was not one of the eight founding members of the Association, his actions directly led to its establishment. He later became a member himself and attended meetings. Pannevis, who arrived in South Africa from the Netherlands in 1866, was a teacher at *De Gimnasium* in Paarl. The school, headed by reverend GWA van der Lingen, maintained Dutch as medium of instruction, in defiance of the British educational policy. Pannevis, unlike many of his contemporaries, was immediately struck by the beauty and the potential of Afrikaans upon his arrival at the Cape. As a religious man he advocated a translation of the Bible into Afrikaans to enable the 'coloured' population to read it, because he realized that Dutch was unintelligible to many. He requested such a translation in a letter to the editor of *De Zuid-Afrikaan*, published on the 7th of September 1872, and suggested the Reverend SJ du Toit as a possible translator.[6]

Reverend SJ du Toit, who turned out to be one of the most ardent campaigners for Afrikaans in his time, arranged a meeting to confirm the need for such a translation. A historic meeting was held on the 14th of August 1875 in the house of his nephew, Gideon Malherbe, during which the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* was established. They called themselves *regte Afrikaners* (true Afrikaners), because they saw themselves as being loyal to Afrikaans and to South Africa only, rather than to the British administration or to the Netherlands as many of their 'fellow Afrikaners' were. While the members in principle supported an Afrikaans Bible translation, they found the idea premature. Afrikaans, they decided, first had to be legitimized and firmly established as a written language before a translation could be attempted. For this purpose they

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[6] *De Zuid-Afrikaan*, a bilingual weekly, was launched in 1830.

invested in a printing press and proceeded on the 15th of January 1976 to publish the first Afrikaans newspaper in Paarl: *Die Afrikaanse Patriot* (The Afrikaans Patriot).[7]

Already in the late nineteenth century the linkage of Afrikaans to the Afrikaners, as a distinct nationality, was evident. The Association's nationalist aim was to take a stand for 'our language, our nation and our country' (Schmidt 1996: 134). For SJ du Toit the term 'Afrikaner' "denoted someone of Dutch or Huguenot descent", who spoke Afrikaans and resisted domination by the British (Giliomee 1979: 101). Du Toit blatantly disregarded the multi-ethnic roots of Afrikaans in his language campaign, because he believed "Afrikaans was a white man's tongue" that needed to be developed into a national language along with Dutch (Giliomee 2003: 217).

This was ironic, given that many Afrikaans place names in South Africa originated, for example, amongst Khoi speakers. The slave community at the Cape, many of whom adopted the Islamic faith, played an important role in the development and recording of *Kaapse Afrikaans* (Cape Afrikaans). Some of the first Afrikaans texts in the mid-nineteenth century were in fact Afrikaans translations of the Koran in Arabic script. A number of Muslim schools had used Afrikaans as medium of instruction since 1869 (Van Rensburg 1997: 12), years before the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* established an Afrikaans school, *Die Gedenkschool der Hugenoten* in Daljosafat in 1882.[8]

Die Afrikanerbond (Die Afrikaner Bond), established in 1880, was another organization with a nationalist agenda that was alternatively linked to Afrikaans and to Dutch. The Dutch-Afrikaans political organization "advocated the establishment of a national bank and farmers' cooperatives, the boycotting of British commercial institutions, and the channelling of state funds to Dutch education and Afrikaner enterprises" (Schmidt 1996: 139). During the following years the Afrikaner Bond secured approval for the use of Dutch "in parliament, in the courts and as the medium of instruction in schools" (Giliomee 1989 cited in Schmidt 1996: 140).

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[7] The Moravian Missionary at Genadendal had already been publishing a paper called *De Bode* since 1859 that contained Afrikaans texts (The Afrikaans Language Museum and –Monument).

[8] Information obtained from The Afrikaans Language Museum and –Monument.

The idea that 'white' Afrikaners ought to have a common language, as a number of authors have shown (see Scholtz 1964; Schmidt 1996; Giliomee 2003), emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century, after certain factors such as the discovery of diamonds (1867) and gold (1886), the annexation of the Transvaal (1877), the First Anglo-Boer War (1880-1881) and the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) together brought about the awakening of an ethnic consciousness amongst the Afrikaner. This language-conscious Afrikaner nationalism was fuelled by an anti-English sentiment, which was already strongly present after the First Anglo-Boer War. It was not yet clear at the end of the nineteenth century, though, whether Afrikaans or Dutch would ultimately become the *volkstaal* (language of the Afrikaners).

3.2.4 Afrikaans in the twentieth century

As a result of the reconciliatory stance between the British and the Afrikaners, propagated by General Smuts, the former republics attained self-rule a few years after the peace treaty of 1902. The Afrikaners were demographically weakened after the Second Anglo-Boer War. Sir Alfred Milner, who served as a High Commissioner for South Africa and Governor of the Cape Colony, attempted to make English speakers the largest linguistic group in South Africa in the post-war period through an aggressive immigration policy (Steyn 1980: 175). State departments were almost completely anglicised; only English was allowed in Parliament and Afrikaners were actively discriminated against.

The period was also marked by the tremendous impoverishment of the Afrikaners as a consequence of the wartime 'scorched earth' policy of the British, which involved the destruction of anything that could be useful to the enemy such as livestock, crops and shelter, whilst advancing through the conflict area. Economic pressure, coupled with forced urbanization, led to a process of language shift amongst some of the Afrikaners in favour of English.[9]

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[9] Language shift occurs whenever the members of a local speech community begin pervasively to abandon the use of one linguistic variety in favour of another, regardless of whether or not the language continues to be spoken elsewhere (Moore 2001: 60).

But many Afrikaners actively resisted the English takeover. Nationally-conscious Afrikaans newspapers that were established or re-launched in different parts of the country, cultural organizations, regional political movements and the Afrikaans churches all played an active role in this resistance (Steyn 1987: 81-83). The churches, for example, facilitated the establishment of a growing number of Christian-National Education schools that promoted "an Afrikaner nationalist version of history and a love of Afrikaans" (Giliomee 2003: 379).[10]

The establishment of the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Akademie voor Taal, Letterkunde en Kunst* (The South African Academy for Language, Literature and Art) in 1909, to promote both Dutch and Afrikaans, followed from the struggle for language equality in the public and educational spheres. The language struggle was intimately connected to the broader nationalistic aspirations of the Afrikaners (Kitshoff 2006: 55). Initially Dutch achieved equal status on a par with English as determined by the Union Constitution, but from 1914 onwards the Provincial Councils officially recognized Afrikaans, which was the spoken language of the majority. Afrikaans thus achieved a more favourable position under the new governments; in fact, Afrikaans was in itself a major unifying factor in leading Afrikaners to join forces and exercise majority rule in the new Union after 1910 (Moodie 1975: 39).

The Second Language movement, which dated from 1914 and led to the standardization of Afrikaans, was a direct consequence of the humiliation brought about by the Second Anglo-Boer War. The success of this movement was attributed to the fact that the Afrikaners became more nationally conscious (Steyn 1980: 226). The successive Boer Wars renewed 'kinship ties' between Afrikaners throughout South Africa. "A new breed of poets focused on Boer suffering and heroism: Eugene Marais, Totius (the son of SJ du Toit), and Louis Leipoldt" (Moodie 1975: 41). These Afrikaans poets and writers (see Glossary), along with Afrikaner political leaders, historians and journalists, were instrumental in defining *Afrikanerskap*. The Afrikaners were mythologized as a *uitverkore volk* (chosen nation) with a unique past in which the Great Trek and the Second Anglo-Boer War featured as defining moments (Kitshoff 2006: 57).

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[10] The doctrine of Christian-Nationalism held that the strict separation of the races was in accordance with the will of God. "Christian nationalist discourse managed through state power to define almost every aspect of the Afrikaners' lives, and the ways in which one should behave and what values one should identify with in order to be an Afrikaner" (Vestergaard 2001: 48).

The National Party, in which Afrikaner nationalism found its fullest expression, was established in 1914. Two influential Afrikaner newspapers (which are still in existence today), *Het Volksblad* and *De Burger*, were launched the year after in 1915 (Du Plessis 1986: 75). These papers, along with various other publications, language organizations and educational institutions that cannot be considered here, played an enormous role in giving public exposure to Afrikaans.[11]

Political leaders such as General JBM Hertzog, who advocated equal language rights for Dutch and English speakers, intentionally used Afrikaans as a focal point to mobilize Afrikaners politically (Scholtz 2002: 10). Initially, as pointed out by Hans du Plessis (1987a: 215), it was unclear whether the language struggle centred on Dutch or on Afrikaans as a 'corrupted form' of Dutch. But in the early twentieth century Afrikaans became a major unifying factor among Afrikaners. Language was widely considered to be one of the defining aspects of a *volk* (nation). CJ Langenhoven, the famous writer and language activist who initially supported Dutch, for example, proclaimed: "Afrikaans is the only tie that binds us [Afrikaners] together as a people; it is our only national characteristic" (Giliomee 2003: 368).

Afrikaans, as the said bearer of the Afrikaners' unique culture, history and national aspirations – their "core and most valuable product" (Kannemeyer 1995: 25) – became a means to recover their self-worth. Afrikaners were encouraged to maintain their language as the "most intimate expression of our whole national being" and those who did not practice *taalhandhawing* (maintaining the language) were accused of having no self-respect (Giliomee 2003: 371-372).

The coming to power of the Pact Alliance of the National Party and the Labour Party in 1924 further advantaged Afrikaans through the appointment of Afrikaners to important positions (Steyn 1987: 88). DF Malan, Minister of the Interior, introduced a bill that added Afrikaans to Dutch and English as an official language in 1925. This step also became the symbol of the progress *Afrikanerdom* had made (Giliomee 2003: 376). Although 1925 brought an end to the

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[11] "Among the organizations which came into being at this time to further nationalist aims awakened by the Afrikaans language movement was the Afrikaner Broederbond (Afrikaner Brothers' League)" (Moodie 1975: 50).

political struggle for the official recognition of Afrikaans, after that Afrikaans could not be separated from Afrikaner politics (Du Plessis 1986: 78).

According to Johan Combrink (1984: 49), the language behaviour of Afrikaners since 1925 spoke of a spirit of mythical exclusivity. Various cultural organizations such as the *Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuur Vereniginge* (Federation for Afrikaans Cultural Associations, formed in 1929) and the *Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging* (Afrikaans Language and Cultural Association, formed in 1930), for example, aimed to promote Afrikaans. But these racially exclusive organizations made no provision for so-called 'non-white' speakers of Afrikaans, despite the fact that they outnumbered 'white' speakers of the language.

Linguistic historians deliberately ignored the significant contributions of 'non-whites' to the development of Afrikaans, while concentrating instead on the European roots of the language. Standard Afrikaans was simplistically equated with the language of the Afrikaners, while 'non-standard' varieties were neglected or frowned upon.[12] *Kaapse Afrikaans* was often used to typify and stereotype characters as 'non-white' in work written in standard Afrikaans (Van Rensburg 1999: 18). The National Party's reign till the early 1930s further estranged the 'coloureds' from the Afrikaners (Steyn 1980: 227).

The *Gesuiwerde National Party* (Purified National Party) was established in 1934 under the leadership of DF Malan in opposition to the United Party of Generals Smuts and Hertzog. The party then became the primary vehicle of Afrikaner nationalism and Afrikaans – both of which provided Afrikaans-speaking 'whites' with a sense of security during the Great Depression (Kitshoff 2006: 59). The outbreak of the Second World War again led to a shift in political power and another attempt at Anglicization, particularly of single-medium Afrikaans schools, when General Smuts and the *Verenigde Party* (United Party) temporarily assumed power (Steyn 1987: 91).

Despite numerous setbacks, Afrikaans had prevailed by the mid-twentieth century. Formerly a humble, spoken language, Afrikaans in time came to be recognized as a written, official

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[12] The movement for *alternatiewe* Afrikaans (alternative Afrikaans) in the 1980s attempted to counter the one-sided emphasis on standard Afrikaans, specifically within the context of education (Van Rensburg 1997: 18).

language on a par with English and other languages. The public press played a large role in the development and dissemination of Afrikaans. Milestones for Afrikaans in the twentieth century included the publication of the first standard dictionary in 1926, the extensive development of subject terminology, and in 1933 the first Bible translation (Van Rensburg 1997: 49). Afrikaans was also gradually instituted as a school subject in the different provinces of the Free State (1935), the Transvaal (1936), the Cape and Natal (1954).

3.2.5 Afrikaans under apartheid

The Nationalist government assumed power in 1948 and introduced legislation that advanced Afrikaans (and 'white' Afrikaans speakers) in all spheres of life. Afrikaans was seen as in need of being protected from being ousted by English through repeated language interventions by the Nationalist government. The Union clause, which provided for the equality of two official languages (Afrikaans and English), was strictly enforced.

'White' residential areas remained racially integrated to varying degrees before 1950, but under the leadership of Prime Minister HF Verwoerd, the policy of apartheid took shape. Apartheid resulted in strict segregation between the races and the relegation of millions of 'blacks' to so-called *bantustans* ('black' homelands).[13]

During the 1950s "the language of Afrikaans and the Afrikaner-controlled state had become locked in a tight and suffocating embrace" (Giliomee 2003: 546). Although South Africa remained a bilingual state, Afrikaans became a symbol of oppression in the eyes of non-Afrikaans speakers, who saw the proponents of Afrikaans behind legislation such as the Mixed Marriages Act (1949) and the Immorality Act (1950), which both prohibited sexual intercourse across racial lines; the Population Registration Act (1950), which provided for the racial classification of the population; the Group Areas Act (1950), which provided for separate

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[13] From 1960 onwards the South African government instituted homeland governments for the 'black' people, eventually establishing four 'national' states and six non-independent homelands. After 1994 these homeland governments were "disbanded, with South Africa re-constituted into nine provinces" (Webb 2002: 66).

residential zones for the races; and the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (1953), among others.

According to Herman Kitshoff (2006: 60), the 1950s became a decade of racial consciousness rather than language consciousness. 'White' Afrikaans and English speakers moved closer to each other, while the rifts between Afrikaans speakers from different ethnic backgrounds widened. Throughout the 1960s and the 1970s the multi-ethnic roots of Afrikaans were still flagrantly denied, while the importance of their 'own' language to the *volkslewe* (national life) of the 'white' Afrikaners was emphasized:

> To summarize: the bond of language is important; I can't envision that a *volk* could continue if he [sic] does not have a single language, although it is not all that constitutes a *volk* – but when someone has purposely broken the bond of language with his *volk*, he is already wandering on other, foreign pathways (Grobbelaar 1974: 46).

'Coloured' and 'black' Afrikaans speakers were increasingly alienated not only from Afrikaners, but also from Afrikaans as a result of Afrikaner Nationalism. Afrikaans became widely known (and rejected) as the 'language of the oppressor'. Graham Leach (1989: 51) writes:

> Not for one moment have Afrikaners thought how they might set their language free and remove it from the straightjacket of apartheid ideology so that blacks and others would be proud to use it. Afrikaans is a young language born of the African continent, but a language that might one day be lost, because of its identification with Afrikaner power and privilege.

Two important language events that took place in the 1970s illustrated this 'identification [of the language] with Afrikaner power and privilege'. The first was the inauguration of the Afrikaans Language Monument in Paarl in 1975, exactly one hundred years after the establishment of the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners*.

The second event, ironically, was the Soweto uprisings, which occurred only a year later in 1976. The Soweto uprisings, in protest against the possible enforcement of Afrikaans in so-called African/Bantu schools, led to the further stigmatisation of Afrikaans as the language of oppression. The Minister of Bantu Education decided in 1974 to strictly enforce the 50-50

policy in the former Transvaal province; this was a decision that ignited the student demonstrations in Soweto (Ponelis 1984: 53). According to this policy, which was never fully implemented, only non-exam subjects from Grade 7 were to be taught by means of an African language; science and practical subjects had to be taught in English, and maths and social subjects had to be taught through the medium of Afrikaans.

On the 16th of June 1976, 20 000 school children in Soweto took part in a protest march to Orlando Stadium. Although there were an array of underlying reasons for the protests, they were mainly protesting on that day against the use of Afrikaans as medium of instruction for some subjects, carrying placards reading 'Away with Afrikaans; 'Afrikaans will spoil our future' and 'We are not Boers'. A learner, Hector Peterson, was one of the first to be shot in a violent encounter with the police. Many more were killed and hurt.[14] The protests first spread to other areas on the Rand and then to the rest of the country (Steyn 1980: 289). Several hundred children were killed. There was little in the events to counter Breyten Breytenbach's lament: "Afrikaans had become a language for gravestones" (Degenaar 1987: 205).

But Afrikaans could also function as a language of protest, although it seldom did. Paul Zietsman (1992) indicates that prominent people within the 'coloured' Afrikaans community such as Franklin Sonn, Jakes Gerwel, Allan Boesak and Adam Small protested against the structures of apartheid in Afrikaans. There were also examples of 'white' protest. The literary magazine, *Sestiger*, for example "provided a mouthpiece for young Afrikaans writers [such as Jan Rabie, Etienne le Roux and Karel Schoeman] to challenge the South African racial and political situation" in the 1960s (Buckland and Neville 2004: 77).

The *Vrye Weekblad* (Free Weekly), an Afrikaans newspaper that was distributed nationally until it was forced to close down in 1994, provides another example of protest in Afrikaans. Max du Preez, along with other journalists, launched the progressive Afrikaans newspaper in 1988. During the years that the paper was published the editorial board of the *Vrye Weekblad* was repeatedly involved in controversies regarding the printed revelation of atrocities committed under apartheid. The newspaper, in opposition to the nationalist press of the time, was founded

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[14] Today 16th June is a public holiday, known as Youth Day in South Africa.

on "a belief in an open, non-racial democracy", "the protection of basic human rights such as freedom of speech and association", "negotiation, reconciliation and national unity" (Du Preez 1999: 132). Du Preez, who believed that Afrikaans speakers at the time had a role to play in the country's democratic transition, described the newspaper as being "unashamedly Afrikaans". The Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals appropriated the phrase in later years to indicate that the arts festivals were unreservedly Afrikaans, without the negative historical and political connotations of apartheid.

The *alternatiewe* (alternative) Afrikaans music scene in the 1980s also contributed to the undermining of Afrikaner hegemony. The progressive 'white' Afrikaans musicians, Johannes Kerkorrel, Koos Kombuis and Bernoldus Niemand, were part of the *Voëlvry* music movement – a name that indicated both being free (as in openly protesting apartheid) and being outlawed. They toured to different parts of the country in 1989, performing Afrikaans rock songs that "satirized the state, Afrikaans political leaders, the South African Defence Force, the apartheid system and white middle-class values" (Grundlingh 2004: 2). The fact that they performed in Afrikaans was significant. Kerkorrel remarked in a press interview:

> We are liberating the language. If you can make a language into rock and roll, it can't be an oppressive language anymore. It's got to be free. It is just an African language like any other and it is certainly not the exclusive property of the *volk* (Grundlingh 2004: 11).

3.2.6 Afrikaans after apartheid

The abolition of apartheid had important implications for Afrikaans. According to Randal van den Heever (1987: 13), it appeared "as if Afrikaans would die a certain death amongst our ['coloured'] young people" because of the reference to it as a white man's language of oppression. Many ['coloured'] first-language speakers gave Afrikaans up in favour of English, while second-language speakers of Afrikaans also indicated a preference for English (Van Rensburg 1997: 54).

Pleas to 'strengthen its survival potential' and to ensure its 'continued existence' were again raised. Throughout the 1980s and the 1990s prominent Afrikaner intellectuals argued that the association(s) between the Afrikaner and Afrikaans (see Degenaar 1987; Van Rensburg 1999;

Du Preez 1999) should be loosened; that Afrikaans should be depoliticized (see Prinsloo 1987; Degenaar 1987); that 'coloureds' should be accepted as equal members of a diverse, linguistic community (see Steyn 1984; Ponelis 1984; Viljoen 1984; Degenaar 1987; Combrink 1993); that non-standard forms of Afrikaans should be recognized (see Steyn 1984; Van Rensburg 1997) and that Afrikaans must become a language of reconciliation (see Combrink 1984). The Afrikaans arts festival managements' approach towards Afrikaans, as will be illustrated in the following chapter, was clearly shaped by these and similar sentiments.

The very fact that these pleas on the behalf of Afrikaans were made suggests how entrenched the racial ideology was. Van Zyl Slabbert (2000: 79) wrote in his book *Tough Choices* how "considerable consternation arose, with the suggestion that coloureds could also be Afrikaners". Some conservative Afrikaners in post-apartheid South Africa still considered the struggle for Afrikaans as "a struggle for the survival of the 'white' in Africa" (Greghan 1995: 77). Because of their belief in 'racial purity', they therefore opposed all attempts to recognize as Afrikaners those 'coloureds' and 'blacks' who speak Afrikaans. As a result of the negative connotations of the term, Neville Alexander (1999: 27) protested that "no one in their right mind would suggest that people labelled coloured are Afrikaners, in spite of the fact that some 90% of them continue to speak Afrikaans".

Afrikaans language lobbyists, in the period of negotiations between the ANC and the National Party in the 1990s, began to see that the future of the Afrikaans language would lie within a multilingual paradigm and the strengthening of the functional use of African languages (Alexander and Heugh 2001: 29). Afrikaners could no longer afford to be indifferent towards 'coloured' speakers of Afrikaans. It was also increasingly recognized that Afrikaans speakers should find allies**,** not only among fellow Afrikaans speakers, but amongst other groups that were worried about the status of the country's other indigenous languages (Du Plessis 1997: 10). Afrikaans was now hailed as a truly indigenous African language. But some were sceptical, fearing that this was a thinly veiled attempt to ensure the survival of the Afrikaners and 'their language' (Du Plessis 1987b: 117).

The following section introduces the Afrikaner *volksfeeste*.

3.3 Afrikaners is *plesierig*/Afrikaners are jolly: Introducing the Afrikaner *volksfeeste*

Afrikaners is plesierig,

Dit kan julle glo,

Hulle hou van partytjies

En dan maak hulle so

Afrikaners are cheerful

You better believe it

They like having parties

And then they do this

(Afrikaans folksong)

According to Herman Kitshoff (2006: 68), the term *volksfees* pertains to a cultural group, its language, traditions and shared values. Pieter Kapp (1975) attributes the existence of relatively few Afrikaner *volksfeeste* to the pervasive influence of Calvinism that emphasized soberness and reticence, and distrusted all forms of boisterousness and spontaneity. The *Afrikaners is plesierig* (Afrikaners are jolly) saying is in fact slightly ironic in the light of the exceptional gravity and pessimistic undertone that generally characterized the historic *volksfeeste* of the Afrikaners.

The early festivals in the 1800s were seasonal, often confined to rural areas and practised on a small-scale by settlers of European origin, who later came to identify themselves as Afrikaners. They were always tied to peoples' need to give expression to their identity whether on a national, regional or family level. These dignified, often open-air celebrations generally had a strongly religious character.

Over time festivals came to be connected to specific historical events in which the Afrikaners took centre stage. Afrikaner leaders recognized the festivals' potential to serve as vehicles for the advancement of Afrikaner nationalism. Festivals were therefore used to tie Afrikaners together, with varying effect. The festivals in the post-Anglo-Boer War years (the early twentieth century) were successful in persuading the 'defeated' Afrikaners to shed their feeling

of social inferiority. The emphasis, however, shifted notably in the mid-twentieth century from unifying the Afrikaners to unifying all 'whites' in a so-called South African nation.

3.3.1 Communion festivals – 1800s

Festive celebrations before 1850 centred on the practice of Holy Communion in church. Afrikaners, many of whom lived relatively secluded lives on farms, converged on church squares in towns, four times a year, over an extended weekend period.[15] There they attended extended church services and meetings, young people attended confirmation classes and parents had their children baptized. This was also an important fundraising opportunity for the church. So-called *boeresport* (different kinds of sporting activities) and barbequing formed a sub-component of these festivals (Prinsloo 1988: 77). The communion festivals gradually diminished in importance in the twentieth century, when modern forms of transport brought an end to the seclusion experienced by Boers on farms (Kapp 1975: 29).

3.3.2 The emergence of volksfeeste

The Afrikaner *volksfeeste* which originated in the nineteenth century derived their basic form from these communion festivals. The *volksfeeste* were also primarily family occasions and they retained the strong religious character of the earlier communion festivals. Interestingly, the practice of delivering political speeches at *volksfeeste* was reminiscent of the practice of listening to numerous church sermons during community festivals. The *volksfeeste*, as was the case with communion festivals, also allowed for leisure activities.

Festival committees, consisting of prominent community members, usually arranged these festivals. The festivals, which were celebrated throughout the year, served different purposes and their specific purpose often determined their timing.[16] Festivals also varied with regard to

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[15] Before the period of rapid industrialization, at the dawn of the twentieth century, only ten percent of Afrikaners lived in cities and villages (Giliomee 1979: 104).

[16] Kapp (1975) for one distinguishes between religious, historical, cultural, spontaneous, seasonal, calendar and sports festivals. The work by Kapp (1975) was one of the few authoritative works that I could locate on the history of early Afrikaner festivals.

their degree of formality, the location (they could be held in a hall or in the *veld*), the scale of the event and its duration.

3.3.3 Volksfeeste and the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism – 1850s onwards

These *volksfeeste* in the second half of the nineteenth century became closely connected to the "active, struggling national life of the Afrikaner" (Kapp 1975: 8). According to Kapp, these festivals were driven by the search for an identity among Afrikaners, spurned by the difficulties they experienced under British imperial rule, and their fight for independence and self-determination.

Afrikaners were very aware of their smallness as a 'nation' relative to the British and African population in South Africa – a fact that was emphasized by the difficulties that they had experienced, particularly during the two Anglo-Boer Wars. Hence their independence and 'culture' was perceived as being under constant threat.[17] A sure way to strengthen the Afrikaner *volk* in the face of threat was purportedly for every Afrikaner to develop a *kultuurbewussyn* (cultural awareness) and feeling of togetherness (Van den Heever 1950: 6-7). *Volksfeeste* provided an ideal platform where the 'national idea' – the question of 'what constitutes the Afrikaner nation' and the answers to that question – could be articulated and refined.[18] The festivals in fact played a crucial role in strengthening and consolidating the Afrikaners' national consciousness, particularly between 1881 and 1949.

One of the ways in which the *volksfeeste* functioned to achieve this was by commemorating key historical events which were perceived as forging the Afrikaner nation.[19] These events included: the arrival of the French Huguenots at the Cape (1688), the covenant of Blood River (1838), as

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[17] Some argue that the Afrikaners' history can be conceived of as a protracted struggle against multiple successive (material and spiritual) threats (see Van den Heever 1950; Leach 1989). The main threats that the Afrikaners believed that they were confronted with at various times included: Anglicisation, class and political divisions between Afrikaners, the so-called *swart gevaar* (the threat that Africans posed), imperialism and communism.

[18] Piet Meyer (1940: 46) felt strongly that every performance at a *volksfees* should symbolically relate to the Afrikaner cause.

[19] "For any social grouping to have a collective identity there has to be a shared interpretation of the events and experiences which have formed the group over time" (Tosh 2000: 2).

well as the establishment of the Transvaal (1852) and Free State republics (1854). Many of the commemorative events centred on armed confrontations between the *Boere* and the British such as the *Slagtersnek* Rebellion (1815-1816).[20]

During the First Anglo-Boer War or *Eerste Vryheidsoorlog* (First War of Independence) (1880-1881) the Boers in Transvaal clashed with the British authorities. The Boers revolted in protest over the annexation of the Transvaal republic by the British in 1877. The Boers, who were familiar with the landscape, defeated the British at the Battle of *Amajuba* on the 27th of February 1881. This date indicates an important watershed in the development of *volksfeeste*. From then on greater emphasis was placed on the history of the Afrikaner – their *volksgeskiedenis* – in an effort to boost Afrikaner nationalism. Paul Kruger, at the celebration of *Dingaansdag* on the 16th of December 1881, declared that God granted the Afrikaners the country and their freedom (Van Jaarsveld 1979: 65). In the aftermath of the war the *volksfeeste* in the two Boer republics became strongly characterized in terms of the Afrikaners' need to protect and give expression to their group identity.

The Second Anglo-Boer War (1899 – 1902) was fought between the two independent Boer republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, on the one side, and the British Empire, on the other. Britain declared war in order to obtain control over the gold industry in Transvaal. The Boers were finally defeated after both sides suffered thousands of fatalities and the two republics were incorporated into the British Empire. The suffering of Afrikaner women and children in British concentration camps during the war, and the Boers' eventual defeat, increased the antagonism that Afrikaners felt towards the English.

The end of the Second Anglo-Boer War was another milestone in the development of *volksfeeste*, because the war spurred on the Afrikaners' quest for self-determination. According to Kapp (1975: 69), leaders in the First and Second Anglo-Boer Wars literally spent hours during the *Dingaansfeeste* (addressed below) relating stories of heroism and hardship such as the endurance in British concentration camps of woman and children. All Afrikaners had to

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[20] During the Rebellion, Boer rebels clashed with government forces over the use of so-called coloured troops to arrest a 'white' farmer, Freek Bezuidenhout. Four rebels were found guilty of treason and hanged.

remember the humiliations of past generations and how they had fought for their freedom as a nation. Patriotic songs were sung at *volksfeeste* in between accounts that commemorated significant, historical events. Brass ensembles accompanied historical representations that either re-enacted battles from the Great Trek and Anglo-Boer Wars, in which the Afrikaners proved victorious, or that depicted the suffering of the *volk*.

Speeches were central to the *volksfeeste*, because they were viewed as a means to educate and inform Afrikaners (Swart 1969: 5). Politicians often delivered speeches, but other intellectuals also addressed festival audiences. Issues such as the Afrikaners' past, *volkshelde* (national heroes), problems confronting the Afrikaner *nasie* (nation), the Afrikaners' shortcomings and talents, and South Africa's economic development were addressed during these events. In the first half of the twentieth century, the speeches revolved around the worrying question of the "continued existence of the white Christian civilization" in South Africa (Swart 1969: 5). Different issues predominated at the *volksfeeste,* and by implication in the speeches, at different times.

Afrikaners firmly believed that it was their divine duty to commemorate events of the past (Kitshoff 2006: 69). These festivals therefore had a deeply religious meaning to them. Some of the most prominent *volksfeeste*, as well as the role played by Afrikaans in the celebrations, are now examined separately.

3.3.4 The Day of the Vow (1864-…)

One of the key historical Afrikaner festivals that commemorated a battle was *Dingaansdag* (Dingaan's Day). It was renamed *Geloftedag* or the Day of the Vow in 1952. It was celebrated annually on the 16th of December across the country since 1880, when it was resurrected (at Paardekraal) after not having been celebrated for a number of years (Giliomee 2003: 166).[21] It commemorated the Battle of Blood River, where the Boers defeated the Zulus in 1838. This historic battle followed after a number of violent confrontations between the *Voortrekkers* and

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[21] The 'Day of the Vow' has been renamed 'Reconciliation Day' in the new South Africa.

the Zulus, and failed negotiations for the secession of land for settling and grazing by the 'white' settlers.

On the 16th of December 1838 the Boers, 464 of them under the command of Andries Pretorius, defeated more than 10,000 Zulu warriors. The Boers, who suffered no fatalities, had made a vow before the battle that if God would grant them victory, they would commemorate the battle annually and observe the day as a Sabbath. It was formally celebrated for the first time in 1864, and by the 1900s it had become a familiar and official event in the Boer republics of the Transvaal and the Free State (Kitshoff 2006: 70)

The festival had a particularly strong religious connotation. It was a holy day of thanksgiving and humility before God; a day during which people reflected on their history and used the occasion to strengthen the national consciousness (Kapp 1975: 50). The occasion advanced the myth of the Afrikaners as a chosen people, ordained by God, because of the parallels drawn by speakers between the plight of the *Voortrekkers* and the Old Testament Israelites. According to Dunbar Moodie (1975: 21), "this civil ritual ... unites Afrikaners in their sense of unique identity and destiny ... ever reminding them of their sacred separation from English and black African".

There were, however, times when the celebration of the Day of the Covenant was also used (sometimes in rival celebrations) as an opportunity to unite 'white' South Africans, regardless of whether they spoke Afrikaans or English. At an official Day of the Covenant ceremony at Paardekraal in 1916 General Botha, for example, pleaded for the reunion of the Afrikaner people in the aftermath of the 1914 declaration of war and the 1915 Rebellion. His definition of 'Afrikaner people' specifically included English-speaking South Africans (Moodie 1975: 88). The Governor-General of South Africa, representing King George V, not only attended but spoke at length in English at important *Geloftedag c*elebrations in the 1920s (Moodie 1975: 97). "During the late 1930s, prime ministers Jan Smuts and JBM Hertzog tried to unite Afrikaners and English speakers within a common South African nationality and therefore had hoped that 'Dingane's Day' would be celebrated by all whites" (Leach 1989: 13). After 1948 the event reverted to being a nationalistic celebration for 'white' Afrikaners.

The proceedings were mostly solemn and consisted of prayer meetings and public worship. The recital of the vow during these religious services was standard practice (Swart 1969: 15). Festival-goers, who sometimes wore traditional outfits, were expected to be neatly clad and to arrive punctually. Elderly people who had participated in the *Bloedrivier* battle gave historical accounts of the battle and the Great Trek (Van Jaarsveld 1979: 67).

Since the 1930s the ATKV and the FAK (see Glossary) played a central role in the organizing of the *Geloftedag* commemorations (Kitshoff 2006: 71). Despite the solemnity that characterized the festival programmes, time was set aside for sporting events such as target shooting and horse racing as well as military parades and choir performances (Kapp 1975: 60). Typical Afrikaner delicacies such as *boerewors*, *melktert*, *pannekoek* and *koeksisters* (see Glossary) were served. Alcohol, however, was never allowed. Initially wagons were drawn into a laager formation to delineate space for different amusements, but this later became a set festival practice that recreated the historical battle site, symbolized unity and celebrated the role of the *Voortrekkers* as "pioneers of Western civilization" (Kapp 1975: 58).

A persistent tension in the *volksfeeste* (including the *Geloftedag* commemorations) was maintaining the dignity and decorum of these events and foregrounding their 'true meaning', whilst also providing for lighter entertainment. Ideally Afrikaners had to approach these festivals as opportunities for quiet introspection and reflection on Afrikaner values and *volkstradisies* (national traditions). Even leisure activities had to be meaningful. Afrikaner commentators cautioned over the years that a fine balance should be maintained between seriousness, on the one hand, and jollification, on the other, within the festivities. Some (see Swart 1969; Swart 1987) feared that modern and novel presentations could lead to these events becoming increasingly superficial, instead of cultivating genuine pride and interest amongst the Afrikaners in the *Boeresaak* or Afrikaner cause.

From 1912 onwards these festivals in fact became increasingly politicised as the Afrikaners' national consciousness grew (Van Jaarsveld 1979: 69). Speakers, who addressed the festival-goers outside of church buildings, were expected also to provide meaningful guidelines, in times of uncertainty, to the Afrikaners for the present and the future (Swart 1969: 15).

3.3.5 The centenary celebrations of the Great Trek - 1938

The Great Trek held enormous importance for the Afrikaners as a key event that was perceived as 'giving birth to' the Afrikaner nation (Van Jaarsveld 1979: 50).   The Afrikaner nationalist ATKV arranged the centenary celebrations of the Great Trek in 1938, which became "a historical milestone in itself", as pointed out by Albert Grundlingh and Hilary Sapire (1989: 19). The Trek was symbolically re-enacted along two routes that started from Cape Town and moved through almost five hundred towns.

"Two great festivals were planned for December 16, 1938, one at the site of the Battle of Blood river, and the other in Pretoria, where the cornerstone of the new *Voortrekker* monument [in commemoration of the *Voortrekkers*] was to be laid" on the historic battle date (Moodie 1975: 178).   Three women, direct descendants of *Voortrekker* leaders, laid the foundation stone at Monument Hill on the Day of the Covenant.   More than one hundred thousand Afrikaners witnessed the event.

The historic celebration of the symbolic *Ossewatrek* (Ox-wagon Trek) left a distinct imprint on the landscape.   A small monument of red granite was erected on the city square in Potchefstroom, for example, to commemorate the symbolic Ox-wagon Trek of 1938.   "At each town the nine ox wagons passed through, streets were renamed after *Voortrekker* leaders" (Leach 1989: 4).   The tracks of the wagon were preserved in cement in front of many churches or town halls.

Along the 'route of conquest', which involved even the smallest towns, local communities were involved in localized celebrations.   According to Hermann Giliomee (2003: 432), "from that time *braaivleis* (barbeque), a re-enactment of how the *Voortrekkers* cooked their meals … became fashionable".   People sang patriotic songs for hours on end around campfires; Afrikaner heroes were celebrated; enthusiasts trampled over each other to get a close-up view of the wagons; some kissed the wagons and burst into tears (Steyn 1980: 219); and newborn children were given names in commemoration of the Trek.

The celebrations [like all *volksfeeste*] were nevertheless solemn, dignified affairs (Grundlingh and Sapire 1989: 20).   "Speech after speech extolled 'the virtues of the *Voortrekkers*' and their

establishment of a "frontier for western civilization" (Witz 2003: 28). Afrikaners were once more sensitised to the numerous threats that confronted their nation in their attempt to maintain Christian civilization and the superior position of whites (Van Jaarsveld 1979: 71). "English speakers were ostensibly included in the proceedings, but it was unmistakably meant to be an exclusively Afrikaner celebration" (Grundlingh 2005: 193).

It is important to take note of socio-political developments at the time to understand why the festival became such a spectacular event. The ruling National Party and the most important opposition party, the South African Party, had joined together in 1934 as the United South African National Party. A large number of Afrikaners under the leadership of Dr DF Malan opposed the merger and continued to exist as the National Party. The struggle between the two parties caused serious political divisions amongst the Afrikaners.

During the celebrations, however, Afrikaners were urged to agree on the key elements of their uniqueness such as the maintenance of their religion, language and culture. According to Moodie (1975: 185), "Afrikaners had [indeed] learned in their worship at the ox-wagon altars how very much they had in common as Afrikaners. Party-political differences were made to seem insignificant". The celebrations also glossed over class, gender and generational divisions between Afrikaners. Literate and illiterate Afrikaners attended them together. The festival, in fact, prepared the path for the Afrikaner Nationalists' assumption of power ten years later (Leach 1989: 5) by actively promoting Afrikaner nationalism.

The celebrations also cannot be seen apart from the so-called *Arm Blanke Vraagstuk* (Poor White problem). A period of rapid urbanization followed in the aftermath of the Second Anglo-Boer War. There were few opportunities for small- and medium-scale farming (Giliomee 2003: 345). Many Afrikaans-speaking 'whites' were forced to move to the cities in search of employment. But a lack of education, skills and training made it difficult for these men and women to compete in the urban labour market, often against Africans. Large numbers of urban Afrikaners were either unemployed or poorly paid.

These urbanized Afrikaners who felt uprooted, disillusioned and insecure found solace in embracing a mythical, idealized past in which the Afrikaners had triumphed over difficult

circumstances. The 1938 festival gave the downtrodden workers something to cling to and re-instilled in them a feeling of personal honour and pride. "Many of the speeches during the centenary celebrations were carefully calculated to reclaim the 'poor whites' for the *Volk*" (Grundlingh 2005: 195).

The celebration brought about a greater degree of language consciousness and language loyalty. Public speakers commonly referred to Afrikaans, 'the most Afrikaans of all Afrikaner qualities' (Steyn 1980: 221). Afrikaners were encouraged to speak their language in a pure form. The celebrations left Afrikaners with a renewed awareness, propagated by the National Party, that the Afrikaners' future needed to be safeguarded. The symbolic Ox-wagon Trek thus led to Afrikaners petitioning the government for stricter segregation measures and a ban on racially mixed marriages (Steyn 1987: 90), which led to further separation between the races. Afrikaner Nationalism, in other words, had a distinct purpose, namely securing 'white' Afrikaans-speaking hegemony and dividing the population along racial lines.

3.3.6 Inauguration of the Voortrekker Monument - 1949

The Voortrekker Monument, which was built to commemorate the *Voortrekkers* and their pioneering legacy, was inaugurated on 16 December 1949. An estimated 250 000 Afrikaners attended the celebrations (Van Jaarsveld 1979: 72), which lasted a number of days and consisted of numerous speeches, sermons, spectacular marches and artistic performances.

A number of regional festivals were simultaneously celebrated across the country. So-called *Rapportryers* travelled to the monument along fifteen different routes, stopping in 400 different towns along the way. They carried messages written by Afrikaner cultural organizations that referred to Afrikaner ideals and values (Nicol 1961: 43-44).

The monument, which is rich in symbolism, commemorates the battle of *Bloedrivier* as a key event in the history of the *Voortrekkers*. Every year on the 16th of December at twelve o'clock the sun shines onto the middle of a cenotaph that reads: *Ons vir jou Suid-Afrika* (We are for thee, South Africa). A marble frieze depicts the history of the Great Trek (1835–1852), providing insight into historical events and the everyday habits of the *Voortrekkers*.

The inauguration also celebrated the 'triumph of Afrikaner nationalism' and the achievement of unity under the leadership of Dr DF Malan and the Afrikaner government (Van Jaarsveld 1979: 72). However, according to Witz (2003: 96), the inauguration also "promoted the cause of a broader exclusive white South African nationalism". Different speakers at the inauguration stressed the importance of 'white unity' and highlighted the historical interconnectedness between 'whites' in South Africa. English speakers responded ambivalently to this attempt at nation-building (Witz 2003: 98).

3.3.7 Van Riebeeck festival - 1952

The informal celebration of Van Riebeeck day on the 6th of April dated from 1918.[22] The festival became more popular in the 1930s as a result of the *Voortrekker* Centenary festival and the re-emergence of a strong historical consciousness amongst the Afrikaners that led to a renewed interest in the day as the "birth of *Afrikanerdom*" (Senekal 1970: 156). Traditionally the festivals focused attention on the historical and cultural connections between South Africa and the Netherlands. The focus in later years first shifted to the advancement of Afrikaner *kultuur* (Afrikaner culture) and then to making it a national celebration rather than a *volksfees*.

The Van Riebeeck festival that celebrated the tercentenary of Jan van Riebeeck's landing at the Cape is of particular significance. Leslie Witz (2003) offers a comprehensive analysis of how the Van Riebeeck festival mobilized people around a more inclusive notion of 'white' identity in 1952. Van Riebeeck Day, celebrated on the 6th of April, only became an official holiday in that year. Afrikaners generally viewed 1652 – the year Van Riebeeck landed at the Cape – as the starting point of the establishment of 'white' civilization in Africa and Afrikaners as its exclusive bearers. But the Van Riebeeck festival of 1952 defined the so-called South African nation in broader terms to incorporate 'white' English speakers as well.

Party leaders of the National Party, which became the ruling party in 1948, realized that the NP needed to broaden its support base in order to retain political power. The resistance from Africans across the country, which was gaining in force, further necessitated closer political cooperation between Afrikaans- and English-speaking 'white' South Africans. The NP

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[22] See Senekal (1970) for an overview of these festivals.

government therefore sponsored the tercentenary festival of 1952, which they viewed as an opportunity for establishing greater unity between 'whites' in the country. The "festival was designed to commemorate a commonality of all people … racially classified as white" (Witz 2003: 5). Whereas previously the festivals had emphasized only Afrikaner unity, the Van Riebeeck festival was an attempt to be more accommodating.

The build-up towards the festivities started early in January with seven mail coaches travelling to different parts of the country from their respective starting points. The 1952 festival in this sense displayed continuity with the 1938 centenary celebrations of the Great Trek and the inauguration of the *Voortrekker* Monument in 1949. Local festivities were organized in different towns to coincide with the passing of a coach through the towns. However, the Van Riebeeck festival, in contrast to the former two treks, deemphasized the Afrikaner nationalist past, whilst foregrounding the historical role played by both Afrikaans and English settlers in the European founding and settlement of the country (Witz 2003: 222).

A week of festivities was also held from the 30th of March to the 6th of April. The festivities included processions in the streets of Cape Town, various festival displays, gallery exhibitions, a specially constructed festival fair on the foreshore and the historical re-enactment at Granger Bay of Jan Van Riebeeck's landing at the Cape. Alternative pageants were held for 'Malay', 'coloured' and 'Griqua' communities (Witz 2003: 135).

3.3.8 South Africa becomes a Republic - 1961

The idea of establishing a republic originated in the eighteenth century, was realised several times, continued after the defeat of 1902 and gained force in the 1930s. Becoming a republic – a notion that the English in South Africa resisted as countering their imperial links – was seen as part of the NP government's removal of all signs of British rule. But Dr DF Malan and his successors were wary of pursuing the republican ideal if it would lead to a rift between English speakers and Afrikaans speakers. The republican ideal was therefore postponed, but the *volksfeeste* became one of the means to keep the republican ideal (*republikeinse ideaal*) alive.

Republiekdag was instituted on the 31st of May 1961, when South Africa became a republic. Although it was intended to be a national festival, it was mainly celebrated as an Afrikaner *volksfees* (Senekal 1970: 163). The most prominent one was celebrated countrywide in 1966.

3.3.9 Commemorations of the Great Trek - 1988

The National party split in 1982 as a result of irreconcilable differences between the Conservatives, who argued for the maintenance of segregation and Afrikaner isolation, and the Reformists. The Conservative Party, led by Andries Treurnicht, gained increasing support in the 1980s (Giliomee 2003: 608).

The two opposing viewpoints with regard to the 1988 commemoration of the Great Trek reflected the division in Afrikaner ranks. The right-wing Conservative group wanted to continue to use the event for the mobilisation of Afrikaners. The second group, under leadership of President PW Botha, viewed it as the ideal opportunity to achieve reconciliation between the Afrikaners and the Zulus.[23] They campaigned for a symbolic gathering at *Bloedrivier*. This mutual gathering never took place, because the two groups failed to reach an agreement. Instead different rival symbolic ox-wagons treks were made. The Conservatives in fact planned thirteen trek routes across the country to spread the right-wing message (Leach 1989: 4).

Both the 1938 and the 1988 celebrations of the Great Trek took place in the midst of serious divisions among Afrikaners. But the 150th anniversary of the Great Trek in 1988 was a much smaller event with much less impact, partly because of the political insecurity in the country and the fact that the National Party increasingly had to reach out to 'white' English speakers in order to broaden its support base.

3.3.10 The role played by Afrikaans in the celebrations

The earliest festival proceedings were conducted in either Dutch or Afrikaans. English never featured strongly at *volksfeeste*. Gradually, as Afrikaans came to be increasingly recognized,

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[23] According to Graham Leach (1989: 3), during the 1988 commemoration President Botha, "while honouring the early Boers, recalled that people of colour had joined the Great Trek and fought with the Afrikaners" and emphatically stated that "it was not only a trek of white Afrikaners".

Afrikaans replaced Dutch at these events. Afrikaans was believed to be central to the Afrikaner cause, because by acquiring the language, an individual also acquired the worldview of that particular nation (Meyer 1940: 18). The uniqueness of Afrikaans, as stated before, was said to distinguish 'white' mother-tongue speakers from other 'culturally distinct' groups. Afrikaans was thus a major unifying factor among Afrikaners.

By the end of the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), the acceptance, standardization and development of Afrikaans became a key political issue to the Afrikaners (Kitshoff 2006: 70). The continued existence of the Afrikaner *volk*, which was increasingly perceived to be intertwined with the state of Afrikaans, was once more perceived to be under severe threat (Van den Heever 1950: 22). The festivals contributed in no small measure to the struggle for official recognition of Afrikaans through the presentation of Afrikaans songs, poems and plays and the highlighting of the history [albeit a one-sided one] of Afrikaans (Kapp 1975: 106).

The language struggle, politicised from the beginning, was thus widely championed at *volksfeeste*. The necessity of assertion of the language against English was stressed. The neglect of 'proper' Afrikaans was often addressed at these festivals, because Afrikaner leaders saw any change in Afrikaans – for instance, the acceptance of 'non-standard' elements as standard – as a threat to the integrity of the Afrikaner's cultural identity (Webb 2002: 30).

According to Kitshoff (2006: 71), the fundamental connection between the various *volksfeeste* (such as the Kruger festival, the Van Riebeeck festival and the Majuba festival) since the 1930s was the fact that Afrikaans was the medium of communication. There were also a number of specifically Afrikaans language festivals that raised consciousness about Afrikaans in times of struggle and celebrated its achievements. The largest and only countrywide language festival was arranged in 1959 by the FAK (Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Associations) (Kapp 1975: 155).

The *volksfeeste* from 1914 onwards were narrowly focused on symbolizing *volkseenheid* (the unity of the Afrikaner nation). They were meant to advance the *volkseie* (that which belongs uniquely to the nation). English was classified as *volksvreemd* (foreign) – a notion that appealed to the Afrikaners, many of whom were still embittered about the Anglo-Boer Wars. English

participation in festival programmes was often restricted. The English press therefore (rightly) accused the Afrikaners of utilizing the historical festivals to advance a nationalist political agenda. People, other than English-speaking 'whites', also at times expressed their dissatisfaction with their exclusion from the celebrations (Kitshoff 2006: 71).

3.3.11 The rise of volksfeeste and their waning

Afrikaner leaders and ardent *kultuurvegters* viewed interest in the *volksfeeste* as a barometer of nationalist sentiments (Kapp 1975: 23). Despite the fervour that such events (temporarily) induced, interest in the *volksfeeste* fluctuated in response to prevailing circumstances. Festivals, as stated before, are often connected to crises, often of a political nature. Lack of economic welfare, in contrast, tends to exert a negative effect on festival attendance.

Complaints were expressed about poor turnouts in 1894, for example, but the emergency situation ignited by the Jameson raid prompted renewed interest in the festivals in 1896 (Kapp 1975: 67). The Jameson raid (1895-1896) stemmed from British and Jewish businessmen protesting against the perceived discriminatory attitude of the government of the Transvaal republic towards the foreigners in Johannesburg. It was an attempt to overthrow the government, supported by Cape premier Cecil John Rhodes, who wanted to unite South Africa under the British flag. The intent behind the invasion of Transvaal was to trigger "a rebellion of the Witwatersrand *Uitlanders* [foreigners], thus providing a pretext for the British high commissioner in Cape Town to intervene and proclaim British sovereignty over Transvaal" (Giliomee 2004: 242). The raid, which failed spectacularly, increased the Afrikaners' nationalist sentiments.

Between 1930 and 1936 historical reports show dwindling festival interest due to an international money crisis, droughts and the Great Depression (Kapp 1975: 89*)*. During the Great Depression (1929–1933) people were too poor to attend festivals, but five years later pent-up needs were expressed in a spectacular way during the *Voortrekker* centenary celebrations. The 1938 celebrations resulted in enormous enthusiasm for *volksfeeste*. As a result the celebration of the Day of the Vow became popular once again. This was mostly due to the policy of Afrikaner nationalism, driven by the NP (Kitshoff 2006: 71).

The development of festivals, as testified by the Van Riebeeck festival in 1952, was marked by a gradual shift to 'white' cooperation with the exception of *verregses* (ultra-conservatives), who continued to stage exclusive and separatist events.

After South Africa became a republic in 1961, the interest in festivals once more gradually started to wane. The South African Broadcasting Corporation, possibly in response to this trend, broadcasted two radio talks on *volksfeeste* in 1969. Professor Marius Swart, who expressed concern over the state of *volksfeeste*, delivered the talks. Swart (1969: 3-7) attributed the decline in festival attendance to a number of related factors: secularization; the youth's lack of interest in cultural activities; an increase in economic prosperity; growing class distinctions; the urbanization of Afrikaners; archaic festival programmes; a public that seeks spectacles; an unwillingness to listen to speeches; a lack of interest in the past; and competing leisure opportunities.

The celebration of *Geloftedag* also became increasingly controversial during the 1960s and 1970s. While conservative Afrikaners wanted the event to remain an exclusive, Afrikaner celebration, others were in favour of greater inclusiveness. The number of Afrikaners who commemorated the Day of the Vow continued to decline in the following decades (Leach 1989: 15). Notions of fairness, justice and moral values, largely as a result of the work of Afrikaner writers and philosophers, were increasingly addressed at *volksfeeste* in the 1980s. The old Afrikaner *volksfeeste* virtually ceased to be celebrated in the late 1980s and later, because of mounting dissatisfaction with apartheid policies from within Afrikaner ranks (Kitshoff 2006: 71-72).

3.4 A living monument: The National Arts Festival

The NAF also originated at a time of crisis. When the festival was established in 1974, there was a sense of English identity being threatened by the intensified exclusiveness of Afrikaner nationalism.

3.4.1 Grahamstown: A tradition of celebrating

Grahamstown, the host town of the National Arts Festival, had been associated with carnivals and festivals for almost 200 years. Colonel Graham, from whom the town derives its name, founded it in 1812 as a military camp to protect what was then the boundary of the Cape colony, the Great Fish River, against the encroachment of the local inhabitants, historically referred to as the 'black tribes'. A small village slowly emerged around the military camp and in 1814 the Governor proclaimed the region a separate magisterial district named Albany.

The government in Britain decided, because of skirmishes between 'white' and 'black' in the area, to put emigration schemes into effect and in April 1820 the first British Settlers landed in Algoa Bay. Close on 5000 British settlers came to South Africa in 1820 in search of improved circumstances, after they had fallen victim to the acute economic depression that followed the Napoleonic Wars. The British government encouraged settlement by offering immigrants free passage and land in the district of Albany, or the *Zuurveld* (Butler 1991b: 3). The Settlers, who were unaware of the British government's motive in placing them on the troubled frontier of the Cape Colony, were supposed to provide a buffer state, with a small body of troops as their protection against the Xhosa beyond the border (Neville 1996: 13). Rather than settling the border disputes, however, the territory between the Bushman and the Fish rivers remained in dispute.

Despite numerous setbacks, the Settlers, along with a number of Afrikaner families who were already living there, managed to settle in the area.[24]   The first Dutch settlers came to this area from the Cape colony in the mid-18th century. They were *trekboere* (itinerant farmers) and the Dutch East India Company granted them loan farms in the Eastern Cape (Holleman and Paterson 2002: 13).[25]

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[24] Here they "worked to secure municipal government … fought for the freedom of the press; they founded schools, libraries, museums, financial institutions and learned societies; they contributed to the development of trade, commerce and farming" (Neville 1996: 14).

[25] The loan-farm system was the most widely used form of land tenure. Under this system the applicant asked the district administrator, acting on behalf of the central government, for permission to occupy a specified portion of land. Permission was granted in return for payment of the annual rent.

The British immigrants established the tradition of celebrating landmark anniversaries on a grand scale. When Lord Charles Somerset visited the district in 1825, a military levee, balls and supper parties were arranged. According to Collier (1961: 30), the visit "seemed to have given the town a taste for pleasure … parties, levees, and balls, did not cease with his departure". As the Settler City (Butler 1991), the town also commemorated the twentieth, twenty-fifth, fiftieth and so forth anniversaries of the Settlers' landings.

While aimed at strengthening the English heritage, the good relations between the Settlers and the Boers were emphasized at these festive events, which were marked by military processions, tree-planting, jubilee sports, an agricultural fair, an arts exhibition and firework displays. Further noteworthy festive events were the celebration of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887.

The First Great Exhibition was held in the same year. The exhibition, which took place over a period of five weeks, was housed in the City Hall of Grahamstown. All South African states and territories were represented there and more than 160 000 people visited it (Butler 1991b: 25-27). Thelma Neville, a respondent from Grahamstown, in fact pointed out that long before the 1820 Settlers Monument was built, organized festivals were hosted in town:

> The festival held in 1970, four years before the monument was built, was held to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the landing of the Settlers. It was a wonderful festival. It was like a rehearsal of what was to come … But festival was hardly a word used.[26]

3.4.2 The 1820 Settlers Monument

After the Afrikaner Nationalist government took control of South Africa in 1948, the encroachment of Afrikaner nationalism on English-speaking South Africans provided the incentive that later led to the building of the Settler's Monument in Grahamstown. Guy Butler (1991a: 301), in a memorandum he submitted to the 1820 Settlers Commemoration Committee on the 15th of January 1965, argued: "Grahamstown has certain attributes and needs which

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[26] The Re-enactment of the 1870 Settler Jubilee celebrations in Grahamstown was performed in the Drill Hall during the 1970 festival by a cast mostly of 1820 descendants" (Nevillle 1996: 38).

makes it worthwhile to considering seriously the possibility of its becoming a festival and conference centre".

Butler (1991a: 301) singled out, in addition to the "exceptional charm" of the city, the town's historical importance as the Settler city, the attraction of the surrounding countryside, the resources of taste, talent and experience present in the town as educational centre, its positioning between the expanding areas of Port Elizabeth and East London and the availability of halls and auditoria.

Thelma Neville was associated with the 1820 Settlers National Monument project from its inception, not only as a journalist but also as a leading member of various organizations and societies in the town. She first joined the permanent staff of the Monument Committee in 1967 as publicity officer and later became liaison officer. She points out:

> It was fear of the English speaker having no place … and being left out of the design by the new architects of the nation that had motivated Tom Bowker [a Member of Parliament and Grahamstown citizen], in the mid-fifties, to highlight British Settler history and to launch a campaign for a national monument to honour these Settlers (Neville 1996: 1).

During proceedings at a national conference that was held shortly after the opening of the monument in 1974, it was stressed that "English speakers should ... consciously endeavour actively to promote and preserve the English language in South Africa" (De Villiers 1976: 6). The Monument was meant to represent a counter-move to the fact that a large amount of government money was being spent at that time on the advancement of Afrikaans. It was therefore agreed that the Monument should be dedicated to perpetuating the legacy of the British pioneers in advancing the country, of whom the 1820 settlers were considered to be the most significant.

During the consultations with various interested parties, long debates ensued over the form and placement of the Monument in Grahamstown. Eventually it was decided that the Monument should celebrate the democratic tradition and the English language. As the main venue for conferences and English language festivals, the National Monument, positioned on Gunfire Hill,

was designed by F Lamond (Jock) Sturrock to be a living memorial, in other words both commemorative and functional.

The intention was to pass the legacy of the English on to all South Africans, and thus the dedication in the Monument foyer reads: "…its auditorium, lecture halls and other facilities are open to all, to enjoy and enlarge our heritage of language and culture and to perpetuate our traditions of tolerance and freedom of speech". It was both a comment on, and an expression of opposition to, Afrikaner exclusivity.

Initially a fund-raising campaign was launched by means of a travelling exhibition mounted by the Albany Museum, which emphasized the achievements of the Settlers (Neville 1996: 23) and Settler souvenirs were sold. Members of the Executive Committee of the Monument Council had become responsible for fund-raising in the areas in which they lived in the 1960s. The Nationalist government, which supported the idea of a monument, contributed substantial amounts to the project on more than one occasion in an attempt to increase unity, goodwill and cooperation between Afrikaners and 'white' English speakers. For the NP, uniting 'whites', as stated in a previous section, was strategically important for their own purposes.

Many prominent Afrikaans-speaking people contributed to the cause. According to Thelma Neville (1996: 45), "it was a wonderful time of camaraderie and splendid co-operation [as] Afrikaners [from across South Africa] joined with South African English speakers to build a monument". The Monument's construction eventually cost R5,25 million. The ambitious project, however, progressed slowly: the Precinct Stone was unveiled in 1962; after the revised architectural plans were accepted, the twin foundation stones were laid in 1967; the first sod was only turned in 1970. The monument was inaugurated on the 13th of July 1974.

Since 1977 the monument has been used for the graduation ceremonies of Rhodes University; for concerts and conferences, national and international; for eisteddfods and for public lectures and workshops. The building contains a large auditorium that can seat 900 people. This is used for productions, lectures and other events. It also has an art gallery that is used for temporary exhibitions, and a restaurant and a council chamber that are both ideal for different types of functions. The Olive Schreiner Hall, with its tiered, upholstered cinema-style seating,

accommodates 200 people in a venue suitable for scientific demonstrations, films, seminars and lectures.

3.4.3 The development of the National Arts Festival: An overview

An inaugural two-week festival of music and drama, linked to lectures, discussions and debates (Neville 1996: 68) coincided with the opening of the 1820 Settlers Monument in 1974. The first festival was named the 'Shakespeare Festival of the Arts'. An arts festival has been organized every year since then with the exception of 1975, when a lack of funds proved prohibitive.

Part of the development of the festival is reflected in the successive name changes that the festival underwent. It was simply called the Grahamstown Festival in 1977; in 1979 it was called the Five Roses Festival of the Arts and in 1980 it was named the Five Roses National Festival of the Arts. The festival underwent another name change in 1984, when it became known as the Standard Bank National Festival of the Arts. The festival's name changed yet again in 2001 after Standard Bank withdrew its anchor sponsorship. From then on the festival was known simply as the National Arts Festival. These name changes were important because they reflected the festival's broadening in scope. Whereas previously the festival focused predominantly on the English language and culture, it now came to celebrate the arts in general (Silva 1998: 55).

Guy Butler, the 'father' of the festival in Grahamstown, suggested prior to its inception in the 1970s that the festival "should be both light-hearted and serious and while it might legitimately lay stress on the interests and traditions of English-speaking South Africans, it should never become sectional or parochial" (1991a: 302). The 1820 Foundation and its committee claimed to be committed to a non-racial South Africa (Silva 1998: 51).

The festival's British/Eurocentric outlook was, however, reflected in the initial themes of the festival, for example 'Mostly Mozart' in 1981 and the next year, 'Boldly Beethoven'. The festival at the outset offered relatively 'safe' material, owing to the reluctance of the organisers risking the apartheid government closing the festival down (Grundy 1993: 15). But over the years the festival achieved a reputation for groundbreaking stage productions – productions that

ignored many stage conventions often pushed the boundaries of acceptability and simultaneously managed to deliver pointed socio-political commentary.

An ongoing issue has been how to broaden the range of works seen at the festival. African music, for instance, was added to the programme in the late 1970s, supplementing the classical and predominantly Eurocentric music of the inception years (Silva 1998: 50). Different art forms were also not always accepted to the same degree. The need to broaden the scope of the festival played a role in the later division of the festival into two main parts: the so-called main festival and the fringe, a distinction that has since been dissolved.[27] The festival and the fringe, in particular, quickly became a broad platform for the staging of original work in a variety of genres. The promising performances could thus be tested at the festival. New talents were discovered and developed.

Whereas many productions aimed merely to entertain, others attempted to stir consciousness, stimulate thinking and maybe even to provoke action. Annually certain theatre trends were identified as emphases continually shifted (see Silva 1998 for a singularly comprehensive overview of the festival's development in terms of production content). Above all, festival productions, and the festival by implication, needed to retain its relevance.

During the politically volatile decades of the 1970s and 1980s being relevant meant delivering socio-political commentary on the state of affairs in the country. Many productions, often in the form of satire, openly defied or ridiculed the apartheid laws of the time. Racial discrimination was severely critiqued. During the 1980s protest theatre grew. Audiences were, for example, exposed to everyday occurrences in township life such as detentions. Many performances directly confirmed a commitment to the struggle for a just society to the extent that the festival became characterized by its overt political nature.

During the heyday of apartheid the festival was one of the few places in South Africa that offered a free exchange of ideas, because performers could perform almost without fear of

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[27] The main distinction between the main and the fringe festivals was that the fringe productions were not commissioned by the festival. Festival-goers tended to favour the productions on the main festival, because these were presumed to be of a higher standard. The distinction thus placed fringe artists at a disadvantage.

recrimination. According to Lynette Marais, the festival director who had been involved with the NAF for the past twenty years:

> During a time of strict segregation, anyone could perform on our stages or watch in the audience. And there was never a question of censorship, because by the time a complaint had been registered, the Festival would already be over (Witepski 2005: 64).

Critics (and many festival-goers), however, became dissatisfied with the predominance and generally low standard of protest theatre/resistance art. Tyrone August (1989: 2) accused protest theatre of being "trapped by the culture of apartheid". So-called formula protest theatre was dismissed by some festival commentators as being repetitive and unoriginal; overly reliant on oft-repeated slogans and gestures; focusing only on 'white' guilt and 'black' rage; and failing to add something new or commenting on reality in a new way (August 1987; Williams 1987; Sachs 1998).

3.4.4 Early critiques of the festival

Although the opening of the first festival in 1974 was multi-racial, becoming fully inclusive was made problematic by the government structures under apartheid. Thelma Neville, for example, recalled how difficult it was to obtain permission from the Nationalist government in 1976 for 'black' and 'coloured' participants to attend the festival. The 1980 Foundation, despite government resistance, nevertheless continued to stress the multi-racial character of the festival (Silva 1998: 41).

The rhetoric about inclusiveness, despite the strong protest role of the festival, applied to a large degree only to 'white' Afrikaans- and English-speaking communities, especially during the formative years of the festival. The festival used to be primarily targeted at conservative, economically well-off English speakers (Grundy 1993). The demographic profile of festival-goers reflected this. Elderly 'black' respondents whom I encountered in Grahamstown told me that they never attended the festival in the 1970s and early 1980s, because it was not affordable and difficult to obtain tickets. Significantly the festival only added the term 'National' to its name in 1980.

As a result the festival was therefore widely condemned as being elitist (an accusation that the Afrikaans-orientated festivals also continually had to deal with), celebrating colonialism and excluding a major section of South Africans from the festivities. Repeated reference was made to the "largely white audiences" (see Lakhani 1987) that attended the festival.

The festival as a result was under threat of boycott from certain organizations, universities and theatre groups for some years. Progressive cultural organizations went ahead and successively boycotted the festival. Increasing pressure was exerted on the festival's planners in public forums and informal consultations. This pressure gradually led to the festival becoming more diversified, both in terms of the demographic profile of festival-goers and festival workers and in terms of the production content.

3.4.5 Entering a new phase – the 1990s

The festival entered a new phase in the early 1990s when festival productions began to posit a possible future for South Africa. The festival, in step with the impending democratic transition, implicitly endorsed the need for a "new language, one imbued with promotion of life, a celebration of democracy" (Meintjies 1990 cited in Mda 1996: 209). The Festival Committee chairman for 1991, Alan Crump, acknowledged "a much greater representation is needed in the way [the festival] is planned … I want it to be national and representative" (Powell 1990: 5).

The festival management attempted to highlight 'unity in diversity' through a plethora of festival productions, exhibitions and other artistic events. The festival was likened to a mirror – reflecting both what South Africa was and what it ideally could be. It was widely believed that the festival could play a role in guiding South Africa towards much anticipated change. Herman Wasserman (1997: 4), for example, describes the NAF as "a festival that tries to, in post-apartheid South Africa, bring about reconciliation of diverse cultures through the arts".

Reconciliation, acceptance, forgiveness and the wish for a better society became major festival themes. The festival was seen as a possible place to celebrate democracy. Press reports described the festival as a "cultural hotpot" (Joubert 1992) and "a true reflection of the [South African] population" (Norval 1993). This was in line with national ideology at the time.

3.4.6 Recent critiques of the festival

The critiques of the festival, whilst perhaps less severe, did not abate during the 1990s. Barry Ronge (1991), a well-known theatre critic, reprimanded the festival for not paying sufficient attention to the key issues of the day and failing to engage with a society in transition. Wally Serote, the head of the ANC's Arts and Culture Department, commented during his visit to the festival "the festival is moving in the right direction [in other words the direction of social transformation and greater inclusiveness], but it will still be a while before the move can be fully realized" (Heuva 1991: 2). Sandile Memela (1993: 3), more critically, accused the festival of being a "cultural event that refuses to unhinge itself from Eurocentrism" – an accusation that was not without merit.

The ANC, SACP and COSATU held an alliance march in the same year and urged the festival to reach out to the townships. Yet others reiterated that the festival had not yet been fully transformed, remaining mainly 'white' and middle class (Kobokoane 1993; Von Klemper 1994). Some, taking an opposing stance, lauded the festival for the progress it had made towards becoming more diversified (Jackman 1991: 7). Despite disagreement over the festivals' progress towards greater inclusiveness, it became undeniably more 'Africanized' in the 1990s.

3.4.7 The shifting position of Afrikaans within the NAF

Since its inception the festival, as stated before, has been considered as predominantly English-orientated. Even in the 1990s English remained the dominant language of the festival. The content of *Cue*, the official newspaper of the festival, reflected this. But Afrikaans also played a key role in the celebrations, often as an instrument of protest. Fanie Olivier (1988: 1), in response to the strong Afrikaans presence at the festival, exclaimed: "*Afrikaans gaan die aanslag van die Afrikaners oorleef*" (Afrikaans is going to survive the onslaught of the Afrikaners).

Afrikaans theatre was subjected to the official censorship of the government and the respective, supervisory provincial administrations during the apartheid years (Steyn 1980: 418). The festival therefore provided Afrikaans playwrights and other theatre practitioners who were

critical of the repressive order a platform to voice their opinions and express their opposition to the apartheid regime.

Many so-called *andersdenkendes* (dissident Afrikaners) found a temporary refuge in the festival. They could, within the relative safety of the festival, explore alternative identity formations and free themselves from the prescriptive identity criteria dictated by Afrikaner nationalism. "Although no statistics are available, by the late 1980s the percentage of Afrikaners attending the festival had grown even more, due to the emergence of Afrikaner protest theatre on the fringe" (Silva 1998: 73).

While English dominated at the festival events, the use of the Afrikaans language for protest art thus made its presence felt over the years – a presence that probably reached its zenith in the late 1980s and early 1990s, judging by the available media reportage. Jakkie Groenewald (1987: 1), for example, reported that what was noteworthy of the 1987 Standard Bank National Arts Festival was the "large number of Afrikaans plays and new cabarets that are staged", many of them critical of the prevailing political establishment.

One of the featured fringe productions, entitled *Panorama*, by well-known South African satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys, for example, addressed so-called Afrikaner parochialism, their stained consciences [because of apartheid], prudishness, inflexibility and Calvinistic short-sightedness (Stroombie 1987). But despite the prominence of Afrikaans performances, it is interesting to note that no Afrikaans was spoken at the official opening of the festival (Groenewald 1987).

Barrie Hough (1988: 1), in reflecting on a general trend visible at the 1988 Standard Bank National Arts Festival in a number of Afrikaans productions, wrote: "There is a tendency amongst the younger Afrikaans playwrights and writers to demythologise and place in perspective the sacrosanct image of the Afrikaners". Afrikaner heroes were openly challenged. One of these Afrikaans protest plays, *Piekniek by Dingaan* (Picnic with Dingaan), addressed the "hang-ups of the Afrikaner and if he [sic] does not change, the destruction that awaits him" (Olivier 1988: 1).[28] Fanie Olivier describes the text as "unashamedly Afrikaans, but Afrikaans

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[28] Dingaan was a Zulu king who succeeded to the throne in 1828 by murdering his predecessor, Shaka, and became notorious for his cruelty. His army was routed at the battle of *Bloedrivier* and its aftermath.

that is fully freed from any of the old and degenerate loyalties … it confirms that Afrikaans has come to the festival to stay". Towards the end of the 1988 festival Tony Jackman (1988: 2) reported:

> Not black, not white, not even English. It was Afrikaans theatre that dominated this festival in the heart of British Settler country … it is not that the whole festival has an Afrikaans feel, not at all. It is just that several of the main talking points, the ones 'you've got to see …' are Afrikaans.

Although the protest role of Afrikaans diminished in the early 1990s, Afrikaans continued to feature prominently at the festival. Emile Joubert (1992: 4), for example, reported from the NAF festival in 1992:

> A noteworthy quality of this festival is the positive stance displayed towards Afrikaans music, cabaret and especially drama. And take note: not only amongst the Afrikaners, hanging out there annually in their multitudes. English speakers who admit that they are hardly ever seen in Afrikaans company, say that they will rather die than miss a Reza de Wet drama or a Nataniël cabaret [see Glossary] … The role that the festival organizers and sponsors play in the advancement and expansion of Afrikaans entertainment, may not be underestimated.

A play by Reza de Wet called *Mis* (Fog) was lauded at the 1993 festival: "... with such theatre the possibility exists that Afrikaans will not deteriorate quite as quickly as many people expect" (Hough 1993: 1). The Crossing, an engine shed that was converted into a theatre complex, became known as the prime venue for Afrikaans productions at the festival in 1994. It functioned as a sponsored community venue for a number of years until Transnet withdrew its sponsorship. Leading Afrikaans alternative artists such as Johannes Kerkorrel performed there (Hough 1994).

But overall the Afrikaans presence, both in terms of productions and Afrikaans-speaking festival-goers declined significantly during the 1990s. The decline in productions was largely attributed to the financial returns required by productions and produced by full houses,

something the NAF could not guarantee. The following table gives an indication of the total Afrikaans content at the festival for the period 1990 to 1994, based on information about festival productions contained in festival guides dating from that period:

NATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL: PRODUCTION OVERVIEW

MAIN FESTIVAL

Years	Production Total	English and/or other	Afrikaans	Afrikaans and other	Not applicable
1990	92	80	1	2	9
1991	111	90	4	2	15
1992	125	109	4	3	9
1993	123	104	3	4	12
1994	169	145	3	4	17

NATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL: PRODUCTION OVERVIEW

FRINGE FESTIVAL

Years	Production Total	English and/or other	Afrikaans	Afrikaans and other	Not applicable
1990	157	112	14	4	27
1991	179	131	12	11	25
1992	237	170	14	23	30
1993	228	181	10	20	17
1994	270	195	9	36	30

Clearly the Afrikaans presence at the festival not only declined, but it was quite limited in relation to the overall production content. This was partly because other South African languages such as isiXhosa and Setswana gained more prominence at the festival. Afrikaans speakers whom I spoke to at the National Arts Festivals in 2004 and 2005 lamented the fact that fewer renowned Afrikaans artists were coming to Grahamstown:

> You can look there are now very few Afrikaans artists. They appealed to us. They were
> our pride and joy. We used to go and watch all their shows. It changed in 1994. There was
> a huge swing over (Celeste, Grahamstown resident).

> I find it a pity that we no longer see Afrikaans artists performing here. Afrikaans shows
> have declined over the last four, five years. Formerly you found the cream of Afrikaans
> performers here. Afrikaans culture is neglected. There used to be a balance, but now it is

no longer a national festival because Afrikaans has gone. I miss the Reza de Wet era, Deon Opperman, Nataniël … they were all here (Veronica, festival-goer at NAF).

3.5 Conclusion

The first part of this chapter analysed how the Afrikaners' experiences of struggle, a sense of insecurity, British imperialism and the identification of perceived threats led to a need for group mobilization. Each successive crisis led to a re-evaluation of the Afrikaners' history and a renewed emphasis on the achievement of national unity. Efforts at group mobilization were manifested, both politically and culturally, within the context of *volksfeeste*. *Volksfeeste* played a central role in the cultural life of the Afrikaners from the mid-nineteenth century. This is evident from the intersections between the historical Afrikaner festivities, the rise of Afrikaner nationalism and the advancement of the Afrikaans language.

The *volksfeeste*, as generally exclusive events, served to mobilize Afrikaners around an ethnic identity based on markers such as 'whiteness', Western civilization, Christianity and a command of Afrikaans. By facilitating physical togetherness, these events made Afrikaners aware of their commonalities and shared interests. Attendance provided Afrikaners with a source of 'cultural capital'.[29]

However, as noted in the literature review, emphasizing the functionality of festivals sometimes leads one to overlook the tensions inherent in the construction of festivals. Festivals are always multi-vocal, fractured events. Despite the official emphasis on consensus and unity within festivals, the objective to create a sense of belonging between people is usually only achieved to varying degrees. Festivals might even lead to strife and entrench existing divisions. Often "multiple conflicts [are] inherent in festivals" (Witz 2003: 9).

This was also the case with regard to the *volksfeeste*, where conflicts sometimes erupted over issues such as the format, content and meaning of the events as well as degrees of inclusion and

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[29] Pierre Bourdieu (1984, 1986) coined the phrase 'cultural capital' to refer to forms of education, knowledge and skills that people from the 'higher classes' acquire that place them at an advantage above others. This concept has been used in explanations of social inequality in a variety of fields. It has particular application within educational systems by helping to explain the disparities in performance between learners from different socio-economic backgrounds, despite their receiving the same 'official' education.

exclusion. Different Afrikaans cultural institutions such as the ATKV sometimes competed over the right to organize a specific festival event, leaving those who were not directly involved with the organization somewhat distanced from the events. The festivals nevertheless became entrenched in the cultural life of the Afrikaners as noteworthy cultural events, despite internal conflicts and their continual waxing and waning.

One could probably easily (and erroneously) assume that the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals in the 1990s merely revisited the older *volksfeeste* and reconstituted them in a modern guise. The 1938 Great Trek centenary celebrations, for one, occurred during a time of "stressful social transition" (Grundlingh 2005: 197) that mirrored the stressful social transition of the 1990s to an extent. Kitshoff (2006: 75) concludes that *die volk* (the Afrikaner nation) once more turned towards festivals when a need for the affirmation of their identity arose after the Afrikaners' loss of minority government by 1994. The fact that the *volksfeeste* had become entrenched in the collective consciousness of the Afrikaners before 1995 could possibly be used to help explain why the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals quickly attained a large following after their inception.

But the continuity between the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals and the older *volksfeeste*, especially from an organizational perspective, was very limited. The emphasis within the *volksfeeste* on the serious political celebration of one singular theme, driven by politicians, was completely in opposition to the emphasis on the arts and their inherent variety that one finds at the contemporary Afrikaans arts festivals. I would therefore argue that the National Arts Festival was in fact the real precursor to the Afrikaans arts festivals, as the following chapter clearly indicates.

CHAPTER 4

The emergence of contemporary Afrikaans-oriented arts festivals

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter helped to put the emergence of the contemporary Afrikaans-orientated festivals after 1994 into historical perspective. The chapter indicated how the Afrikaners' experiences of struggle, insecurity and crisis led to the need for group mobilisation that was then played out politically and culturally within various contexts, amongst them the context of *volksfeeste*. This is to an extent continuing after 1994.

The contemporary Afrikaans arts festivals, similar to the former *volksfeeste*, illustrated the ability to mobilize Afrikaans-speaking 'white' people around something that they regarded as precious and something they could enthuse about. However, the arts festivals, as this chapter shows, were not merely extensions of the former *volksfeeste*. Although identity issues were also manifested within the new Afrikaans-orientated festivals, they differed from the earlier state-driven manifestations in the sense of being less exclusivist, ethno-nationalist and imposed from above.

This chapter gives an overview of the establishment of the KKNK and Aardklop in the 1990s and examines the broad context (the pre-liminal conditions) under which these festivals emerged. Both festivals were established to boost Afrikaans theatre and the performing and visual arts in general. The first section relies largely on respondents' accounts to give an impression of the early festivals and the actors involved. The qualities that made the host towns suitable for the hosting of the arts festivals are then considered.

The subsequent sections argue that a sense of crisis that prevailed during the 1990s contributed to the establishment of the KKNK and Aardklop. The sense of crisis centred on two domains: the position of Afrikaans and the state of the arts in the country. The next section shows how the festival planners and certain political leaders positioned the arts festivals in relation to the need for national reconciliation and the facilitation of national unity between all South Africans. The final section isolates crucial differences between the former Afrikaner *volksfeeste* and the newly established Afrikaans-orientated festivals.

4.2 Background to the establishment of the KKNK and Aardklop in the 1990s

4.2.1 The establishment of the KKNK

The Klein Karoo National Arts Festival made its debut in 1995. The Chamber of Commerce in Oudtshoorn had been instructed to submit plans for possible tourism projects in one of the preceding years. Nic Barrow, a prominent lawyer and businessman in Oudtshoorn, and Andrew Marais, former Public Relations Manager for the National Press (*Naspers*), first came up with the idea for an Afrikaans festival in 1993.[1] They were therefore jointly known as the fathers of the KKNK. Nic Barrow told me in an interview that he had the idea for an arts festival about two years before the hosting of the first KKNK festival in 1995, during his family's third visit to the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown. He realized that Oudtshoorn would benefit economically from a festival:

> I realized what a large economic injection the [National Arts] festival is to Grahamstown. Any town needs it. And it gives exposure to the town. People now realize that Oudtshoorn is about more than just the [Cango] caves and ostriches.

The decline in Afrikaans productions at the NAF in Grahamstown, as indicated in the previous chapter, also helped to create a space for the establishment of similarly structured Afrikaans-orientated festivals elsewhere. Since the establishment of the two Afrikaans-orientated festivals, the Afrikaans productions at the NAF in fact continued their downward spiral (Burger 2003). Fewer festival-goers also visited the NAF (Van Bosch 1998; Muller 2003).

More than 100 interested people from across the country attended an initial planning meeting that was held in Oudtshoorn on the 22nd of January 1994. A pilot committee headed by Gerrit Geertsema, the former director of the performing arts council PACT, had to take the idea further. They established an Article 21 company (without profit motive) in June 1994 and appointed a first Board of Directors. The members were: Nic Barrow (chairman), Jans Rautenbach (vice-

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[1] *Naspers* is a multinational media group with its principal operations in electronic media and print media in South Africa. The group creates media content in a variety of forms and through a variety of channels, including television platforms, internet services, newspapers, magazines and books.

chairman), Rosie Schoeman, Liz Olivier, Vincent Abrahams and Andrew Marais. During 1994 the Directors, in cooperation with the founding advisors, Adam Small, Merwe Scholtz and Franklin Sonn, worked to ensure an "apolitical and a-religious foundation" for the KKNK.

Gerrit Geertsema served as managing director for a short while, before the playwright Pieter Fourie took over from him in July 1994. Karen Meiring was appointed as the first festival organizer in November 1994 and took over from Pieter Fourie as the managing director in November 1999. She served the festival in this capacity until 2007, when a new managing director, Brett Pyper, was appointed. Karen Meiring, who worked as a freelance artist and managed her own company when she became involved with the KKNK, studied drama at PUK (currently known as the North West University) and worked for one of the former provincial arts councils for a time. She was also one of the founding members of *Cutt Glass*, a successful female a cappella group that performs both locally and internationally.

Few people believed that the concept of an Afrikaans festival was viable when plans for the KKNK first became known. Many respondents, including Nic Barrow himself, described the mistrust with which people, particularly Oudtshoorn locals, regarded the early festival planning efforts, dismissing it as merely another *boerebazaar* (Afrikaner bazaar). The conveners of the first craft markets at the two Afrikaans-orientated festivals, for example, had to entice exhibitors to support the festivals. One of the respondents, Wendy, had been involved with both festivals since their inception and annually exhibited at these events. She remembered:

> They invited me the first year to participate in the KKNK, because they needed an anchor
> tenant. I said I am all up for promoting *die Taal* [Afrikaans language] and the festival … I
> just packed my car with stock and went without any expectation of doing business. The
> crafts market was a tiny affair – only five food stalls and one marquee tent with maybe
> thirty traders. That is where it started.

Sponsorship – an aspect of events management that will be briefly addressed in a following chapter – was crucial from the start. *Naspers* as the founding sponsor donated R250 000 to the festival. According to Barrow, *Naspers* presented itself as the ideal anchor sponsor for the festival, because it controlled the Afrikaans media and would have given the festival an

incredible marketing boost. Soon after this *Transnet*, the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology and the *Klein Karoo Cooperation* joined in as supporting senior sponsors (see Glossary). The success of the debut festival encouraged all these sponsors to expand their contributions and also attracted additional sponsors. Pieter Fourie, the first managing director of the KKNK, remarked a few years later: "the diversity of our sponsors with the first festivals showed that the whole South Africa bought into the idea of a liberated Afrikaans" (Griebenow 2001a: 11).

4.2.2 The establishment of Aardklop

The Aardklop festival was established three years later in 1998. An Afrikaans task group, consisting of distinguished Afrikaans business people, had meetings over a period of about a year in Johannesburg and Pretoria to discuss the future of Afrikaans. The idea for Aardklop originated during a conference about Afrikaans that was held towards the end of 1996 in Stellenbosch. The participants wanted to institute something 'concrete and merry' (Nieuwoudt 2003a: 17). The suggestion to organize a festival, given the proven success of the KKNK, immediately found wide appeal.

The task group then set out to explore the viability of another Afrikaans festival in the north of the country. They realized that there was a market for another festival, because the KKNK in Oudtshoorn and the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown were the only arts festivals in the country and too far for many festival-goers to attend (Nieuwoudt 2000a: 17). Aardklop was to give people in the northern provinces the opportunity to experience art and entertainment of quality virtually on their doorsteps (Fouché 1998a: 1).

They approached Giep van Zyl and Karen Meiring, who had their own production company, Gigs Galaxy, at the time.[2] Giep van Zyl studied Communication at the North West University (then known as PUK) and worked for the ATKV before joining Karen Meiring in 1996 as business partner. Giep van Zyl, who had extensive experience with regards to the arts industry, then became involved in the initial planning and search for sponsorships. He was a founding member of Aardklop and was later appointed as the first festival manager.

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[2] The company managed artists such as Johannes Kerkorrel, Lochner de Kock and Richard van der Westhuizen, and produced several stage productions.

Discussions were also held with a variety of interest groups. Simon Afrika, a local Aids council coordinator from Potchefstroom, was one of the people involved in those initial discussions. He recounted to me how the festival began:

> I was one of the first guys that initially chatted, together with professor Hans du Plessis, about the idea [for a festival]. Giep [van Zyl] came to the university and invited us from Ikageng and Promosa [neighbourhoods in Potchefstroom] and we had a fabulous meeting in 1997 before the first festival was launched. We caucused the whole year about the mission and vision of the festival and whether there was room for another festival in the country and the involvement of the 'coloured' and 'black' communities. The idea was that the festival should discover and develop new talent and bring that talent into the mainstream.

Neil van Heerden was appointed as the festival's first chairman. Van Heerden, a former Director-General of Foreign Affairs, served as the head of the *SA Stigting* (SA Foundation) in 1997 when Aardklop was established; this was an institution that acted as link between large companies, businesses and the government. He had always been passionate about the arts, particularly classical music, jazz and the visual arts. His extensive network of acquaintances and contacts proved invaluable in securing the sponsorships for the first festival and his insistence on artistic quality set the tone for that festival and the festivals that were to follow. According to Giep van Zyl, Van Heerden played an instrumental role in the initial success of Aardklop and the formulating of festival policy. He was the first to describe the festival as 'essentially Afrikaans' (*Afrikaans uit huis uit*), but inviting everyone. Giep van Zyl told me about the first festival, which was immediately judged to be a success:

> We did not even know for sure in April 1998 whether the festival was going to happen. I can still remember well how Neil [Van Heerden] phoned me to say he thinks we have enough money, we are going to do it. Only a few people worked for the festival and the office officially opened for the first time in July that year. We had two months to organize the arts festival. It only lasted three days … We had no new productions. All our productions were existing productions, because we did not have the money to stage new work. But we made a good profit.

4.3 Tracing the pre-liminal: the festivals' host towns

One of the first steps in hosting a festival is finding a suitable town to serve as host. Both host towns shared a past in which they at varying times occupied a prominent position in history – Oudtshoorn as the unofficial capital of the Klein Karoo region and Potchefstroom as the town around which the social and ecumenical life of especially Afrikaans-speaking settlers in the North revolved.[3] A number of common factors facilitated the hosting of the arts festivals in the respective host towns. Oudtshoorn and Potchefstroom were relatively reachable, had a definite Afrikaans character, a suitable size, the required infrastructure to host a festival, the support of the municipal councils and the necessary expertise.

While both towns – Oudtshoorn more so than Potchefstroom – had marginal status vis-à-vis larger metropolises, their relative geographic marginality was partially balanced out by the provincial road networks that linked them with surrounding metropolitan centres.[4] Potchefstroom, located between the most prominent gold fields, was only 144 km away from Oliver Tambo International Airport and it was on the main railway line to the provinces of the Northern and Western Cape. According to Giep van Zyl, a native from the town, they decided on Potchefstroom because he knew many people there and the host town had to be close to Gauteng to ensure a market for the festival.

Whereas Grahamstown was associated with English, Oudtshoorn and Potchefstroom were strongly associated with Afrikaans. South Africa's rural areas were indeed traditionally the domain of Afrikaans speakers (Steyn 1980: 23). The Afrikaans character and strong Afrikaans sentiment surrounding the host towns played an important role in their selection as host towns.

The following table provides a language profile of these towns:

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[3] Although Potchefstroom, with a population estimated at 250 000, was awarded large city status in 1994, the city is still generally considered by residents to be a *dorp* (town), because of its rustic feel.

[4] These were the N12 and the R62, in the case of Oudtshoorn, which linked the town with the centres of Mossel Bay, George, Beaufort-West, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town.

TABLE 3: LANGUAGE PROFILE OF THE HOST TOWNS

	Afrikaans	English	IsiXhosa	Setswana	Other	Total
Oudtshoorn	77953	1571	4702	70	397	84,693
Potchefstroom	36580	2527	13643	56121	19485	128,356

Statistics South Africa Census 2001

A large percentage of the country's Afrikaans speakers were concentrated in the Western Cape – the province where Oudtshoorn was situated.[5]   A number of Oudtshoorn residents, and respondents from outside of Oudtshoorn, described Oudtshoorn as a *hartland* or centre of Afrikaans. The majority of the region's speakers in fact had Afrikaans as a home language, leading one of my respondents to comment: "Afrikaans is in the residents' genes". The 'coloured population' (74.39%), most of whom spoke Afrikaans as home language, constituted the majority in the Greater Oudtshoorn area. 'Whites' (17.5%) and Africans (6.2%) represented the remainder of the population (RIDP 2003: 36).

The close association between Oudtshoorn and Afrikaans was mainly due, among other reasons, to the legacy of Cornelis Jakob Langenhoven (1873–1932), who was resident there for the greatest part of his life. Langenhoven played a major role in promoting the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in schools – the first time Afrikaans was recognized in legislation in South Africa (History of Oudtshoorn 1943). He used the newspaper *Het Suidwesten*, of which he was the editor, as a medium to advance Afrikaans. Langenhoven, who believed that Afrikaans was the true language of the Afrikaner, wrote numerous texts, including translations of Shakespeare into Afrikaans and *Die Stem*, which was eventually to become the national anthem of South

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[5] Two and a half million Afrikaans speakers live [in the Western Cape], of whom the great majority (79%) are coloured (Brink 2006: 5).

Africa up to 1994. After that part of it was incorporated into the new national anthem. Today his house, called *Arbeidsgenot*, is preserved as a museum that is open to the public.

The language profile of Potchefstroom, where Setswana rather than Afrikaans dominated, differed dramatically from that of Oudtshoorn. Many of the Potchefstroom residents whom I encountered, including those who spoke Afrikaans as a second or third language, nevertheless perceived the town as being predominantly Afrikaans.

One of the resident respondents told me that "if you know Afrikaans, you will get anywhere in this town. Even the Tswanas speak Afrikaans". Another resident confidently said that "it is not often that you find a town that is Afrikaans", adding that it is a *boeregemeenskap* (farming community). Yet another resident, a local restaurant manager, described the Afrikaans character of Potchefstroom as he perceived it as follows: "Potch is very Afrikaans. And the residents are not ashamed about it. People in other places speak English because that is the norm. Here Afrikaans is the norm". [6]

While Oudtshoorn was historically tied to the promotion of Afrikaans by Langenhoven, Potchefstroom was known as the hometown of Totius. Prof. JD du Toit (1877–1953), better known as Totius, was a prominent figure amongst the Afrikaners as theologian, poet and cultural leader in his lifetime. One of his greatest achievements was the first translation of the Bible into Afrikaans, published in 1933. Totius's former home was converted into a house museum, similar to *Arbeidsgenot* in Oudtshoorn.

The size of the towns was also taken into consideration. Festival organizers across the board believed that, in contrast to a city where festivals would 'disappear', the relative smallness and rural character of the host towns implicitly fore-grounded the festivals because of the lack of other distractions. According to a festival organizer: "One of the important things which was not necessarily intended that way – it just happened – is that because of the small size [of the host town] you can't come here and not know that there is a festival taking place".

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[6] The primary medium of instruction at the Potchefstroom campus (PUK) of the North West University, for example, was Afrikaans, given that it was the home language of roundabout 90% of the students (PUK Guide 2004). The campus was marketed as offering a good study career and student life in Afrikaans.

Similarly Tim Huisamen, who has for years been prominently involved in the organization of student theatre at the NAF in Grahamstown, remarked: "small towns are ideal. Due to the smallness the festival is the only thing that happens at that point in time. The whole town is focused on the festival" – a transformation that was not deemed possible in a larger setting. It also made moving between different festival sites easier for festival-goers.

Many respondents also believed that smallness, along with the concentration of festival-goers aided the cultivation of a festive atmosphere by creating a feeling of intimacy. Nic Barrow said in relation to the KKNK: "You rub shoulders everywhere. It contributes to the festivity". Likewise Danie Lategan, the former chairman of Oudtshoorn's Tourism office, confidently asserted that "you can only establish that [festival] intimacy here".

Despite their relative smallness, both towns were deemed to have the necessary infrastructure to support the arts festivals. Importantly, there was an abundance of spaces that could be converted into production venues. A venue had to have the potential at the outset to support theatrical productions before being transformed into makeshift theatres, an aspect of the festivals that the following chapter addresses. Both host towns utilized the performance and exhibition facilities of tertiary institutions, civic centres, auditoria, halls, public and private school facilities, mixed-use non-commercial facilities such as libraries and museums, and mixed-use commercial facilities such as hotels as venues during festivals.[7] According to Neil van Heerden, a former chairman of the festival's Board of Directors:

> Potchefstroom immediately came to the fore as host, because the university has a
> conservatorium, many halls that can be used for staging productions and because this place
> is situated close to Johannesburg and Pretoria (Nieuwoudt 2000a: 17).

The towns both had a well-established business infrastructure, could handle the increases in traffic flow and supply sufficient accommodation during the festivals. Both towns also boasted

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[7] Oudtshoorn had two theatres that could seat 685 and 655 people respectively. There were 5 registered hotels and 62 registered guest houses in the town as well as five official tourist camps. Potchefstroom had an extensive educational infrastructure with 9 pre-primary schools, 61 primary schools, 2 combined primary/secondary schools, 13 secondary schools, 3 schools for children with special needs and 5 tertiary institutions.

additional tourist attractions such as the Cango caves (discovered in 1780), ostrich show farms, the Swartberg mountain range, the *Rust-en-Vrede* waterfall and unique sandstone architecture in the case of Oudtshoorn, and in the case of Potchefstroom, the Vredefort dome, which had recently been declared a World Heritage site. Both these places, in addition to relatively supportive municipalities, were also home to a number of people who had expertise in events and/or artistic management and who were able and willing to become involved in the festivals. The following section looks at the sense of crisis that precipitated the establishment of the two arts festivals in the host towns.

4.4 A sense of crisis: the state of Afrikaans in the 1990s

The South African government had been dismantling apartheid laws since the middle 1980s and resistance organizations had been legalized in 1990. But the shift of political power only officially took place in 1994, when democratic elections were held. When the discussions for the conception of a possible Afrikaans arts festival began in the same year, the Afrikaans language in particular was perceived by some of its speakers to be in a renewed state of crisis, a crisis ironically precipitated by the apartheid government's former channelling of financial resources, almost exclusively, towards Afrikaans and 'white' Afrikaans speakers.

The intertwinement of Afrikaans with racist politics, as illustrated in an earlier chapter, had virtually made it "an outcast amongst African languages" (Tomaselli and Louw 1999: 136). It was therefore not self-evident in the early 1990s that Afrikaans would remain an official language under the new political dispensation. According to Giliomee (2003: 644), the negotiation team "was keen to elevate English … to be the effective public language to secure jobs and status for the black elite and their children". There were also fears about how political restructuring would influence the already weak economic base of Afrikaans (Ponelis 1992: 78).

Despite the pressure on Afrikaans and concerns over its future, Afrikaans could hardly be considered moribund. Moribund languages are "linguistic varieties spoken by relatively few people … and/or in relatively few communities … and/or on relatively infrequent occasions" (Moore 2001: 60). It was the language most evenly spread across provinces in South Africa. Afrikaans speakers comprised the third largest linguistic group in South Africa.

The official 1996 census placed the South African population at 40.5 million (Webb 2002: 65). Zulu, with 8.3 million speakers (22% of the population), is the largest language group in South Africa. Xhosa is the second largest language group, with 6.6 million (17%) speakers. The first-language speakers of Afrikaans number 5.7 million (15%). Afrikaans speakers thus form the third largest language group, with the majority (2.3 million) being located in the Western Cape. 'White' Afrikaans speakers only constitute 42% of first-language Afrikaans speakers (Willemse 2004: 4). About 3.4 million (9%) South Africans speak English as a first language in South Africa. This makes them the sixth largest language community in the country.

A total of 15 million people (approximately 45% of the country's total population) however, could understand and speak Afrikaans whether as a first, second or third language (Van Rensburg 1997: 82). Afrikaans served as an established Language of Teaching and Learning (LOTL) at all educational levels and there was a strong Afrikaans language industry within the country (Webb 2002: 245). First-language Afrikaans speakers generally enjoyed a higher socio-economic status compared to that of other linguistic groups; this was a direct outcome of apartheid policies. More than a third had a senior certificate, 40% occupied so-called white-collar professions and their average income per capita was higher than that of the rest of the South African population (Van Rensburg 1997: 94).

4.4.1 Afrikaans and the South African Constitution

Moreover, cultural and linguistic diversity was positively recognized within South Africa's newly instituted system of pluralism. The Constitutional Principles as outlined in the Constitution of 1996 (Act 108) state that "the diversity of language and culture shall be acknowledged and protected, and conditions for their promotion shall be encouraged" (Webb 2002: 49). The Constitution therefore recognizes eleven official languages and commits the government to the equal treatment of all the official languages and the promotion of indigenous languages.[8] Every South African citizen, for example, has the right to be educated in the language of his/her choice where practicable and the right to stand trial in a language that he/she understands.

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[8] The official languages of South Africa are Afrikaans, English, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, isiXhosa and isiZulu.

Although "everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice", according to the South African Bill of Rights, "no one exercising these rights may do so in a manner inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights" (Webb 2002: 54). Linguistic, cultural and religious associations such as arts festivals therefore have to be managed in accordance with the principles of non-discrimination and free association. Afrikaans thus lost its status as one of the two most privileged languages in the country, but retained Constitutional protection.

4.4.2 Afrikaans and the loss of higher functions

After 1994, however, the government "appointed large numbers of civil servants who could not speak Afrikaans and failed to introduce appropriate language legislation to give substance to the language clauses in the constitution" (Giliomee 2003: 659). While the national and provincial governments must use at least two official languages in principle, for all practical purposes English became the lingua franca of the government and public corporations. Vic Webb (2002: 27) criticised the South African government for not giving "practical effect [since 1994] to the recognition of linguistic rights", describing the official language practice as becoming more and more monolingual. As a result English is still the greatest threat to the status of Afrikaans as a language of vertical use (Alexander and Heugh 2001: 29)

Widespread concerns about the future of Afrikaans (see Van Rensburg 1997; Giliomee 2003; Olivier 2004) generally centred on the loss of so-called higher functions: the attenuation of Afrikaans in the public domain, the corporate world, the judiciary, trade and industry, health organizations, the media and sport; the decline in academic publications in Afrikaans; and the abolition of Afrikaans in prominent institutions. Several large industries such as the Post Office, Telkom, the South African Broadcasting Corporation, South African Airways and ABSA have all opted for a mainly English policy. The global Anglicisation process and the contraction of the Dutch Reformed Church also weakened the position of Afrikaans.[9]

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[9] Fritz Ponelis (1984: 35) was still able to argue in 1984 that "the position of Afrikaans up to now is guaranteed by the hegemony of the Dutch Reformed church", a situation that no longer existed in the 1990s when the church, as one of the former cornerstones of apartheid, increasingly lost support.

The South African government furthermore exerted pressure on Afrikaans-medium schools to introduce parallel courses in English. Single-medium Afrikaans schools had diminished by about 40% since 1993 (Giliomee 2005b: 2). The perilous position of Afrikaans at tertiary level was another cause for concern for Afrikaans speakers. "Since 1994, all tertiary institutions which formerly used Afrikaans as the major medium of instruction have gradually been switching to using English in addition to Afrikaans", in order to accommodate all qualifying students (Webb 2002: 94). "Three historically Afrikaans universities (Pretoria, Rand Afrikaans and Free State) introduced a full set of parallel medium courses" (Giliomee 2003: 658), while at the time of writing the University of Stellenbosch was debating the issue.

These were amongst the main developments that led *Vriende van Afrikaans* (Friends of Afrikaans), a newly established organization that campaigned for the safeguarding of Afrikaans, to announce that "a total onslaught is being waged against our language".[10] Many Afrikaners have frequently "expressed their frustration at what they see as government tactics to bring about the Anglicisation of South Africa via the gradual but ineluctable scaling down of Afrikaans" (Alexander 2002: 96).

4.5 A sense of crisis: The state of the arts in the 1990s

The arts, parallel to Afrikaans, were also perceived by many to be in a state of crisis and in need of being renewed, a situation that had been foreshadowed in the late 1980s. Barry Ronge, at that time a student drama adjudicator, lamented the insufficient formal theatrical structure in a report entitled *It's a crisis* that appeared in a 1987 *Cue* (the newspaper of the NAF), claiming "a lot of people have a lot to say. But apart from the festival they have nowhere to say it and make a living out of it" (Ronge 1987: 2).

Ian Steadman (1990: 1), commenting on the South African theatre industry, asserted "the theatre appears to be in crisis". According to Steadman, the crisis related to the search for relevance in a changing country, the lack of audiences, only a narrow section of the population attended theatre, the elitism that surrounded performance venues, and poor working conditions and remuneration

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[10] PW Botha, the former prime minister of South Africa, used the term 'total onslaught' in the 1980s to refer to the perceived threat of communism.

of theatre practitioners. Yvette Hutchison (1996: 40) similarly referred to the "cultural crisis" in the country in an article that considered trends in South African theatre.

South Africa did not support "an efficient and constructive creative infrastructure" (Bain and Hauptfleisch 2001: 8). Additional causes for concern in the 1990s for theatre practitioners were inadequate funding, too few knowledgeable arts administrators, unpolished productions, a decline in innovative work, the high costs involved in the arts, competition with other media and the absence of artistic strategy.

The new South African government, committed to a new arts and culture dispensation consistent with purported non-racist, non-sexist and democratic ideals, felt strongly about instilling a sense of pride in the diverse cultural heritage of South Africans. The aim of the White Paper on Arts and Culture Heritage was therefore to set out government policy for establishing optimum funding arrangements and institutional frameworks to promote the arts, culture, heritage and literature in South Africa in their own right, as significant and valuable areas of social and human endeavour. It also dealt with the rights of practitioners within these domains. There was "an urgent need to balance the interests of what is an essentially elitist social activity with the need to contribute to the cultural development of the nation as a whole" (Bain and Hauptfleisch 2001: 11).

Under the new dispensation access to the arts had to be widened and the full range of art forms had to be promoted. The White Paper spelled out the arrangements required to implement the new vision and it indicated the changes required of existing institutions to assist in the redressing of past cultural biases and the imbalances in the provisioning of resources. The Paper outlined a more active funding role for provinces and indicated that local municipalities and arts institutions were expected to generate their own funds in future.

The distribution of public funds in support of the arts, the geographical location of physical infrastructure, the dissemination of skills, the staffing and management as well as the governance of institutions under apartheid all reflected significant bias in favour of 'white' artists, European art forms and 'white' audiences (White Paper on Arts and Culture Heritage 19: 10). Performing arts work and exhibition opportunities for 'black' artists at funded arts institutions were, for

example, limited. Many 'white' Afrikaans-speaking artists, the former beneficiaries of the government's arts policy, were therefore anticipating that the new policy would lead to the neglect of more 'Eurocentric' art forms and that the infrastructure and skills built up would be lost (Nieuwoudt 2004: 11).

4.5.1 A changing scene - the restructuring of the performing arts councils and the establishment of the National Arts Council

The restructuring of the performing arts councils exacerbated these fears. The four provincial arts councils – PACOFS (Performing Arts Council of the Orange Free State), PACT (Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal), CAPAB (Cape Performing Arts Board) and NAPAC (Natal Performing Arts Council – were established in the early 1960s. They were subsidized by central government and the provinces, and as the primary recipients of national public funding for performing arts, played an important role in bringing the performing arts to rural areas and the cities on a regular basis (Trichardt 2004: 17). The different provincial councils appointed full-time theatre companies that gave theatre practitioners a chance to build a career in theatre.

However, the professional arts companies to which they were home, operated mainly in a so-called Eurocentric arts environment (Bütow 2003: 113). The funding of the PACs in the 1990s decreased drastically as a result. Arts councils were established instead in each of South Africa's nine provinces with the purpose of stimulating and supporting art in their respective jurisdictions through provincial government grants. As a result of the restructuring of the PACs many formerly state-supported theatres could no longer afford to stage productions (Nieuwoudt 2004: 11).

Mismanagement, the cut in subsidies and lack of money eventually led to the demise of many such institutions. The State Theatre closed for eighteen months in 2000 as a result of financial mismanagement. The National Symphony Orchestra in Johannesburg, the New Arts Philharmonic of Pretoria and the Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra, to name but a few, all closed (Nieuwoudt 2004: 11). Such closures led to smaller audiences, fewer performances and less earning opportunity for theatre practitioners. A range of factors, in addition to funding, were responsible for the condition of the major playhouses:

These include emigration and/or the alienation of the core traditional audience, which was primarily white; substantial perceptions that the urban areas in which the theatres are located are not safe by night (or day); an inability on the part of the theatres and their managements to adjust to changed social and political milieu; and a marked inability of theatre administrators to comply with changes demanded by central government (Bain and Hauptfleisch 2001: 13).

In addition, numerous smaller theatre, ballet or dance companies, orchestras and even some university drama departments were dismantled – a development that further diminished training opportunities for young performers and that also limited rehearsal facilities (Nieuwoudt 2004: 5). Production houses and smaller unsubsidised companies survived by focusing on the corporate world and giving preference to commercial productions because of their reliance on ticket sales.

The National Arts Council, which received a parliamentary grant through the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, was established in 1994 to advance the growth of the performing arts outside of existing theatre complexes. Each province selected an individual representative to serve on the Council. Its principal task was to distribute public funds to artists, cultural institutions and non-governmental organizations, but it was reportedly plagued by internal problems from the start (Smith 2005a). It only provided funding on a project-to-project basis, which made long-term planning difficult, and it proved ineffective in the awarding of funding. There was therefore no permanent structure that could take care of the interests of the arts in a continuous and constructive way.

 "Numerous performance artists, in the chaos and uncertainty that resulted from the dismantling of the arts councils, saw an outcome in the Afrikaans-based festivals", according to Stephanie Nieuwoudt (2004: 13). Dr Peet van Rensburg, a former lecturer at the dismantled Drama Department of the North West University to whom I spoke in Potchefstroom, agreed: "theatre practitioners are now almost solely reliant on the arts festivals. So in a sense the arts festivals replaced the provincial arts councils. The arts festival originators saw that gap".

4.6 Afrikaans festivals and the facilitation of national unity

The Afrikaans-speaker's position; the bargaining, the uncertainty and infelicity surrounding

the future functioning of the language … those caused a chaotic condition and I think that was the fertile breeding ground that we needed to create a festival. One only creates where there is nothing … where there ranges chaos … not when there is order. A total new creation was needed (Vincent Abrahams, member of KKNK's Board of Directors – quoted in field notes).

During one of our conversations Vincent Abrahams suggested that chaotic conditions brought about by apartheid and its demise created the broad context in which Afrikaans (and the arts) could be given 'a new lease on life'. The Afrikaans media, as indicated in the introduction to the study, commented on the state of disorder that held sway in the Afrikaans 'community' after 1994. The arts festivals were a means to deal with that disorder by revitalizing Afrikaans in a way that made the language attractive to 'everyone'. Neil van Heerden, convenor of Aardklop's Board of Directors at the time, commented in an interview that a point of departure of the festival was to:

… establish a display window of the Afrikaans world which will attract other population groups, so that they get the feeling that here is something beautiful, something that they want to get to know better (Jackson 1998: 11).

The following year Neil van Heerden reiterated that, although the festival was grounded in Afrikaans, the organizers wanted to involve the whole population. Everybody should, similar to a honeycomb, be attracted to the festival (Lessing 1999a: 10). During these festivals Afrikaans had to be presented in such a way that *anderstaliges (*speakers of other languages) would also want to 'own' and use it. The festival founders, and the successive festival planners, not only viewed the arts festivals as a means of solidifying the Afrikaans speech community across the 'colour line', but also as a means of reaching out to speakers of other languages.

In order to indicate the national orientation and scope of the festival, the name of the festival in Oudtshoorn was therefore changed during the planning stages from KKK – Klein Karoo Arts Festival – to the KKNK. The KKNK was hailed as the only 'national' Afrikaans arts festival in South Africa when it was first celebrated in 1995. The two festivals were officially committed to

advancing the arts in Afrikaans, while simultaneously aligning them with an inclusive nationalism, as their mission statements indicated:

> The dream is to establish the arts as an unmistakable cornerstone of our South African nation … the KKNK is a South African celebration and extension of the arts by means of Afrikaans (http://www.kknk.co.za).

> … [to] deliver a constructive contribution to the celebration and development of the arts in general in South Africa, within an universal context … it is a showcase of the best of current and developing art tendencies in SA and the world … Aardklop is essentially Afrikaans but universal in character (http://www.aardklop.co.za).

The tension between inclusiveness and exclusivity within the mission statements was best captured in the phrase 'essentially Afrikaans but universal in character'. The principle of national unity constantly needed to be balanced with the maintenance of the country's linguistic and cultural diversity, as the country's official motto 'unity in diversity' indicates. However, I agree with Mads Vestergaard (2001: 63) that the creation of a new South African national identity, bridging old divisions, stands in an uneasy relationship with particularistic group identities.

The festival managements firmly believed that the KKNK and Aardklop could promote national unity in interrelated ways, given the serious national divisions at the time.[11] It was in the interests of the "meaningful establishment of pluralism [and multilingualism] in the country to ensure the continued socio-linguistic vitality of Afrikaans" (Webb 2002: 246). It is widely acknowledged that the domination and one-sided promotion of a single language, such as English, in a multilingual country disturbs the linguistic balance, potentially giving rise to conflict (see Van Rensburg 1997; Alexander and Heugh 2001; Webb 2002). According to Professor Jakes Gerwel, the health of the Afrikaans language and life world therefore served as

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[11] There is a strong degree of linguistic-ethnic intolerance in the country, with intense stigmatisation and stereotyping of the different language communities (Webb 2002: 29).

an important index of the state of internal reconciliation of the South African nation (Brink 2006: 15).[12]

The festival planners believed that, as testimony to the government's meaningful recognition and protection of linguistic rights, the two arts festivals could serve to give Afrikaans standing room in the new South Africa, alongside other indigenous languages; enhance the self-esteem of Afrikaans speakers; improve national communication and decrease tensions between linguistic groups. For the respective festival originators and later managements the recognition of cultural diversity clearly did not imply the promotion of separatism. According to Nic Barrow, in an interview with me:

> We realized from the beginning that the [KKNK] festival needed to be inclusive. That was one of my pillars of the festival. I want to be bold and say that my message from the beginning was that the whole community must be involved in totality … not only a number of token heads from one or another denomination or colour.

4.6.1 Afrikaanses and the broadening of the speech community

A subtle shift thus occurred in the post-apartheid era, and specifically within the context of the Afrikaans festivals. Instead of exclusively guarding the Afrikaans language, the speech community needed to be broadened to include (and unify) all Afrikaans speakers. This conceptual move was captured in the neologism *Afrikaanses*, as opposed to 'Afrikaners', to indicate a social category that encompasses anyone that speaks Afrikaans or identifies with and appreciates the language. According to Vic Webb (2002: 35), the term arose "because of the heated debate about whether Afrikaans-speaking coloured people qualify for the name Afrikaner".

In order to become a language at the forefront of social transformation in South Africa, Afrikaans needed to be freed from its historical associations with apartheid and the stigma that

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[12] Professor Jakes Gerwel is a director of the *Naspers* group and a former director-general in the office of President Nelson Mandela, secretary to the cabinet and rector of the University of the Western Cape. He serves as chairman, director and member on numerous institutions and has written extensively on Afrikaans.

burdened it. In an attempt to combat the negative connotations, the festival founders wanted to depoliticise Afrikaans. They believed that such a move would make the Afrikaans festivals more acceptable, specifically to the 'coloured' community. While neither Rosie Schoeman nor Peet Reyke, founding members of the respective festivals, employed the term *Afrikaanses*, when they told me about the early development of the festivals, the need to distance Afrikaans from the Afrikaners was evident in both accounts:

> It was not an Afrikaner apprehension; it dealt with the salvation of Afrikaans. We felt strongly about giving life to Afrikaans. We wanted people that were born and bred in Afrikaans to create, to sing, dance, write and have concerts – to earn money in their mother tongue (Rosie Schoeman).

> We were unanimous that the festival should focus on Afrikaans but not exclusively. Any language group could participate. The festival originated from the Afrikaans language community, but now we are not speaking about the Afrikaner. We are talking in totality about the Afrikaans community (Peet Reyke).

Instead of appropriating the language as the almost exclusive domain of the Afrikaners, as had been done under apartheid, one of the inception motifs was therefore to create a setting in which everyone would be able to enjoy Afrikaans in an open-minded and renewing way. Pieter Fourie, the executive director of the KKNK at the time, described the purpose of the festival in the 1995 festival guide as "the rediscovery and resettlement of Afrikaans and all its cultural goods from and for all *Afrikaanses*. It becomes really a festival for the emancipation of Afrikaans". The town of Oudtshoorn and the Klein Karoo were referred to in the same festival guide by extension as the world of *Afrikaanses*.

The distancing from the ideology of the historic Afrikaner *volksfeeste* was evident in the timing of the two festivals. The KKNK usually took place in March/April, whereas Aardklop was celebrated in September/October. Apart from the fact that the KKNK sometimes coincided with Easter weekend, the festival dates were of no historical or symbolical consequence to the Afrikaners. Rather they were held to coincide with the provincial school, and sometimes university, holidays, thus ensuring maximal potential participation. Monetary considerations

clearly influenced the timing of the festivals. From a practical viewpoint the festival managements needed to utilize educational facilities as venues and accommodation. The festivals were also carefully timed to avoid overlap with other celebratory events. The mild weather was advantageous, because it made the festivals' flagship open-air music concerts and other outdoor activities possible.

4.6.2 The festivals – posited as instruments of healing

Nelson Mandela, the South African state president at the time, was invited as guest speaker at the ceremony at which the Freedom of Oudtshoorn was granted to the festival in 2001. The so-called "Freedom of Oudtshoorn" is the highest accolade that the town council can bestow on an institution. It was the first time in two hundred years of South Africa's formal theatre that this honour was awarded to the performing arts.

Mandela, who also attended the 25th anniversary of the NAF in 1999, declared that the KKNK was a testimony to the fact that Afrikaans was rooted in Africa. "The festival can be an important strategy to heal wounds and to strengthen the language society. This annual institution is becoming to mean just as much for Afrikaans as Langenhoven in his time meant for the language", he said (Basson 2001b: 1). Nelson Mandela thus described the KKNK as a terrain on which people could come together to heal through the medium of Afrikaans.

At the tenth celebration of the KKNK President Thabo Mbeki was invited to the opening ceremony. He also drew from the model of reconciliation that Mandela espoused. He touched on the role of arts festivals in uniting South Africans in his speech and the contribution made by Afrikaans artists in the new democracy through their willingness to change and create an environment of reconciliation. There was a strong perception that the arts festivals could help to normalize a society collectively traumatized by apartheid. According to Karen Meiring (2007: 2), one of the former festival directors, the KKNK had a large role to play in the psychological health of individuals and communities. The same kind of reconciliation model, as indicated in the previous chapter, was espoused at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown.

4.7 Differences in orientation between the Afrikaner *volksfeeste* of the past and the new Afrikaans-oriented festivals

> It would have been senseless to make it an Afrikaner cultural festival; we could not build on those old *volksfeeste*. It is all part of a process, an Afrikaans evolutionary process … it is almost a revolutionary process in terms of how festivals were run in the past (Vincent Abrahams, member of the KKNK's Board of Directors – quoted in field notes).

There were indeed marked differences between the former Afrikaner *volksfeeste* and the new Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals. The performances within the *volksfeeste* were mostly amateur or mass performances, often of a rather low artistic quality. The new Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals, apart from the emphasis placed on the arts, also differed from the *volksfeeste* in not having a prescribed and single theme. Whereas attendance at the *volksfeeste* was largely free and people did not go there to sell their crafts, the contemporary arts festivals have become increasingly commercialized over the years. The former and current festivals also differed in terms of the scale of the events. The *volksfeeste* remained largely localized, because people were hesitant to attend a festival in a neighbouring town (Swart 1969: 14). The contemporary festivals, in contrast, draw large crowds from across the country.

Ideologically the newly established Afrikaans arts festivals diverged in a number of crucial respects from the state-subsidized Afrikaner *volksfeeste* of the past, and the accompanying Afrikaner nationalist mentality that predominated at these early events. These differences emerged from numerous interviews and conversations with festival planners, first-hand observations and an extensive analysis of official festival publications and related press reportage.

Firstly, the festival planners of both arts festivals purposely wanted to distance the festivals from the politicised language struggles of the past. Rosie Schoeman said in reference to the KKNK that "we did not want anything to do with politics. There were [political] parties that wanted to ride on our backs. But we were apolitical in heart and soul".[13] Whereas the Afrikaners before

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[13] The apolitical orientation of the KKNK was illustrated by the fact that no political posters were tolerated in the central festival terrain during the 2004 festival, which overlapped with that year's local municipal elections.

1994 propagated the advancement of Afrikaans through the retention of political power, the festival planners attempted to depoliticise Afrikaans. While it is probably not a realistic ideal, the socio-political conditions under which the Afrikaans arts festivals emerged prompted such remarks.

The festival planners were adamant that the arts festivals had to be about the inclusive, unrestrained and diverse *celebration* of (a constantly evolving) Afrikaans as opposed to the *preservation* of (standard or 'white') Afrikaans which, given the former intertwinement of Afrikaans with apartheid, was largely associated with stagnation, conservatism, rigidity and exclusionism. The festival planners of the contemporary Afrikaans festivals distanced themselves from the gravity or solemnity and the strong historical and religious orientation that characterized the *volksfeeste*, allowing instead for unrestrained boisterousness.

Whereas speakers and attendees at *volksfeeste* before 1994 generally viewed Afrikaans as the most important differentiating factor between the Afrikaners and others, the new arts festival planners believed Afrikaans could play a unifying and reconciliatory role in the new South Africa. Whereas the powerful Afrikaners of the former period viewed receptiveness and tolerance with regard to culturally different others as a potential threat to the Afrikaner's survival, and hence condemned it, the arts festival planners regarded such openness as a definite strength. Whereas the leading Afrikaners in the old South Africa cautioned against all forms of social integration, the arts festival planners encouraged it, and indeed approached it as an end in itself. Whereas Nationalist Afrikaners before 1994 opposed all forms of spontaneous intermingling between 'cultural groups', the festival planners emphasized the facilitation of relaxed social encounters between all festival-goers.

Whereas the Afrikaners of the *volksfeeste* constantly emphasized that Afrikaans was under threat, the festival planners, while acknowledging the centrality of Afrikaans within the festivities, generally distanced themselves from an excessive preoccupation with the language. The festival planners felt that within the arts festivals the two key celebratory aspects – language and the arts – had to be given equal weight, at least in principle, in order to ensure that the festivals did not turn into a negatively construed 'struggle for Afrikaans'. Ideally they felt that Afrikaans should never dominate the arts.

The festival planners wanted festival-goers to attend the arts festivals to support the Afrikaans arts and not purely for the sake of celebrating the language. They therefore viewed the festivals partly as an educative process – an aspect that will be addressed in a following chapter. Ideally all festival-goers had to make the attendance of productions, rather than merely 'hanging out' at these festivals, their first priority.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter, along with the previous ones, set the stage for the chapters that are to follow. The chapter attempted to answer the important questions of 'when', 'why', 'how' and 'where' the two Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals were established. The various sections focused on the pre-liminal conditions that give rise to the arts festivals and on how the festival organizers envisioned the festivals, and in particular the role of Afrikaans within them. Clearly various festival role players firmly believed that Afrikaans could function as an 'instrument of healing' in a post-apartheid context that called for the 'social mending' of South African society. The establishment of the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals thus represented a distinct historical break with the former *volksfees* tradition.

The following chapter focuses on the liminal conditions that came about and were fleetingly maintained during the arts festivals. During the special festival state, as stated before, temporal and spatial adjustments to the environment are made and social transformation(s) are said to occur. This thesis examines not only how the arts festivals were imagined to bring people together, but also the extent to which the festivals actually did facilitate a sense of togetherness between people. The following chapter looks at the construction of the arts festivals in order to understand how this condition of liminality was brought about, before further examining the role of the arts, space and language in bringing people together and/or dividing them.

CHAPTER 5

The creation of the festivals as liminal events

5.1 Extract from field notes

KKNK 2005 – The day before the start of the festival

09: 45. I am slightly taken aback by the dramatic transformation that the town has undergone from one day to the next. The town, which has become noticeably busier over the past two weeks is now a frenetic hub of activity. I am walking since the increase in traffic and pedestrians and the number of street closures have made driving and finding parking problematic. Strict access control is enforced in the cordoned off area in central town. Permits have been selectively issued to permanent residents, businesses and delivery vehicles and others directly involved with events management.

Trailers are seemingly parked everywhere. Festival workers are scurrying around, unloading their wares, taking final measurements and speaking on cell phones. Town council vehicles are seen driving up and down, making final preparations for the first influx of festival-goers the following day.

The internal dynamic of the town has changed notably. The car guards, who are ordinarily stationed in front of the Queen's shopping mall, have been relocated to another area to make room for the craft market stalls in front of the area. They are all wearing brand new uniforms. Mobile tellers and chemical toilets have appeared on the parking terrain. There are production posters on every conceivable service. I note the wide variety of people that walk past me; ranging from representatives of different festival sponsors to festival workers to *Krit* journalists to police reservists to colourful ostrich feather sellers.

Already some people in town are 'catching the vibe' – deafening Afrikaans music, which would not normally be tolerated, blasts from the amphitheatre's speakers. The music nearly drowns out the voices of the two street children who are delivering an inspired performance on a nearby pavement. Two empty deodorant bottles serve as microphones as they repetitively sing a phrase from a well-known Afrikaans song.

During the past week I have tried to keep note of all the preparations that were taking place, but it turned out to be an impossible task. Numerous transformations occurred simultaneously in different parts of the town. The word 'festival' started regularly cropping up in residents' conversations. There was – between the stress, the vitamin B injections, the home renovations, the calculations and provisioning for extra stock and the hopes for profit – an almost tangible excitement in the air as residents and business owners discussed their expectations for the festival. A resident respondent said:

> It is as if you can feel a change in the atmosphere. You suddenly realize the festival is coming and then things start happening. It is almost like the feeling you get in December when you know that things are slowing down for the holidays, but it is the opposite that happens now. You have to be here to experience it. And then the tents suddenly appear …

KKNK 2005 - Day 6

10: 15. The festival is in full swing. Seemingly the world has been turned on its head. Female festival-goers queuing at the female restroom at a venue decide to use the male restroom instead; shops are open around the clock; some residents are hiring out their houses to festival-goers and camping in their own yards; children are selling magazines to passers-by; at one stall one can get a foot massage in public. A man is holding a huge poster on a street corner that reads *Jy kan my klap vir R5* (You can slap me for R5).

But the 'no rules' appearance of the festival is an illusion. Here are no absolute freedoms. A security guard quickly turns a street vendor away who tries to sell his products within an enclosed area that functions as a temporary eatery during the festival. There is a huge poster at the entrance to the area that reads *Geen alkohol mag aan persone onder agtien verkoop word nie* (No alcohol may be sold to a person under eighteen). There is a similar poster at the exit that reads 'No alcohol beyond this point'. These measures are strictly enforced but are more than a little ironic in the light of the sometimes excessive use of alcohol at the camping and other festival terrains.

17:50. Certain rules continue to be enforced, yet some festival-goers choose to act as if no rules apply. I have just exited a highly acclaimed show when I witness an incident that bears

testimony to this. A well-dressed male festival-goer, who also attended the show, walks back towards his luxury vehicle with an Eastern Cape licence plate. He takes two empty glass bottles from his carrier bag and nonchalantly places the bottles in a shrub growing besides the road. When he catches me watching in disbelief, he reacts defensively: "It is not my town. You can throw it away if you want, but I am not going to drive around with it".

18: 40. I am walking down St John's Street. At the first house that I pass, a front window is used as a hatchway to sell home-brewed ginger beer to passers-by. The fourth house on the same block has been converted into a temporary restaurant. The menu features baked *snoek* and *potjiekos*. Fairy lights decorate the front porch where a girl is serving *melktert* (milk tart) and *pannekoek* (pancakes) to patrons sitting outside. I cross a low bridge that is flanked by a funfair to the right – spinning teacups, a merry-go-round, a pirate ship in full sail, etc. – and sporting grounds to the left where the festival's prime arts and craft market is positioned. That is where I am heading.

Festival-goers from all ages are sitting on the bridge's broad railing, seemingly carefree. During the festival any elevation in the built environment is utilized as seating – the cast iron fence of the local tourism office; the steps in front of the public library; the stone wall surrounding the fountain; in front of the town's only purpose-built theatre. The wooden poles protecting the tree trunks of trees in the main street become back rests. Some festival-goers carry deck chairs that they open wherever something catches their attention and they want to sit down.

19: 50. I am at the Parmalat Arts and Crafts market. The tents are labelled alphabetically, but I need to concentrate to find my way between the tents. I am walking through the central walkway of tent C. Within the single tent the ten crafters sell such varied products as homemade jams, greeting cards and wooden toys. I am trying on a pair of sheep-wool slippers when someone announces over a loud hailer that the arts and craft market will close within the next ten minutes.

Around me festival-goers start streaming towards the exit gates. I remain standing just outside of the tent, wanting to observe what will happen next. The stallholders must wait until closing time before they are allowed to pack away their wares. Festival rules. A self-appointed crafter starts closing all the tent flaps, another one checks to see whether the tent is properly locked. The

quietness that descends over the grounds, once the festival-goers and festival workers have departed, is eerie. I notice that St Johns Street is also quieter, now that there is less reason for festival-goers to travel this way.

21: 05. I am inside a production venue. Five minutes have passed with nothing happening onstage. My sightline to the stage is restricted, but I readily accept it in the *feesgees* (spirit of the festival). The roof fans have been switched off because they interfere with the performance and, in combination with the scorching heat, the atmosphere inside the cramped venue quickly becomes almost intolerable. The darkness appears to give some members of the slightly agitated audience the confidence to whistle and make loud comments, coaxing the performers to commence with the performance.

22: 10. Festival-goers sense that it is the performers' concluding song of the evening. Around me many are standing up, clapping hands, stamping their feet. I notice that some of the plastic chairs at the end of the rows have been pushed aside so that people can dance in the aisles. One woman close to the stage stands on her chair to take a photograph of the performers, but she is reprimanded by a festival-goer in the row behind her.

5.2 Introduction

The extracts from my field notes indicate that festivals take place during a liminal period – a time set off from ordinary time. The literature on festivals generally assumes liminality to be a given, a taken-for-granted backdrop against which festivals unfold, and hence they devote little attention to it. Festival studies merely reiterate that the liminal is an extra-ordinary time when the world is turned on its head. The liminal state, according to the literature, presupposes a number of things: a 'different reality'; the insignificance of everyday concerns; the engagement in unusual activities; and the application of special rules. But none of these is analysed in any depth. Moreover liminality is assumed to be unchanging and uniform; the notion, as treated in the literature, lacks historicity and context.

This chapter takes a contrary stance by arguing that manifestations of liminality, far from being self-evident and unchanging within festivals, are socially constructed. One therefore needs to first ascertain what liminality within a specific context entails. One also needs to critically

engage with the perceived markers of liminality, for example, by specifying the special rules that function within a festival. Secondly, one needs to examine how the setting apart of festivals (as liminal phenomena) from everyday life happens, in order to take account of a festival's historical development as well as consistencies and variations in the creation of different festivals as liminal events. Thirdly, one needs to take account of how people on ground level perceive liminality.

This chapter argues that liminality, within the context of these two arts festivals has a close correspondence with the notion of 'magic'. It further illustrates how the staging of the KKNK and Aardklop in the host towns – a transformation that, to casual onlookers, bordered on the magical – was made possible by a number of interrelated factors. These were: extensive planning and preparation, different senses of time, the alteration of everyday routines, re-discovery and re-appropriation of private and public spaces, the activation of festival spaces, and the reworking of rules. These six factors considered collectively were the (most important) conditions of liminality; in other words, they made these festivals into constructed liminal events.

The chapter, by considering the conditions of liminality in turn, also provides a historical overview of how KKNK and Aardklop functioned and how they have developed since their inception.

5.3 Liminality and making magic

> … adventure and experiment are a vital part of any artistic gathering, and too many expect either total experiment or total tried-and-tested perfection, forgetting that delicate balance in between, that creates the magic that is July in Grahamstown (Ross 1990: 2).

These are the words of Lynette Marais, the National Arts Festival director, who at the time of writing (2008) has been involved with the festival in Grahamstown for seventeen of its thirty-four years. When I met with Lynette Marais for the first time in 2004 during my period of fieldwork she reiterated: "What makes it worthwhile is the magic out there. That is what you work to achieve". Mannie Manim, chairman of the NAF festival committee and manager of the Baxter theatre in Cape Town, remarked in a press interview in a similar vein: "With every

theatre that closes its doors a bit of magic dies … actors and singers are the most wonderful people, they are magicians" (Robinson 2000: 9).

These comments, whilst pertaining to the NAF, are of equal relevance to the Afrikaans-orientated festivals. According to a stage management textbook, theatre can be defined as "the interaction between performers, technical personnel and the audience, with the help of technical means and support, according to certain principles and in a planned and organized way, to reach a certain goal" (De Bruyn 2004: 3).

While this succinct definition captures the mechanical side of prototypic, classical theatre making, it disregards the magical element that many festival organizers and theatre practitioners whom I encountered at the two arts festivals deemed to be essential to the performing arts, and by extension, the arts festival experience. A performer at the KKNK remarked: "You are making magic and that can't be planned. Even for a cast that has performed for years, it will always be different. It is about creating magic; not only about reciting lines".

An artistic performance, like the execution of a magic rite, is subject to special conditions of time and place, and entails the use of materials and tools (décor, stage make-up, costumes) which are not just everyday things (Mauss 1972: 46). Not surprisingly, references to 'magic' and 'spellbound audiences' abound in reviews of festival productions (see Joubert 2004).

Numerous authors (see Carlson 1996; Schechner 2000; Read 2000) claim that during the suspended time of performance, life outside of the theatre space(s) comes to a standstill as audiences are 'removed' from everyday concerns. The conventional theatre setting – a darkened auditorium, a cyclorama, the imaginary fourth wall provided by a proscenium arch and stage floodlights – contributes to the suspension of disbelief.[1] In fact, stagecraft textbooks often elaborate on the elements of a theatre's construction that 'set the actor apart from the audience' and 'divide their actions from reality' (see Zapel 1990).

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[1] "In the true proscenium theatre the actual presentation takes place behind the curtain line, or imaginary fourth wall, formed by the proscenium. The audience looks through a picture frame to see the [onstage] action" (Zapel 1990: 3).

Richard Schechner (2000: 198), with reference to all performance activities including theatre, claims that "special rules exist, are formulated, and persist because these activities are something apart from everyday life". For Schechner (2000: 192) the everyday is characterized by the "ordinary activities of productive work" and "theatre's narratives, however 'disjunct' through aesthetic experiment, always offer alternative realities and insights to the everyday". Likewise Alan Read (2000: 189) claims that "theatre, when it is good, enables us to know the everyday in order better to live everyday life", because theatre narratives are antagonistic to official views of reality.

Roles and institutions of everyday life tend to be challenged and shifted around within the defining frame of theatre, which is governed by behavioural norms applied in a different way than is usually the case off stage (Hoëm 2001: 244). By extension "an actor is constituted as actor from the moment a spectator … watches him and considers him to be 'extracted' or 'removed' from the surrounding reality" (Pavis 2003: 57).

Perceptions of theatre as contrasting with reality and/or being magical fed into and strengthened the already existing popular portrayals of festivals as being cordoned off from the everyday (see Abrahams 1987; Brandes 1988; Cohen 1993; Mitchell 1995). This portrayal of festival as a kind of theatre was evident in certain arts festival marketing campaigns:

> The idea with the marketing campaign was that escape from the city and the enrichment that the arts offers one. It is that blocking out of the ordinary world. Everything else fades. You can move into this little micro cosmos that only exists here, while the outside world ceases to exist (Haddad Viljoen, Aardklop's former marketing manager).

The arts festivals happened through a conscious and distinguishable process aimed at, and resulting in, partially setting these arts festivals apart from everyday life. This consciousness of a 'setting apart' by casual observers was evident from the responses of numerous residents who excitedly told me that the particular host town came 'alive' at festival time. But few residents were able to outline the exact transformations in the host towns that gave rise to such assertions, apart from allusions to a noticeable festival 'vibe' or 'spirit'.

Festival-goers, the majority of them non-residential, also emphasized that they experienced the host towns differently, compared to how they usually experienced towns. Many respondents pointed out: 'where else are the locals so friendly?'; 'where else can we park where we want to?'; 'where else do you have such a variety of performances?' Alternatively: 'nowhere do you have time to do this', 'nowhere do you *kuier so lekker*' (nowhere do you have such a good time socializing), 'nowhere are the streets so busy at this time of night' and so forth.

Clearly, respondents were aware of these festivals, and their host towns by implication, being somewhat cordoned off from the everyday. But what did this cordoning off entail? How did the process develop? What made the respondents conscious of it? What could the perceived 'vibe' or 'spirit' in the host towns during these festivals be attributed to? Could the festival organizers purposefully create a festival vibe? These questions are addressed in the following sections.

5.4 Conditions of *liminality*

5.4.1 Liminality and planning and preparing for festivals

The first condition of liminality was planning. While festivals might seem to be "magically conjured" up (Accone 2002: 4), the planning and preparation for both festivals proceeded over an extended period, gradually intensifying and becoming more public as the festival dates drew closer. It is important to take note of these planning procedures and how they were refined from the beginning of the festivals up to the present in order to get a historical sense of how these two festivals developed.

According to Donald Getz (1997: 4), many event organizers spend a great deal of time and effort in creating the right atmosphere and festive spirit to encourage "joyfulness (even revelry), freedom from routine constraints and inversion of normal roles and functions". A festival organizer at the KKNK confirmed this observation: "The festival does not just fall into place, it is meticulously organized".

5.4.1.1 Management of the KKNK and Aardklop

Both festivals had a Board of Directors that consisted of experts on various terrains such as the arts, administration and community issues. The respective festival managements were responsible for most of the festival planning. The management team of each festival consisted of a number of managers who, along with the permanent staff working under them, dealt with various aspects of the festivals such as corporate communication, finance, client services, projects and the festival programme. Both festivals also employed temporary staff. Temporary workers commenced working anything from six months to two months before the next festival and continued working until shortly after the festival.

5.4.1.2 The relationship between the festival managements, the municipalities and other key role players

Close cooperation between the festival managements and the municipalities of the host towns was crucial to the success of the festivals. The town and city council of Oudtshoorn and Potchefstroom respectively recognized the festivals' potential in contributing to local economic development by encouraging investment, stimulating business and creating employment opportunities within the host towns.

Both municipalities granted the festivals die *Vryheid van die dorp* (Freedom of the town), which in essence meant that the festival managements temporarily took control of the respective host towns, while certain municipal regulations ceased to apply. In 2002, for example, the Executive Mayor of Potchefstroom and the city council granted the Aardklop management the annual use of a demarcated area in *Die Bult* area for the period of the festival.[2] It was decreed that all activities within this demarcated area had to be done in collaboration with the Aardklop

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[2] *Die Bult*, which was initially agricultural land and pasturage, was developed as another residential area of Potchefstroom in the nineteenth century. Over the past few decades, as the University of the North West that was located in the area became the most important growth engine of the town, many residents relocated to this affluent area. Gradually in response to the rise in resident and student numbers and the correspondent consumer demand a second 'central' business district developed there. There was an open, grassy plain, known as Cachet Park within *Die Bult* that was utilized for the arts and craft market and the open-air shows.

organizing committee, excluding established business activities, but including temporary extensions of established businesses relating to Aardklop activities.

Whereas previously activities on street reserves (sidewalks) proceeded in a relatively uncontrolled fashion, all activities from then on had to be arranged in collaboration with the festival's organizing committee. Main traffic routes were included in the existing demarcated area and earmarked for exclusive use by Aardklop and the festival's sponsors for marketing purposes.

The festival cores – central hubs of activity where festival-goers congregated – thus overlapped with the respective host towns' central business districts. The business districts were most suited for this, because of the conglomeration of public facilities there and existing business infrastructure that helped to generate 'a vibe'.

The municipalities remained involved in a supportive capacity during the festivals. They made available terrains for festival use; assisted with the cleaning and maintenance of festival terrains and pavements; rendered essential services such as electricity distribution, refuse removal and sanitation; helped to regulate traffic; assisted with the administration of the street closures; provided standby public safety and emergency services; executed fire safety checks; and enforced security. A joint operational centre was manned during the festivals in the host towns by representatives of the police, traffic and fire departments as well as contracted security firms and medical personnel. Both municipalities, in addition to the donations in kind, also donated a substantial annual amount to the festivals.

The city council of Potchefstroom was cooperative from the start. Aardklop, in addition to the substantial contribution in kind, was boosted at its inception with a city council sponsorship of R100 000 (Fouché 1998b: 7). A Memorandum of Understanding that was signed in 2003 by Aardklop's festival management, the North West University and the Potchefstroom city council underwrote the festival.

According to the Memorandum, the annual arts festival had to be "inclusive and developmental in nature" with the core activity that of presenting arts lovers with an arts festival that "touches people deeply by its boldness, discipline and inspiration". The city council and the University in

turn undertook to make every reasonable effort, as far as was financially and logistically feasible, "to establish and promote the appropriate infrastructure, logistics and expertise with an eye to the financial and commercial success and the sustainable growth of Aardklop". The city council donated a plot to the festival in 2004 to serve as possible office space.

The North West University, in addition to the donation of a cash amount, provided performance venues to Aardklop that they maintained and cleaned; hired additional traffic officers and security to administer parking on campus during festivals; and made student residences available to the festival management, which rented them out as accommodation during the festival. The offices of the festival newspaper, *Spat*, was based at and freely utilized the resources of the communication department of the university. Finally, they also conducted marketing research on behalf of the festival.

According to Theo Cloete, the director of marketing and communication at the North West University: "All three – the festival management, the city council and the university – benefit from Aardklop. You will be surprised at how well we get along. There is a good working relationship". There were references in the minutes of Aardklop meetings to the festival management's gratitude for the positive approach and practical assistance of the council and the university. It was documented in 2002 that the city council, in turn, was satisfied with the festival's community projects and the fact that Aardklop promoted job creation in Potchefstroom.

There were also examples of letters that were exchanged between the KKNK and the town council of Oudtshoorn in which they expressed gratitude on both sides. Liz Olivier, the marketing director of the festival at the time, for example thanked the town council in a letter for the 'delightful spirit of cooperation' (6 March 1998).

However, the working relationships between the respective festival managements and the host towns' municipalities were not always problem or conflict free. More than one respondent said that the relationship between the festival management of the KKNK and the municipality of Oudtshoorn had soured over the years. The fact that the municipality required the festival

management to pay for municipal facilities and services, which was not the case with Aardklop, was offered as testimony to this.

The executive mayoral committee and the strategic management of Oudtshoorn met with the festival's Board of Directors and the festival's senior management in October 2003 to improve cooperation. According to the meeting minutes, Karen Meiring said that there was a perception that the municipality did not properly support the KKNK. According to Meiring, the festival management wanted to approach interaction with the municipality, as a partner in the achievement of goals, positively. The meeting therefore marked a new relationship of cooperation in the light of the approaching tenth festival the following year. The meeting did not yield the desired results.

Correspondence between the executive major of the town and Karen Meiring, on behalf of the festival management, revealed that especially the issue of payment for facilities remained a point of contention. The festival management saw the refusal of the municipal council to exempt them from the rental fees normally charged for venues and municipal terrains as a sign that there was no true partnership between them. Karen Meiring complained to the press in 2005 about the lack of support from the local police, the inadequate infrastructure of the town and the fact that the KKNK virtually had to supply everything for the festival (Pienaar 2005: 6).

One of the council members in Oudtshoorn, Briaan Blaauw, denied that there were problems between the municipality and the festival: "The festival management pays a reduced tariff. The municipality cannot provide services for free, because we are a state entity. I want to stress that we welcome the festival. It should not leave the town".

The relationship between the festival management and the municipality in Potchefstroom has been similarly strained at times. Andrew Maphetle, the new mayor of Potchefstroom, insisted in 2006 that Aardklop should change its language and cultural orientation to become more inclusive. The municipality, at the time of writing, annually contributed R600 000, to the festival. Maphetle explained his comments as follows in a press interview:

> Potchefstroom is the country of Aardklop. When I said that the festival had to change, I did
> not mean that we had to do away with Afrikaans culture, I said it had to be extended to

include all cultures … the North West [province] is culturally diverse (*Beeld*, 19 August 2006).

Members of the council and the municipality felt that Aardklop was a good initiative, but that it was mainly (and wrongly) geared towards the Afrikaners. One respondent, who was closely involved with local economic development in Potchefstroom, remarked "nation-building is one of our key performance indicators in our municipality, so we cannot support something which does not bring about the integration of communities". The issue of inclusiveness will be addressed in a following chapter.

5.4.1.3 Festival logistics

During the months preceding the festivals, the combined planning efforts of festival managements, local municipal authorities and other festival workers were essential. The logistic departments at the festivals were responsible for, among other things: preparing and maintaining all the officially recognized performance venues, overseeing electricity provision, installing telephone lines, building craft stalls, hiring equipment, the transporting of equipment and artists, the movement of props, and putting up sponsors' banners and posters. As a result of the scale of the festivals, the logistical planning was resumed virtually the moment a festival ended. Annually the KKNK attracted about 1000 artists in more than 200 festival productions to Oudtshoorn (Saayman, Slabbert and Saayman 2006: 1). This amounted to about 900 scheduled performances over the period of a single festival. The Aardklop festival hosted 105 productions, 40 venues, 600 craft stalls and a support team of about 200 in 2005 (Lee 2005a: 15).

Karen Meiring, when managing the KKNK, drew on her experience of hosting huge projects at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown. According to her, the festival management felt that there was 'no need to redesign the wheel' when first hosting the KKNK. The KKNK management, in turn, was fully involved with the hosting of the first Aardklop, because they felt that hosting a festival in another part of the country would not impact negatively on the KKNK. The financial model of the Afrikaans-orientated festivals was later adjusted to make it a 'one festival concept' instead of dividing the festival into a main and a fringe festival as at the NAF. The booking system for tickets was also made more effective.

The fact that the KKNK and Aardklop were roughly modelled on the framework of the National Arts Festival (as the 'mother' of all South African arts festivals) made events management easier. Respondents nevertheless reported that the initial years of both festivals were characterized by the haphazard and trail-and-error way in which planning proceeded. The organizers of the early festivals were uncertain at first about how to proceed with the planning for an unknown number of potential festival-goers: [3]

> Because we did not know what to expect in 1995, we did not know how to plan. We did not know what the reaction would be, so we did not know what kind of infrastructure was needed. We did things in a hit or miss way (Danie Bester, first logistics manager KKNK).

> It used to be an act of faith. You rigged a venue with lights and sound and hoped that festival-goers would go there. You provisioned for stalls on Cachet Park [see Glossary] and held thumbs that people would support them (Corina, festival worker at Aardklop).

Danie Bester described the chaos that resulted in 1995 and 1996, the first two years of the KKNK: "There were not enough parking spaces, the ticket office did not work well … the systems jammed all the time. The people parked on the pavements. We had to soft talk the Traffic [Department] to not tow the cars away". A resident who was not directly involved in the organization of the festival remembered the problems encountered in the early years of Aardklop. These problems were similar to those experienced by the KKNK:

> I think it started in 1995, 1996 … I remember the traffic jams, the security at the flea market was insufficient, the restaurants and shops ran out of ice and fresh vegetables, the rubbish drums were permanently overflowing, you had to step carefully between the bottles lying around.

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[3] "In visitor management, demand is an uncertain science in which the visitor manager – however well prepared – has, in effect, to guess demand and define capacity. If demand falls below forecast, the event suffers from under utilization of resources. Potential revenues are lost if demand exceeds capacity" (Yeoman, Robertson and McMahon-Beattie 2004: 66).

5.4.1.4 The standardization of the festivals

The extensive pre-festival planning by the festival organizers was primarily aimed at maintaining public order and facilitating festival productions. The improvement of festival infrastructure within the two host towns went hand in hand with standardization, increased professionalism and predictability as festival workers gained experience with regard to staging the festivals. A guesthouse owner in Oudtshoorn, remembered how "one of those first years a group of artists who stayed here carried my furniture out of the house to use as props. Now they are trained"! (Lizelle, Oudtshoorn resident).

Most festival service providers described the development of the festivals in terms of a steep learning curve: "You have to learn from things that do not gel. Now we are well versed. Everything proceeds smoothly. Your problem areas have improved; your facilities and controls are in place and your thefts are less" (Jaco, venue manager at the KKNK and Aardklop). Traffic police at the KKNK, for example, learned that festivals have their own patterns. Wednesday, Friday and Saturday nights have been identified as party evenings at both arts festivals, with most of the alcohol-related incidents occurring 'after hours' – a term that took on a new meaning as officials, who were not allowed to take leave during the festival period, worked double shifts.

The planning period that preceded these festivals was extended as the festivals expanded year after year. There were specific timelines for every planning aspect, from marketing to the appointment of temporary personnel and fundraising. Over time festival planners took certain measures to save time and to ease their tasks. By the time that I conducted fieldwork in the host towns, venue capacities had been established, additional parking spaces had been measured out, semi-permanent roads for vehicles had been scraped and certain production venues were permanently upgraded. The power supply in many school halls that were utilized as production venues during these festivals was increased, air conditioning was installed in some, rickety chairs were replaced and most stages were provisioned with a permanent black background curtain.

Various service providers became more adept at planning and preparing for these festivals. This was illustrated by the following comment made by a teacher in Oudtshoorn. The private school where she taught was converted into an art gallery every year: "The challenge is to see how fast

you can pack the school away and transform it. Last year we packed the school away in seven days; this year we were even faster. It is absolute team work". Likewise a school principal in Potchefstroom boasted that nowadays they only commenced with the physical lay-out of a camping ground on the school's rugby fields a week before the festival, because they were "so organized".

Initially the camping ground functioned without any power points and only a few cold showers that had been installed for sporting events. Over the following years the municipality eventually increased the power supply to the sports field from single- to three-phase electricity, additional ablution blocks were built, hot water was installed and space for forty caravans was provided. At the time of fieldwork the school was in the process of fencing the area and installing additional lighting to discourage theft.

These capital investments were of a permanent nature. But many preparatory measures – all aimed at better maintaining order and accommodating the needs of festival-goers – directly preceded the festivals and had to be mapped onto existing infrastructure anew. When I visited one school's caravan park four days before the KKNK was due to commence, firewood had still to be collected, the cables and distribution boxes needed to be installed, the parking stands had yet to be measured and numbered with chalk, the refuse drums had to be organized and the terrain had to be cleaned – all of which required careful timing.

5.4.2 Liminality and different senses of time

The second condition of liminality was the existence of different senses of time within festivals; most markedly event time, the 'sense of now', and leisure time. Judging by the festival literature, a total absence of time pressures characterizes liminality, as opposed to the pressurized nature of everyday life.

The neglect of attention to the issue of time in the festival literature, similar to the neglect of planning, is largely due to the dominant depiction of festivals as spontaneous, carefree and rather disorderly events. This section shows that, whilst many festival-goers indeed describe their festival attendance as a leisure/leisurely experience, it is a misconception that there are no time pressures within festivals. And very few of the performances happen in a spontaneous fashion.

This is particularly true in the case of arts festivals such as the KKNK and Aardklop, where much of the entertainment is carefully planned and ordered.

5.4.2.1 Event time

Event time is a broad concept that encompasses the multiplicity of events that occur simultaneously during festivals, as well as the timing of these events. Despite a widespread belief that clock timing is anathema to spontaneity – Richard Sennett (1990: 180) for one believes that "rather than surprising discoveries, the clock seemed to offer its users only monotony" – meticulous spacing of events within the festivals, was essential for the events to succeed. Steve Brown and Jane James (2004: 61) explain the paradox between timing and spontaneity, within festivals, as follows:

> Allowing sufficient time for each and every programme element and programming tightly (to the second) creates a feeling of spontaneity and relaxed 'flow' to events. Understanding an audience's likely attention span and response to programme elements, and being able to programme to maximize their attention, is also critical.

This same paradox between timing and spontaneity applies to theatrical performances. Bill Mason (1992: 186) in relation to theatre argues: "being in control [through careful timing] does not mean blocking spontaneity, rather the reverse". According to Mason, "performers who are in command of their own timing and actions have a better foundation to depart from the pre-arranged scenario and ultimately it is this take-off that gives the event its life".

For festival workers 'being in command' translated into highly pressurized working environments. A former manageress of the arts and crafts market at the KKNK said: "I worked on times and regulations in terms of where, when and how stall vendors could unload their wares. It runs at an incredible speed. Everything happens at determined times". Theatre practitioners similarly referred to time pressures: "Time is always an issue. You never have enough time to rehearse your text or to build your set" (Carla).

As the years passed, festival organizers' monitoring of event time became increasingly complex. The slightest discrepancy in timing schedules or missing a single deadline could unleash a chain

of catastrophic events, as illustrated by the following quote from Klaas Visser, the transport coordinator at the Aardklop festival:

> I live on adrenalin. It is worse than a war. The number of activities that are squashed into a week is incredible. Here things run to the minute. There are so many things that need to happen simultaneously. If a family of four paid R380 for tickets for a production and they arrived a minute late they are not allowed to enter. So if we slip up, the whole arts festival is a failure.

5.4.2.2 A 'sense of now'[4]

A heightened awareness of the present – a 'sense of now' – was another prominent sense of time that featured in these festivals. The 'sense of now' helped to set the festivals apart as noteworthy happenings. It strengthened the sense that festival-goers had of living in the moment and of the fleetingness of festivals. According to Ros Derrett (2003: 33), the transience of festivals "suggests that it would be difficult to induce and sustain the same sense of occasion and excitement if such an event was to be held more frequently".

Festival-goers unintentionally expressed this heightened awareness of the present through the extensive use of phrases such as: 'it's electric and intense'; 'you go with the flow'; 'you get lost in it'; 'you forget about everything else'; 'you concentrate only on what is happening here'. A festival-goer at the KKNK, in a poetic flourish, exclaimed that "your whole day is dictated by the beat of the music, the variety of people … It is the here and the now and a brilliant moment".

5.4.2.3 Leisure time

The final prominent sense of time was leisure time. This sense of time will be discussed as part of the following section.

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[4] The phrase appears in the book *Conscience of the Eye* (Sennett 1990: 173). Richard Sennett has written extensively on the relation of social experiences to architecture, urban design and planning.

5.4.3 An alteration in everyday routines

An alteration in everyday routines – the third condition of *liminality* – was closely related to the different senses of time. During festivals everyday distinctions between diurnal and nocturnal time faded. The festivals boasted a vibrant nightlife, not comparable to that of the actual host towns. Businesses stayed open later, activities carried on throughout the night and festival-goers continued to roam the streets.

How did attending these festivals affect the routines of residents? For festival workers and festival-goers alike the different senses of time, particularly event time, signalled a marked alteration in their everyday routines. The previous section indicated how many festival workers experienced the festivals as fast-paced and stressful. For festival-goers, unlike festival workers, the change in routine involved a shift from busy, predictable and disciplined working schedules to so-called holiday or leisure time as indicated by the following quotes:

> Here I sleep in a dingy room, but you lower your living standards and take things easy. I have nothing to do. Usually I am a control freak. Nowhere do we live like this. We generally eat healthily. Here you stuff in all the things that you usually avoid – first a pancake, then an ice cream, then a sausage roll ... and you plan nothing! (Kristie, KKNK-festival-goer whom I found before noon sitting barefoot and cross-legged on the pavement, sipping red wine from a plastic cup).

> My life has stopped. I am on pause. My life back home is very hectic. I don't have weekends. I don't know the cut-off time. 'Nine-to-five' to me is just theory. Every day I drive about 50 kilometres to see clients. I leave the house at six and I only return at eight in the evenings. Coming here has slowed me down (Ben, festival-goer at the KKNK).

> From the moment that you arrive here, within three hours, you are at ease and relaxed and for us, who do not camp regularly, it is a big change. You are removed from the television, your home and all the other normal things. When it is not festival, I have to go home at this time of the day and do the laundry and the cleaning, but now I am here relaxing and enjoying myself. And it is not even December (Chantel, festival-goer at Aardklop).

During the festival everything is permissible. You can be drunk or sleep the whole day. There is no moral code; it is one big psychedelic bubble. I think festival is a time when you shop with no guilt; everything is so cheap, especially in the last days when the vendors are trying to get rid of their stock (Mareli, festival-goer at Aardklop).

Resident and non-resident festival-goers evidently bracketed the festivals off as a period where minor and major transgressions of various established routines and behaviour were permissible. Respondents in fact often expressed amazement at the behaviour of fellow festival-goers: "It is astounding what people would do in the spirit of the festival. It would never happen in normal life. You see things that you do not normally see. Everything is allowable in the spirit of the festival" [Ida Schmidt, Oudtshoorn resident]. Although everything was not allowable, as the section on the reworking of rules as a condition of liminality will illustrate, it certainly seemed to be so at times; the illusion was there.

Importantly, returning to the quotes, not all festival-goers felt relaxed, nor did they necessarily feel relaxed all the time. For those festival-goers for whom attending festival productions was a priority, the alteration of routines was often grounded not so much in a slackening of pace, but in a different kind of 'being on the go' as they rushed from one performance to the next. A respondent, who attended these festivals primarily to see productions, remarked: "When you are working you are stuck in a rut so you don't find time for going to the theatre". The festivals, in contrast to the everyday, thus created an occasion for theatregoing, in contrast to the 'everyday'. Festivals simultaneously eased the process by offering a variety of productions at generally reasonable prices.

The artistically inclined festival-goers who could afford it in fact often fitted in the maximum number of shows, exhibitions and/or other events during the festival period, thereby partially cordoning the festival experience off from the everyday as an exceptional artistic binge. Many carefully pre-planned their festival experience so that they would not 'waste time' during the festival.

These festivals also affected the everyday routines of locals. Many put in leave at work and/or rented their houses or rooms out to festival-goers, while they camped in their own backyards.

139

Indeed almost everything that made the residents felt as if they belonged in the host towns changed/disappeared during festivals. A respondent from Oudtshoorn remarked: "You actually feel lost. You find yourself trying to go and see a show at a venue, not knowing where it is. It feels ridiculous to look at the [festival] map and discover that it is actually in a road that you drive down often".

Because the changes that the host towns underwent during these festivals were so extensive, it was decided at an Aardklop 2003 report-back meeting that the festival management needed to inform residents and businesses in a timely fashion about all festival-related activities. Similarly the KKNK introduced the *KKNK & Kie*, a monthly newsletter, for the first time in 2004 to inform the Oudtshoorn community about the festival's activities.

As the residents described the process of becoming strangers in their own towns, many likened their festival experience to 'travelling whilst at home', because the town itself became a different place. One middle-aged respondent, ordinarily a subdued person by her own account, explained why she had drunkenly danced on tables in a pub at the previous year's festival:

> It is the festival spirit that makes you do it. During that time you are not an *Oudtshoorniet*
> [resident of Oudtshoorn]. You are a different person. You are relaxed. The town
> undergoes such a metamorphosis that you have to change with it. You can't carry on in
> your old way (Katryn).

Almost all of the taken-for-granted aspects of residents' daily existence, such as ease of movement, accessible parking and absence of queues (at the supermarket, post office, bank and so forth) were temporarily overwhelmed. The transformation of certain main streets into pedestrian zones, according to residents, represented the most disruptive intervention in the everyday traffic flows of towns. At both festivals vehicles were barred from certain streets. Security officials patrolled these entrances on a 24-hour basis.

Residents who stayed in town for the period of the festivals were thus forced temporarily to adjust their everyday routines. They visited areas that they did not normally visit, whilst avoiding areas that they frequented outside of festival times. High Street, the main shopping street that ran parallel to Baron van Reede Street in Oudtshoorn, for example, was associated

with routine activities such as grocery shopping and banking, but fell outside of the core festival area of the KKNK and many residents therefore avoided it. Comments such as "I don't pay my accounts during arts festival" and "my time is all festival time" were commonplace.

Whereas some residents embraced these festivals, others did not involve themselves in the festival activities, chose to avoid all congested areas, and even felt resentful towards festival-goers. These two extreme viewpoints are illustrated by the two contrasting quotes below:

> Our group of friends is seldom in town. But during the festival you are in town twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week for fear of missing something. You only go home to quickly change your clothes. You don't eat at home and you only sleep there if there is space (Luni, Oudtshoorn resident).

> We don't like it because our town is taken over by strangers. Our parents hire out their homes and we have to stay in tents and the town becomes dirty. It is too busy. We can't do the things that we usually do like *kuier* at 'Friedls' [a popular restaurant]. Usually we are the only table, now [during festival] we have to be put on a waiting list. I don't have a home (Deon, Oudtshoorn resident).

The festivals also changed the social interactions of residents. The influx of strangers from outside the host towns during festivals meant that residents obtained a degree of anonymity. A number of resident respondents told me that people left their doors open during festivals and that they made more time to socialize with others.

5.4.4 Rediscovery and re-appropriation of private and public space

The fourth condition of liminality was the rediscovery and re-appropriation of space, public and private. The festival organizers needed spaces for the staging of the festival activities and they needed to prepare for the influx of people to the host towns during these festivals. Space was therefore encoded with different overlaying meanings compared to the ways in which it was usually conceived, thereby altering its utilization.

The two festivals' arts and craft markets, for example, were located on open plains and sporting fields, which assumed a mainly social significance during the festivals. Many residents had no idea of how these 'white elephant' areas were ordinarily used, given that they only frequented them during festival time.

At the KKNK a prime example of spatial re-discovery was the CP Nel museum; a hallmark sandstone building in Baron van Reede Street. It was declared a national monument in 1981 and dated from the second ostrich-feather boom period.[5] As I looked up to the museum's prominent clock-tower on a clear day in March 2004, shortly after having arrived in Oudtshoorn for the first time, I noticed a number of curious steel plates protruding from the base of the tower. These were the remnants of the 1998 KKNK when a giant ostrich egg was positioned inside the tower. I struggled to associate the remaining evidence of frivolity with the dignified building, but once inside the museum a museum official, who later became a key informant, elaborated on the central position that I knew the museum occupied in the festival activities. As she showed me tenacious fatty stains against one of the museum walls, she told me that chicken bones left lying in the corridor during the previous year's festival caused them. She said, showing me the washbasins – awkwardly positioned against a museum wall and now permanently kept in the building for the purpose of the festival – "We have done things in this museum that should never be done in a museum".

Indeed the museum, which was usually used for research and to host formal functions, became a central gathering point during festival time, when the library and archive sections were transformed into a kitchen; the open square in the museum centre became a coffee shop; certain locales were used for festival productions; one hall was converted into a temporary bookshop; and an open-air stage, seating and a temporary restaurant were established in an open area in front of the museum. The museum worker stressed that their routine was completely disrupted by the festival, but "it is a friendly siege and it is temporary".

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[5] The school was built in 1906. It originally functioned as a school for boys but became co-ed in 1962. The building became a museum after a new school was built in 1967. The second ostrich boom lasted roughly from 1910 to 1914.

5.4.4.1Venue mapping and the conversion of production venues

Venue mapping and the conversion of production venues presented prime examples of the rediscovery and re-appropriation of space as a condition of liminality. The festival organizers had from the outset to identify suitable sites that could function as production venues during these festivals, in addition to the few official performance venues. Venues that were found suitable were made to resemble standard theatres as closely as possible.

According to informant accounts, this time-consuming process of 'venue mapping', as festival organizers called it, entailed measuring the length, breadth and height of the halls (including the measurements of the stage, if the venue had one); assessing the lighting quality; determining whether the electricity in a venue was single- or three-phase; taking note of the floor's angle; listing dressing-room facilities; considering whether temporary scaffolding could be accommodated; establishing whether the venue had a liquor license; counting the number of available chairs and so forth.

Festival organizers at both festivals over the years introduced measures to simplify venue mapping and to limit damage to venues.[6] The festival managements annually took out basic short-term insurance and group life insurance. Although venues were insured against claims by the public and/or festival personnel, the insurance of venues remained the responsibility of the owner(s) of the premises. Some venues were acknowledged over time as being particularly appropriate for certain genres as a result of the attempts to match different performance genres (cabaret, poetry, classical music and so forth) with suitable venues. The interaction between the theatre product and the venue in which it is put on is widely recognized in theatrical circles (see Hauptfleisch 1997). Peter Brook (1968: 26) warns "the wrong place can conjure from actors their coarsest work".

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[6] The new procedures that the KKNK for example introduced in 1998 included the signing of written contracts with all lessees, the appointment of theatre managers, the compilation of inventories, the introduction of procedures for the declaration of damage, the carrying out of inspections and greater attention to the minimum requirements of production venues in terms of size, lighting and acoustics.

The festivals organizers also had to take the customary functioning of these venues into account, in addition to performance requirements and safety regulations.[7] This had to be done in order to avoid controversy. *Elke boemelaar se droom* (Every tramp's dream), an X-rated production at the KKNK, for example, had to be moved to another venue in 1999 after members of the Dutch Reformed Church West, in which it was staged, objected to the content. I was told about similar controversies that erupted at the early Aardklop festivals in Potchefstroom:

> Two years ago there was a production that revamped the whole church. They did not obey the rules of the church. It is difficult to specify the exact rules, but if you are a guest in someone's house, there are certain rules. We are an official festival venue, but every venue has its own style and the production should adapt to the building … you can't force it into a jacket that does not fit (sexton at a Dutch Reformed Church in Potchefstroom).

The respondent, who refused to identify the production, recalled the burning of candles inside the church and the use of foul language during the performance as two rules that were breached. This example effectively shows that the rediscovery and re-appropriation of space as a result of festivals are seldom uncontested, as the silence in the literature about festivals' use of space seems to suggest.

Western theatrical conventions guided the conversion of venues, which started roughly a month before the opening of the festivals.[8] Most of these production spaces were indoors.[9] The technical teams were contracted from outside of the host towns. They started by 'blacking out' a venue (where the whole venue is darkened). Thereafter they installed the required lighting and

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[7] At the time of writing, the Occupational Safety Act (No. 85 of 1993) regulated safety in South African theatres. Safety regulations that pertained to these makeshift theatres included careful maintenance and inspection of safety appliances, the institution of procedures in case of fire, continuous training of all personnel, effective access control, the display of safety signs and the enforcement of non-smoking legislation.

[8] Every year, however, both festivals boast productions that challenge Western theatrical conventions. Some productions, for example, were staged outside or in alternative settings.

[9] Unlike in Europe, where many festivals are organized exclusively for street theatre (Mason 1992: 9), street theatre generally represented a limited item on festival programmes in these two festivals. Street theatre, despite the name, is designed to be performed outdoors, but is not necessarily limited to streets.

sound according to a technical rider – a document that provides all the technical specifications for a single production. If necessary, stages were adjusted or built, and seating arranged according to a fixed floor plan.

Also central to creating performance spaces for festivals were the provisioning of a backstage area and the presence of a cyclorama – a plain cloth or reflecting screen which closes off the back of a stage.[10] According to a technical manager at one of these festivals:

> There is nothing quite as black as a theatre and that is how it should be. It is a blank space and you create a world inside that. But that is the difficult part of a festival. You are not dealing with a theatre. You have to make a blank canvas that is going to suit five to six different shows.

The practise of maximizing space and minimizing costs by running several shows in a single venue – probably the most distinctive aspect of venue mapping – was only developed in the early 1980s at the NAF, but was instituted from the start at the two Afrikaans-orientated festivals. The dominant theatrical style at festivals adjusted to conditions dictated by festivals. Typically, festival productions were of a short duration (an hour or less), they had small casts, mobile sets to reduce transport costs and uncomplicated technical requirements.

5.4.4.2 Experiencing these performance spaces

The mapping, conversion and experience of festival venues have remained a controversial issue at both festivals, despite improvements. How did theatre practitioners, visual artists, critics and other festival workers, on the one hand, and festival-goers, on the other, experience these temporary performance spaces? Performance reviews routinely referred to the unsuitable performance and exhibition venues (see Basson 2001b; Bester 2004a; Griebenow 2001b), unpolished technical appearance of productions (Beyers 2002a; Strydom 2005a), the hard chairs (Meiring 2002a) and defective air conditioning (Kleynhans 2001; La Grange 2001; Ahlers 2002; Ohlson and Young 2002).

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[10] The KKNK's logistics department, for example, incurred enormous expenses every year to hang black curtains over existing, often grey, curtains that were needed for professional lighting, so they eventually requested the town council to make an investment in the future of the festival by gradually replacing them with black ones.

Criticism also focused on poor acoustics (Tredoux 2005); the inappropriate size of the venue (Gouws 2002); late starts (Du Preez 2002; Strydom 2005a), inadequate props such as pianos (Bester 2001; Lee 2005b); sound or lighting problems (Breytenbach 1998; Lessing 1999b; Joubert 2001; Du Toit 2000); and the inaccessibility of venues for disabled people (Fouché 1998c; Basson 2004; Botha 2004a).

The majority of these 'transgressions' of theatre, which contributed to arts festivals sometimes being associated with substandard productions, were directly related to the time pressure exerted by the frenetic turnover of sets in between successive performances. While the theatre practitioners responded in varying ways to the demands posed by these makeshift theatres, all agreed that the arts festivals presented them with uniquely challenging production conditions:

> The noise pollution at a festival is mind blowing. The artists have to compete with chairs that scrape against a school floor, poor sound, student technicians … you can't focus on performing because you wonder where the FOH [Front of House] personnel are, the sounding board has been struck by lighting, there are only three lights and you have just a few minutes to set up! (Wikus, KKNK).

> All my expectations of what a stage should be were thrown out of the window! I had to use the same entrance as the audience to reach the stage. A lot of light crept through. There was a kitchen right next door to the stage and no wings (Barry, KKNK).

> The problem is you compete against practical things such as poor acoustics and limited stage space. You have to be able to isolate yourself and become quiet. If there is light shining through, it does not qualify as a blackout. In a formal theatre you rehearse in the venue for a week. Here you rehearse for five hours in which you have to unpack the set, do a cut to cue, set up the lights and the sound etc. It is actually ridiculous (Francois Toerien, Aardklop).

Occasionally the critics lauded organizers for pairing a show with a suitable venue (see Bester 2004b) or stated that the venue added to the atmosphere or the experience of the production. Critics also commented on the effective utilization of space. Apparently spaces like school and community halls, usually defined as dull and ugly, sometimes managed to generate what one

respondent described as a "unique energy". As Brook (1968: 73) notes "a beautiful place may never bring about explosion of life, while a haphazard hall may be a tremendous meeting place". A few festival workers in fact claimed that the minimal technical means forced artists to be maximally creative.

5.4.5 Liminality and the activation of spaces

> …for De Certeau space is never ontologically given. It is discursively mapped and corporeally practised … it is not a space until it is practised by people's active occupation, their movements through and around it (Clifford 1997: 54).

Another condition of liminality, which followed from the re-discovery and re-appropriation of spaces, was the actual activation of spaces within the festivals. Liminality within these contexts was predicated on the physical presence and proximity of people. While the media and the internet might be increasingly constitutive of festival events, as some claim (see Crain 1992; Guss 2000), even to the degree that physical presence is said to no longer be a prerequisite for experiencing a festival, this was not the case with the KKNK and Aardklop.

Festival-goers had to attend these festivals in order to fully experience them. And it was their presence that made festival spaces, such as performance venues, seem active and inviting. Numerous festival organizers stressed that there was an essential link between the presence of people and the creation of an atmosphere of conviviality. According to Ida Schmidt, a founding member of the KKNK, certain events in the early years of the festival were deliberately hosted in smallish venues so that these venues would appear fuller and hence more congenial.

According to theatre practitioners, festival-goers' presence within production venues was essential for productions to be successful. According to Mason (1992: 179), "the relationship between performer and audience is the essence of any theatrical event and more than any other factor determines its nature". Likewise Peter Brook (1968: 142), an established theatre practitioner, emphatically maintains that "the only thing that all forms of theatre have in common is the need for an audience. This is more than a truism: in the theatre the audience completes the steps of creation".

Just as the work of actors attained meaning when spectators were present; the visual art venues also needed public support. Visual artists, by exhibiting at these festivals, were afforded direct feedback from festival-goers and fellow artists; feedback that those whom I interviewed felt was crucial for the development of their craft. Theatre practitioners similarly referred to a symbiotic relationship between themselves and audiences. A comedian at the NAF told me:

> Freedom of expression only happens when one has an audience. I give the same in my performance whether it is one person or a hundred, but a smaller audience tends to be more reserved and doesn't want to laugh out loud in case someone sees them, but with a bigger audience laughter is infectious (Clinton).

According to Peter Brook (1968: 24), the presence of an audience and the resulting interaction between performers and the audience could transform a 'deadly event' into one that is alive: "actors, cheered by the warmth of the house, gave their best performance, which in turn earned them an ovation. The theatre, that had been a draughty morgue the night before, now hummed with the chatter and buzz of success".

Conversely, theatre practitioners told me about performers who decided to throw in the towel after failing to attract significant audiences. Sold-out shows were often considered to be the best recommendation for a production by the general public. Production reviews as a matter of course contained references to the number of people that attended. Reviewers at both festivals sometimes lamented the very small audiences at deserving productions (see Strydom 2005). Martina Smit (2002: 7), a reviewer for *Krit*, for example, wrote of a word craft and poetry item at the KKNK: "It is a pity that there were only three full rows in the audience. [It] is definitely worth packed halls".

After I exited a 45-minute long show at the KKNK (2004) in which the performers performed vigorously, despite the fact that there were only four spectators, a fellow festival-goer exasperatedly commented: "Being only one of a few in an audience puts you under pressure. You can't yawn; you can't sleep; you can't look around". The technician who was sitting at a corner commented dryly: "We have a bit of a spectator problem. It is more fulfilling to see an audience and to see people enjoying what is being shown. You need a warm and responsive

audience; you need to feel their presence". The very experience of space could thus be diminished by an absence of people.

5.4.6 The reworking of rules

The final condition of liminality was the reworking of rules. The festival literature generally maintains that during festivals all rules are abandoned as people freely participate in festivities. According to Victor Turner (1974: 13-14), "in this gap between ordered worlds [in other words during liminality] almost anything may happen". The social order is temporarily inverted and reinforced once the festivities have passed (see Brandes 1988; Cohen 1993; Abrahams 1987). Very few studies engage critically with the issues of social order, rules, liminality and the interrelationship between them. Rob Shields's (1991: 89) study is one of the few exceptions. The author, in his analysis of the Brighton seaside resort, warns against the tendency to make a fetish of the supposed chaos of liminal zones by indicating how activities become routine, but under different regimes or codes of social interaction.

This section shows how, notwithstanding popular belief and the widespread depiction of festivals as unregulated and disorderly, certain normative demands and rules continue to apply during festivals. Some official and unofficial rules, as confirmed by my respondents, were indeed relaxed during these festivals. But it is the reworking of rules within the context of arts festivals rather than the complete abandonment of rules that helped to create a slightly different and continually adapted 'festival order'. Certain rules had to be reworked and several new rules instituted because, as one respondent put it, "what works well during ordinary times does not necessarily work during festivals".

Since the festivals' inception their organizers have worked closely with municipal authorities to maintain law and order. Extra police recruits and security staff were commissioned to patrol the streets and venues; the fire brigades checked the craft market stalls and venues to establish whether they complied with the prescribed safety standards; and the traffic department, in addition to regulating the provincial roads, administered the street closures and assisted with the removal of illegal stalls.

Security and visible policing has become an increasing concern over the years, both at the KKNK (see Neaves 2001; Naudé 2001; Van Jaarsveld 2002; October 2004) and Aardklop (see Pretorius 1998; Mostert 2002; Botha and Roos 2003; Du Preez 2003) as a result of the growth of the two festivals. Joint operational sectors were established.[11] Festival managements also started to hire independent security companies to help ensure the safety of festivals-goers, to patrol strategic points and to keep watch over activities on the festival terrains.

But the maintenance and reinforcement of social order was not only reflected in the policing of public space, but also within production venues. One of the ground rules of theatre management is that everything must proceed in an orderly, disciplined and systematic way (De Bruyn 2004: 8). The official production venues were therefore also strictly regulated by standard theatre etiquette – no latecomers were allowed to enter once a production had started, except during rare breaks; venues were strictly non-smoking; the consumption of beverages or food was prohibited inside venues; no recordings or photographs could be taken during performances; digital watches and cellular phones had to be switched off. Also, parents were encouraged to leave their children at the respective childcare services if they wanted to see a show to prevent the children from interrupting shows.

According to Andy Merrifield (1996: 68), policing is necessary to ensure the smooth running of public spaces but it should not "stifle disorder and uncertainty, nor squash spontaneity". Similarly Charles Landry (2000: 114) stresses that "city governments need to regulate economic and social life to ensure peaceful, civilized coexistence of often divergent and competing interests and to protect and enhance the common good", immediately adding that the capacity to break established rules and procedures is essential to allow for continuous learning.

Festival organizers at the KKNK and Aardklop strove to find a balance between maintaining order, on the one hand, and allowing spontaneity, on the other. Eduard Rosenstrauch, the artistic coordinator of the KKNK in 2004, inadvertently expressed this tension between order and

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[11] These operated all hours and were jointly managed by the police, army, emergency services, the local and provincial traffic departments, members of security companies and the festival management.

freedom when he told me "you can't cut all the ropes; there has to be a measure of control, but the arts cannot be contained".

I witnessed many debates over the implementation of rules in the attempts to find the right balance, given the absence of fail-proof formulas. Similar to the festival organizers who initially did not know what to expect, municipal authorities in the host towns admitted that they were 'caught with their pants down' when the festivals started, particularly when it came to law enforcement and the maintenance of order. A respondent at the KKNK remarked: "We broke all the rules. There were no rules. We developed and broke them, as the festival grew bigger".

However, it was not simply a case of rules being added and/or more strictly enforced. Annually during festivals those explicit and implicit rules that governed the everyday utilization of public space and social interaction in the host towns were adapted or transgressed. Certain rules were also re-instituted when their relaxation proved too problematic.[12] I spoke to various law enforcers and festival organizers, most of whom wished to remain anonymous, about the issue of rules. Their approaches to rulemaking (and breaking) corresponded:

> There is a sense that it is festival and we don't want to spoil their fun. The police check that crime does not take place, but they won't arrest someone on the streets who is too jolly. It is not a written agreement; it is rather an unspoken understanding [between the festival committee and the authorities] that you don't want to chase festival-goers away (Danie Bester, former logistics manager KKNK festival).

> When the festival comes, I throw everything overboard. It should not get out of hand, but for me it is about people coming here to enjoy themselves. It is unnecessary to institute many additional rules and regulations. That angers people (police officer, Aardklop festival).

> You want the visitors to have a friendly Aardklop experience. We would rather not handle

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[12] The KKNK, for example, re-instituted strict parking measures and took firmer control over drinking in public in 2002, when both these matters seemed to get out of hand (see Van Jaarsveld 2002; Ohlson and Davis 2002c). Karen Meiring, however, complained to the press in 2005 that the police and traffic authorities treated unruly festival-goers at the KKNK too leniently (Pienaar 2005a).

speed traps during that time. Instead you would give courtesy warnings if visitors do not wear seatbelts and emphasize that they are welcome at Aardklop. Discipline should be maintained so that you do not lose control. But there is more tolerance so that they do not go home with a bittersweet taste in the mouth because of fines that they received (Pieter Labuschagne, Chairman of the Technical Committee of Aardklop).

5.5 Liminality reversed

Living theatre … is always a self-destructive art, and it is always written on the wind. A professional theatre assembles different people every night. A performance gets set and usually has to be repeated – and repeated as well and as accurately as possible – but from the day it is set something invisible is beginning to die (Brook 1968: 18).

Liminality, by definition, lacks permanence or durability. It is a temporary state of things; an 'in between' world. Both festivals, even when in full swing, were never without a shadow of undoing that inevitably had to follow. The evanescence of these festivals was powerfully evidenced when I walked the streets in between the 'retiring' and 'reawakening' of these festivals.

Although sharp distinctions between day and night faded during festivals, there was a time in the early hours of the morning when the streets were virtually deserted. During these hours the pavements and streets were littered with the remains of the day's celebrations; printed material such as festival guides, maps and newspapers that quickly lost their significance outside of the temporal frame (the sense of now) for which they had been created had been abandoned in many spots.

Giep van Zyl, the manager of Aardklop at the time, purposely emphasized this temporality: "Look, at the beginning of the festival [the first festival in 1998] I put it to the city council that we are like a circus. We present the festival for five days and then we pack up and leave". During the cleaning-up processes that I observed afterwards all traces of the arts festivals in the towns were swiftly removed; indeed the swiftness of the clean-up process was a key festival performance indicator. Ironically, for me, departure from the field in this case simply meant staying put, because the towns were changing around me.

Only a few of the 'newly discovered' festival spaces remained in existence once the festivals had passed. The majority were (again) 'killed'; at least until the next year's festival.[13] Festival signposting was removed, makeshift theatres reverted to their original form and in some instances (dis)use, temporary eating establishments closed down and craft markets disappeared, leaving behind only dusty, open grounds. A notable exception was the guesthouses in the host towns that opened up shortly before the festivals were due to commence and often remained open afterwards. Roads were reopened.

The presences that activated these spaces so that they could fully make the intended transition – the same presence that necessitated the maintenance of order, the reworking of rules that generally gave impetus to the events management process – became an absence. The 'sense of now' became a fleeting sense of the past as the host towns reverted to their original forms in a reverse process that was shorter in duration and starker, but no easier to observe. There was a brief interlude when those who remained behind were conscious of the reversion:

> It is dead quiet the week after the festival. It is like those ghost towns in the country and western movies … And then everything goes back to normal. Actually it is such a shock to your system; it is like the quiet after the storm. And you do miss it, but you are also glad that it is over, because you again have the town to yourself (Kerry, Oudtshoorn resident).

5.6 Conclusion

The festival literature, as outlined in the literature review, tends to characterize festivals in terms of the inversion of the 'everyday', the absence of law and order, the idealization of freedom, festival-goers' numerous transgressions, the animation of spaces. While such a characterization is useful in describing idealized properties of festivals and the necessary illusions that accompany theatre, art and celebration, the trade-off has been a loss of nuances. The 'everyday' is held as self-evident counterpoint against which the festival action and all inversions, including that of temporal and spatial routines, are juxtaposed.

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[13] Interestingly to 'kill' in a theatrical context means to turn off lights or sound effects. It can also mean to remove something from a set such as a prop.

This chapter analysed the spatial and social construction of the two arts festivals over time. It illustrated (based on careful observations and interviews conducted over an extended period of time) how a number of factors interacted to create a condition that is known as liminality in the literature. During festivals people generally found themselves in settings that differed markedly from their everyday settings; they moved about differently; they approached time differently; their routines changed; they used space in innovative and unconventional ways; and alternative rules came into play. They also engaged with each other differently – a key aspect of liminality that will be addressed in the following chapters.

The festivals indeed induced a sense of liberation from social constraints amongst festival-goers generally. But, as this chapter has shown, only certain behavioural transgressions were permitted and the control of social interaction was such that some behaviour was prohibited or highly constrained. While the festival literature emphasizes the unstructured movement of festival-goers between areas, the two arts festivals continued to operate in spatially controlled environments.

Festival spaces were clearly and carefully demarcated and appropriated as performances venues, visual exhibition areas, and food and handcraft courts. There were, for example, stipulated trading hours at the arts and craft markets; only approved products and no sub-tenders were allowed, and crafters could not exceed their allocated spaces. Moreover, orderly use of public space required extensive pre-festival planning such as the provisioning of adequate public amenities (water, electricity, parking, toilets) and additional policing forces. Many of the controls were instituted as a result of the festivals' unexpected growth and festival-goers' own security fears. There were also several tacit rules of participation in the arts festivals.

The literature's neglect of how spatial transformations actually come about before and during festivals (and the possible implications for the festivals' host towns once the festivals have passed) is partly due to the erroneous and persistent notion that 'anything is allowed' during festival time, despite evidence to the contrary. Numerous municipal bylaws, for one, need to be taken into account when hosting any large-scale public event.

When spatial transformations are remarked upon in the festival literature (see Da Matta 1984 and Turner 1987), they seem to occur almost naturally and require little effort. The studies lack temporal depth, implying that year after year, festival after festival, the same spaces are transformed in exactly the same way. They make no provision for the accumulation of experience by those involved with the hosting of festivals, nor do they consider the implications of festival growth or decline for the transformation of spaces. They are also ignorant of the commercialisation and (ironically) standardisation of festival offerings and processes.

This chapter's historical analysis of the creation of the two festivals has shown that it was not only a case of spaces becoming the 'reverse' of their daily selves. Rather the manifold spatial transformations that were executed over successive festivals were best described as a trial-and-error learning process both for festival workers and for festival-goers. Festival entrepreneurs, for example, gradually discovered what worked well when opening and running a temporary restaurant, while theatre practitioners needed to learn how to adapt to the unique demands posed by makeshift theatres. Festival-goers, on the other hand, identified their favourite hang-outs and some preferred to avoid overcrowded areas.

Moreover, spatial transformations, no matter how fleeting, were rarely uncontested, a consideration that is absent from the festival literature and popular depictions of festivals. Many transformations took considerable adjusting to by locals, who were often inconvenienced by them. The festival literature also fails to take into account the escalation of spaces' 'use value' as various established business owners, entrepreneurs, theatre practitioners and exhibitors clamoured to be noticed by festival-goers. This chapter, in summary, indicated how liminality was brought about within the context of the two arts festivals. Given this background, the next chapter analyzes the perceived potential of liminality for facilitating social transformation.

CHAPTER 6

Social transformation as envisioned in the development of the arts festivals

6.1 Extract from field notes
Aardklop 2004 – Day 7

07: 10. I walk past numerous houses, where colourful tents have been pitched on lawns, on my way to *Die Akker* (a popular restaurant in Thom Street). All the sitting-room furniture in one backyard has been arranged in a half circle outside. A stack of empty beer cans in the centre is the only reminder of the previous day's frivolity.

07: 30. At *Die Akker* a queue already lines the pavement. I choose to sit at an open bar counter overlooking the street. At the table opposite me, a young man, evidently attending his first Aardklop, loudly complains to his three companions about feeling tired, while remedying his hangover with an oily breakfast. One of the middle-aged women, seated at the table next to theirs overhears the stranger's comments and teasingly responds: "You have to become festival-educated, *boetie* (little brother/pal)".

Interested, I enquire whether I can join the woman, whose name turned out to be Elise, and her company at their table. They immediately agree. A customer at another table overhears my request and asks to join our table as well, because he is interested in the ensuing conversation. Elise tells me that she and her four sisters leave their husbands at home every year to attend the festival for four days of "family bonding". Having attended five consecutive festivals, they consider themselves festival experts. They all confidently order 'the usual' by way of emphasis, without glancing at the menus in front of them. According to Elise being 'festival educated' entails "knowing that you have to get up early. You learn about the best seats; you identify your favourite craft stalls; you know which shady areas to avoid; how to juggle time … you have to fit in all your shows, but also have time for *kuier*" (socializing).

11: 40. I am at the festival transport station. The taxi drivers shout out the name of the venue or area that they are heading to as the minibus taxis pull into the station: 'Mooirivier'; 'Kyknet'; 'City Hall' and 'Elgro'. Festival-goers nervously jostle past each other in their efforts to secure a

seat. I get into a taxi that is heading to the Snowflake Building, an exhibition venue that is somewhat removed from the festival core. Sitting in front, next to Stanley, the driver, I can watch as the minibus is filled to capacity. But the passengers still insist that two more people are allowed in.

Festival-goers chat and laugh as we pull away. Afrikaans *sokkie* (dance) music blasts through the speakers. A festival-goer insists that Stanley should turn the music even louder; "it is not a taxi if it doesn't have music". Ironically at that precise moment we pass another one of the permanent *Stilte, kerk* (Silence, church) signs displayed throughout the host town. No one seems to notice it. Behind me two festival-goers, strangers to each other, start debating the relative merits of a production that they both have seen.

6.2 Introduction

These scenes, this time drawn from the Aardklop festival in Potchefstroom, are intended to give the reader another glimpse of what experiencing these arts festivals entailed. Every scene depicted above is of direct relevance to this chapter. The scenes illustrate how festival-goers became 'educated' over time with regard to managing their festival experience(s). They illustrate how festival-goers traversed these festivals, often using alternative means of transport compared to that of the 'everyday'. They illustrate how festival-goers who were strangers to each other intermingled in public and how people were more attuned to those around them during the festivals.

While festivals are volatile events that may yield unpredictable outcomes, recurring festivals are also relatively repetitive and predictable, even to the extent of becoming mundane. Yet these 'betwixt and between' periods are characterized by an underlying feeling of potential – a potential to effect change. Liminality is indeed indicated in the literature as a period during which extraordinary and long-lasting social transformations may occur that negate the period's temporality. Key role players at both festivals continually stressed that the festivals, in all respects, always aimed to be continuously *vernuwend* (innovative) and *grensverskuiwend* (crossing new boundaries, specifically in the arts).

Festival studies that foreground the conservative function of festivals, as indicated in the literature review, under-emphasize festivals' potentiality. But fear of this potential, whether subversive or not, is the main reason why festivals are often strictly controlled events, as the previous chapter illustrated, hedged around with numerous prescriptions and prohibitions.

The festivals' organizers were well aware of this potential. Interpreting social transformation as always constituting resistance against an established social order, as many festival studies do, is clearly too simplistic. Festivals are not necessarily antagonistic to state power. The arts festivals, as indicated by their mission and vision statements, were not directed against an established order or a so-called dominant, official or elite culture, nor were they politically inspired. From the outset, as stated before, they were meant to be removed from the political sphere in the sense of not being affiliated to a political party or adhering to a specific political outlook. Frankly, politics, in the words of a festival planner, conspired against the festival spirit.

This does not mean that politics did not come into play.[1] The role of politics within a festival was illustrated over the years at the National Arts Festival. The festival in Grahamstown, particularly during the volatile 1980s, became known for the plethora of protest plays that were annually staged during the festival. The country's transition to a democracy, however, called for new, innovative forms of theatre and the exploration of contemporary themes:

> The discovery and implementation of the theatre as a weapon – which has been the contribution of the past decade and a half – may now have to make way for the concept of theatre as a tool for mediation, and as an agent for coping with radical change (Hauptfleish 1990: 6)

The Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals, similar to the NAF which adhered to artistic freedom and licence, provided theatre practitioners, visual artists and other festival role players with a platform to critically address issues of the day and perhaps even to criticize or support the national government. Comedians such as Pieter-Dirk Uys, Mark Banks, Marion Holm and Lindie Stander, for example, delivered satirical, social commentary on the state of the nation in

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[1] A number of authors (Brandes 1984; Guss 2000; Remedi 2004) in fact argue that cultural activity is inseparable from politics.

post-apartheid South Africa at successive arts festivals. But the festivals, at least in their official capacities, were not vehicles for political action or ideological resistance. This was evident in the selection and composition of the annual festival programmes.[2]

The KKNK had an independent arts cabinet that consisted of fifteen members who each specialized in and dealt with different artistic genres. Production applications were rated in order of preference and presented to the programme team. While the arts cabinet considered productions' merit mainly from an artistic point of view, they also took a range of additional criteria, such as scale, quality and novelty, into account when making their selection. The programme team also took budgetary constraints into account when they compiled the final festival programme.

Similarly different panels, consisting largely of external experts, selected festival productions for Aardklop. Although there was no official selection policy, selection criteria such as innovation, quality and marketability were taken into account. The programme committee made a programme recommendation to the Board of Directors, who decided on the final programme. Productions that addressed political themes or touched on sensitive issues such as religion or sex were selected on the basis of artistic merit.

While the festival managements shied away from overt politics, there was an awareness (sometimes underlying, sometimes expressed) of the festivals' potential to transform society. Both festivals from the outset embraced the notion of transformation, at least in principle. The arts festivals' Boards of Directors, in making social transformation an explicit part of their vision, aligned the festivals with national policy. Karen Meiring was conscious of transformation as part of a national agenda and felt that it was therefore 'a given'. Economic transformation, within the contexts of the festivals, was secondary to social transformation.

Festival organizers and prominent role players in the host towns were not alone in believing that the arts festivals could gradually contribute towards the transformation of society and nation-

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[2] See Kitshoff's dissertation (2006) for a more detailed discussion of the selection process at the KKNK.

building.[3] Festival sponsors pledged their support for a specific arts festival in the festival guides by referring to the festival or the arts as a 'bridge builder' in a simultaneously 'multicultural' and 'divided' society. The Afrikaans press (see Viljoen 2003a) and academics also latched onto the idea. According to Keith Bain and Temple Hauptfleisch (2001: 21):

> … performing arts practitioners have a responsibility to themselves as well as their audiences. This responsibility involves entertaining, enlightening and *transforming* [my emphasis] a society that is battling to heal and sorely needs democracy to succeed.

This study, as stated in the introduction, examines the role that the arts festivals played (and was imagined to play) in facilitating social transformation in the country. This chapter therefore begins to assess the festivals' potential to effect social transformation by looking at two possible means of social transformation within the context of the arts festivals: social transformation through the experience of the arts, and social transformation through the use of public space. The use of public space is examined on the basis of three different aspects: festival-goers' habit of walking during festivals, festival transport and festival accommodation.

The final section takes a look at the facilitation of social *communitas* – "the many shifting, informal and spontaneous forms of affiliation and affective loyalty that may be generated by … transient and ephemeral activity such as a celebration" (Bristol 1985: 36). The notion of *communitas* is central to the study, because it provides a means of engaging with issues of transformation and social identity that played out within the context of the two arts festivals. The notion helps to highlight the experiences of actual festival-goers: how did they respond to a particular festival production; how did they experience walking around at the festivals; how did they interact with surrounding others. Throughout the study connections are drawn between the experiences of festival-goers and broader social developments within the country.

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[3] Nation-building can be defined as the social process of transforming a divided society into a community of equal opportunities within which individuals enjoy human rights in harmony with other people (Vorster 2005: 2). Redressing injustices of the past, providing basic services and amenities to citizens and alleviating poverty should be part of any nation-building effort.

Communitas implies togetherness, mutual understanding and unanimity. Judging by the festival literature, there is nothing uncertain about a sense of *communitas* – it is either present or absent – and the festival literature generally assumes it to be present during festivals. But was *communitas* so self-evident? Did all festival-goers experience a sense of *communitas* or experience it in the same way? What circumstances were conducive to the facilitation of a sense of *communitas*? These questions are addressed in this and the following chapters.

6.3 Social transformation and the arts

There were many examples over the years of productions and exhibitions at the arts festivals that explicitly addressed transformation in the country, as well as related issues such as forgiveness, reconciliation and the regaining of a sense of national pride. The KKNK festival guide in 1996, for example, described *Valley Song*, written and directed by the playwright Athol Fugard, as a 'metaphor for the new South Africa – a theatre piece with hope'. A play by Pieter Fourie, *Naelstring* (Umbilical cord), which featured at Aardklop in 2001, was said to highlight the 'pain in transformation' in the festival guide. Another production that featured at Aardklop in 2003, *Ekhaya Ngingumhambi*, addressed the prejudices that people have as a result of the differences between them. The festival guide of that year described it as:

> utilising a language that combines the contemporary dance idiom with the creative
> expressions of the performers, the work attempts to aid in understanding such prejudices
> and learning to overcome them.

The annual lecture series at the KKNK and Aardklop, however, possibly provided the most vivid examples of the arts festivals entering into 'direct conversation' with the theme of the country's transformation with featured lectures such as 'At the end of the rainbow: where does the South African nation stand?' (KKNK 2003) and 'Can white and black build a future together?' (Aardklop 2003).

But festival productions and exhibitions with overt political meaning and import were relatively rare at the arts festivals, which were rather marked by variety.[4] The theme of transformation was generally addressed subtly – in the seemingly casual references to all festival-goers as 'South African citizens' in the festival guides; in arts exhibitions that featured the work of artists from both the old and the new dispensations, and in the diverse engagement onstage with contemporary social realities such as squatters, Aids, affirmative action and crime.

The belief in the arts festivals' power of social transformation partially derived from the purported 'transformative' nature of the arts (see Mason 1992; Kershaw 1994; Gilder 2001). There were two sides to 'transformation' as conceived within the context of the arts at these festivals: the fostering of social relationships between people and the yielding of new insights.

Peter Brook (1986: 150) believes certain live performances can modify the relations between individuals so that "when they leave the room, they are not quite the same as when they entered … some participants are temporarily, slightly, more alive". The experience of watching a show or viewing an exhibition together thus provided a basis upon which social transformation could occur. According to Yvette Hutchison (1996: 39), the kind of theatre that takes place at festivals in spaces such as school halls, conference rooms and in open-air venues offers "a more communal experience than that which takes place in formal theatre buildings".

According to Gilder (2001: 5), "it is the potential of the arts … to rip into an individual's emotional and intellectual core, that is best able to teach us how to live with, and perhaps, ultimately to love each other". The rather idealistic liberal-humanist view proclaims that the arts put people in touch with universal values. The arts supposedly transcend any regime; they do not have to be constrained by ideology. The arts were said to embody many of the ideals that South Africa as a new democracy should strive for: freedom of expression, tolerance and a spirit of inquiry and outreach across language, racial and cultural barriers.

The notion of social transformation, as related to the arts, is tied up with a metaphorical idea of movement and images of motion. Tim Prentki (2001: 119) writes about the "ways in which

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[4] The variety that the arts festivals offered is also remarked upon by Yvette Hutchison (2004: 367): "the extraordinary energy of post-apartheid South African theatre is most evident in the variety of performances, styles and topics at the many festivals".

theatre, across a whole range of contexts, has the power [to move] its participants and audiences from one position, one attitude, one pattern of behaviours, one consciousness, to another". Karen Meiring, the former managing director of the KKNK, phrased it as follows: "The arts do not work within traditional categories; they free the person from his or her limits … they get the stagnant on the move".

Festival organizers wanted to provoke festival-goers to be adventurous so that they would be willing to attend productions, including those featuring unknown theatre practitioners, and to explore new directions in the arts. Festival-goers, in the spirit of discovery, ideally needed to embrace the uncommon, the element of uncertainty, and the risk-taking which sometimes accompanied production attendance, as constitutive of the festival 'magic'. Marguerite Robinson, the programme manager of Aardklop, for example, told the press festival-goers should be more daring in attending productions (Johnson 2005: 1).

Their exposure to the arts could 'open their eyes' to the world and yield novel ideas and insights. It could purportedly also make them more tolerant of others and appreciative of cultural differences. Neil van Heerden, commenting on behalf of Aardklop, stressed this point: "The festival is not only about jubilation. It can also be an opportunity for introspection: to think about where we are; what we are and what is happening around us" (Jackson 1998: 11). Van Heerden, in another press interview, said that the arts were an important piece of equipment to help people to deal with the transformation process and to make it their own (Nieuwoudt 2000a: 17). The festival organizers intended to bring about a lasting transformation in how festival-goers viewed the world and each other. Giep van Zyl, the former festival manager of Aardklop, said straightforwardly: "The festival intends that one must leave as a different person to the one that arrived" (Lessing 1999c: 4).

Ronnie Samaai's account of seeing a production – *tussenINbetween* – at the KKNK in 2004 provided a vivid illustration of how social transformation could possibly be effected through the arts.[5] The official festival guide described the production, in which Lize Beekman and Gloria Bosman appeared, as a "meeting between two award-winning creative artists, two voices and

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[5] Ronnie Samaai is a well-known and respected violinist and music teacher. At the time he was serving as the Director of the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra, the Cape Town Ballet Society, the South African Music Educational Trust and the International Classical Music Festival.

musical styles, two backgrounds, two women". Ronnie, who served on the *Kanna* panel as one of the judges for classical music was, to use his own words, 'totally carried away' by the experience:[6]

> We went to see a guitar production in the Civic Centre. The two beautiful people sang a lullaby in a combination of Afrikaans and Sotho … they married the two [languages] and the fusion was so perfect. I could see afterwards that some of the audience members had cried … Music knows no boundaries; you know you are dealing with the artist, not with 'white' or 'black' … I think music is more effective than sport to bring people together, because sport is aggressive but in music the sharp edges are dulled. There was a vibe between the two artists; music was the cement that bound them together.

6.4 Social transformation and public space

The power of these festivals to effect social transformation was not only attributed to the arts themselves. The public nature of these festivals, in conjunction with the arts, provided another means of possibly facilitating social transformation during these arts festivals through the use of public space.

Theoretically a public space is a space that anyone, regardless of identity and status differentials, has unrestricted access to, without being excluded. An important requisite of a public space is accessibility so that users can come and go as they please and linger as long as they like. Free speech rules in public space (Reinecke 2006: 2-3). There is also a sense that one needs public spaces to cultivate togetherness between people.

During the 1990s when the festivals were established, there were not yet that many places where South Africans from completely different backgrounds could encounter each other. When the KKNK was established, according to Rosie Schoeman, "schools were still minimally integrated, the churches were still divided and society was not at all integrated. There was no place where

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[6] The Kanna awards were given to the most outstanding productions and artists at each KKNK festival. The 19 categories included the best presentation, most popular production, best direction, most inspiring artist and best upcoming artist. The adjudication was managed by a *Kanna* panel consisting of directors, members of the Arts cabinet of the KKNK, journalists, experts from the entertainment world and experienced festival-goers.

people could come together". The arts festivals as public events could in principle enable social intermingling between people from diverse social backgrounds.

Public spaces are idealized in the literature as spaces where random, yet satisfying, social encounters can occur. "The glory of modern public space is that it can pull together all the different sorts of people who are there. It can both compel and empower all these people to see each other, not through a glass darkly but face to face" (Berman 1986: 482). According to Mikhail Bhaktin (1981: 243), within the public realm "the spatial and temporal paths of the most varied people – representatives of all social classes, estates, religions, nationalities, ages [may] intersect … people who are normally kept separate by social and spatial distance can accidentally meet".

Public spaces were more actively used during festival time. The street closures during festivals played an important role in this regard. Street closures helped to create a relaxed atmosphere by preventing motorists from speeding through the towns, temporarily giving the pedestrians absolute right of way. As a result festival time was characterized by a heightened awareness of one's environment. Festival-goers tended to be more socially attuned to one another. One respondent at the KKNK said: "People are willing to greet you; they don't just walk without looking to their left or right". Similarly an Aardklop respondent remarked:

> Arts festival time is different. You walk down the street and everyone is more leisurely.
> They stop to chat and everyone is in high spirits. If you make a joke everyone in the
> vicinity, not only the people in your group, laughs.

Whilst walking, festival-goers encountered fellow festival-goers on the streets or at production venues and entertainment enclaves. The meetings could be planned, unplanned, informal or accidental when festival-goers were forced to share a table in a crowded restaurant, when asking for directions, when waiting for a production to commence or when discussing its merits afterwards. Many theatre practitioners in fact relied almost solely on word-of-mouth marketing at festivals, because quality festival material was supposed to get festival-goers talking. Participant observation confirmed that festival-goers often discussed festival productions with surrounding others, including strangers.

Potentially, the arts festivals could also introduce and expose the largely middle class festival-goers to the 'unfamiliar' *leefwêrelde* (life worlds) of fellow South Africans, an issue that will be addressed in the following chapter. The public realm in which the arts festivals were all set is after all intimately "bound up with the ideas of discovery, of expanding one's horizons, of the unknown, of surprise, of experiment and of adventure" (Landry 2000: 119). Clearly the festivals' potential to effect social transformation hinged on two key aspects: whether festival-goers were exposed to the arts (by attending festival productions) and how they utilized public space. Festival-goers needed to be 'educated' in this regard, as the following sections show.

6.5 'Educating' festival-goers

Festival attendance, like all liminal episodes, may have didactic consequences. Stanley Brandes (1988: 6) calls festivals "informal agencies of instruction", because they instruct participants in cultural norms and values by enacting them. Adrienne L Kaeppler (1987), writing about the South Pacific Festival of Arts, shows how the festival is intended to teach festival participants about their own "ethnic roots" and those of their neighbours. According to Gustavo Remedi (2004: 141), carnival has an educative mission, for example, in advancing human rights within Uruguay, but it is a mission that is constantly undermined by the contradictory elements characteristic of carnival performances.

There were a number of different aspects to 'education' as conceived within the context of the arts festivals. Festival organizers firstly told me how they saw it as an 'enormous educational task' to make people aware of the scope and (economic) importance of the respective arts festivals to the host towns and regions. Some also mentioned that the festivals had to 'educate' people with regard to the fact that Afrikaans does not only belong to one sector (the 'white' section) of the population.

However, their main educational aim was to motivate festival-goers to support the arts at these festivals.[7] A number of festival organizers and theatre practitioners told me, somewhat

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[7] One of the discussion topics of the lecture series at Aardklop in 2000, for example, was 'Where are the arts in South Africa headed?' Panel members were in an agreement that the arts festivals should educate people about the arts (Nieuwoudt 2000b: 15).

patronizingly, that people had to be 'trained' to appreciate the arts and that a *kunskultuur* (arts culture) had to be cultivated amongst festival-goers.

Festival organizers of both the KKNK and Aardklop hoped that the festivals would help festival-goers to cultivate the habit of attending festival productions. They openly expressed the wish that the open-air music stages that were managed by the festival sponsors would eventually motivate festival-goers to see a paid production. Giep van Zyl on behalf of the festival management told me that "it is part of the educative task. We want the festival-goers to become used to a higher standard, because they might later on move to a theatre". Similarly a member of KKNK's festival management told me:

> We envision the movement from free stage to light entertainment to something more
> challenging … the festivals are educating people in theatre-going. Here and there you see
> that process, but it is still early days.

These arts festivals as a matter of course attracted festival-goers who were avid supporters of the arts. But they also drew festival-goers who did not normally go to the theatre and who had limited or no previous exposure to the arts. According to festival managements, these 'theatre novices' needed to be subtly educated into attending festival productions and reaching production venues on time. They also needed to be 'taught' about arts appreciation and about the principles of theatre etiquette.

Production reviews at both festivals sometimes referred to festival-goers' failure to adhere to standard theatre etiquette (see Van Eeden 2002a; Prins 2002). Displays of poor theatre etiquette included: rhythmically clapping hands in between items, noisily walking out of venues, failing to switch off cell phones, eating during shows and loudly conducting conversations with surrounding others. Theatre practitioners moreover remarked to me that audience members failed to pick up certain things if they did not know 'theatre language'.[8] Within the context of the arts festivals, and from the perspective of the festival organizers and theatre practitioners, 'cultural capital' amounted to an interest in and knowledge about the arts.

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[8] Patrice Pavis (2003: 255), in a guide on the analysis of all aspects of performance, states that a spectator must know the principal rules of theatre language, in other words, a spectator must be able to interpret what is happening on stage.

The issue of how peoples' tastes and leisure-time choices tend to correlate with their social and class positions is followed-up in the next chapter, where the distinction between 'high culture' and 'popular culture' is introduced. There is a relatively clear-cut and fixed division within the arts festivals between those festival-goers who were attracted to the official artistic productions (generally the more affluent festival-goers) and those who preferred (or could only afford) the cheaper forms of entertainment. The next chapter argues that the division between high and popular within the context of the arts festivals indicated broader divisions of class between festival-goers; these were everyday divisions that the arts festivals, despite claims in the literature to the contrary, did not dissolve.

The festival productions themselves in some instances also had an educative function. Vincent Abrahams told me that he believed that the productions at the KKNK could increase festival-goers' level of knowledge and lead to wisdom and the advancement of spiritual growth. Neil van Heerden, a former chair of Aardklop's Board of Directors, commented to the press: "We are arrogant enough to think that the productions and discourses [at the festival] meet our aim of educating and informing festival-goers" (Nieuwoudt 2000a: 2).

But festival-goers also had to be 'trained' with regard to other practical aspects of attending festivals. "People have to be trained to know where to buy a festival guide and where they can pick up their tickets", according to a member of the festival management at Aardklop. "They should be informed about the shuttle service; the location of the craft market; the payment for public toilets.[9] There are certain things that they don't know". This didactic approach to public space is not novel. Kevin Lynch (1981: 185) is a firm believer in the "education of users to use places properly". Lynch suggests:

> There must be common understandings about group territory and personal space, education in proper spatial behaviour, a record of spatial rights … everyone should know who controls a place and how to act properly there (Lynch 1981: 214).

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[9] Mobile public toilets were introduced at Aardklop's Cachet Park, which was at that stage known as Clover Park, in 2003. A hullabaloo erupted over the R2 that festival-goers were required to pay for the convenience (Roos 2003: 3).

Rayn Smit, the logistics manager at the KKNK, for example, told me about the festival organizers' plans to convert certain streets in Oudtshoorn into one-ways in order to create unidirectional flow of traffic to limit traffic jams. We reminisced about the problems that resulted the previous year (2004), when people drove against the traffic and disregarded the 'No entry' signs. Rayn Smit responded:

> We still don't have the manpower to manage it, but we are trying to *educate* people. By now everyone knows it is an arts festival and over that period of nine days there will be certain problems that arise and that have to be managed, so we try to get people used to the fact that the street will again become a one-way. They are already used to the traffic jams and that they can't park where they want to.

Festival organizers at both the KKNK and Aardklop continued the process of gradually 'training' the public in how to utilize public space during festival time, despite numerous encountered difficulties. One of these difficulties was ensuring that festival-goers arrived on time for festival productions.

Signage was used at both festivals to make orientation easier. Events management principles prescribe that maps and information updates should be readily accessible. Secure parking, pathways, access to amenities like automatic teller machines, phones, first-aid and emergency services, water, food and beverage outlets, shade, seating, exits and roads should be known to all those on the festival or event site, as well as outside agencies connected with security and emergency services (Derrett 2003: 46).

Venues were marked with prominent signboards and, where possible, located within walking distance from each other in order to facilitate the movement of festival-goers. Classification systems were instituted to enable festival-goers to choose between productions according to their nature and content.[10] Information points were furnished over time on the three festival terrains,

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[10] The KKNK, for example, indicated whether the official festival production or exhibition contained references to drugs, violence, nudity, sex, politics, etc. Particularly at visual arts venues, gradations were gradually more prominently displayed in addition to a warning that unaccompanied under-aged children would not be allowed to enter.

but the most important aids to navigation remained the festival guides.[11] These offered both novice and experienced festival-goers comprehensive information on the scope of the festival, the timing and placing of events and venues, the booking system for productions and the location of essential services and amenities. They also informed festival-goers about the no-latecomer policy at festival productions and cautioned them to take the length and location of productions into account when making bookings to allow enough time to move between performances.

Guiding and opening up 'new' behaviours, without coercion (Lynch 1981: 164) was difficult, given the limited control that organizers had over festival-goers' movements. Festival organizers complained about the festival-goers' display of a 'herd mentality'. The fact that the majority tended to congregate in the festival centres added to the general congestion.

6.5.1 Walking at festivals

Festival organizers, in addition to creating a motivation amongst festival-goers to attend festival productions and keeping them informed, attempted to regulate the festival-goers' movements within the respective host towns. The festival-goers had to be able to move around easily in order to take advantage of the festivals' multiplicity of choices. Festival-goers at both festivals were therefore advised to leave their cars at designated parking zones, created specially for the purpose. This was necessitated by the influx of people that stretched the towns' infrastructure to its maximum capacity and caused a 'traffic jam all day', as the head of provincial traffic in Oudtshoorn put it:[12]

> Our client is the festival-goer. We want to keep him [sic] happy at all times so that he will
> return next year. It is important that the serious festival-goer, who plans his daily routine,
> has enough time to move from one venue to the next … that is why it is so important that

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[11] M-Web became the official information provider in 2002 at the KKNK. The company built four information towers across the main festival terrain and erected an electronic news board on the corner of Baron van Reede and Voortrekker Streets. Similarly, Aardklop provided an extensive information service during the festival by positioning information kiosks and a giant electronic information board on Cachet Park and distributing free maps.

[12] For example, in 2003 the provincial traffic department in Oudtshoorn stated that there were 10 005 cars on the opening day of the KKNK, compared to the 4008 cars counted on the 13th of December – traditionally the busiest day because it is the start of the annual summer holidays.

they must be able to walk quickly or use an alternative means of transport.

Many festival-goers indeed preferred to walk where they wanted to be, even though they were often unaccustomed to walking at home. Walking during festivals presented a different means of encountering public space compared to that of the everyday. Kristie, a respondent at the KKNK, said half disbelievingly:

> We walk all the time and we have not even started our car since we've arrived here. At home you drive even if it is only half a block to the café. There are few places where women can walk around at twelve o' clock in the evening and still feel safe [like at the KKNK].

While the extensive security presence at the festivals made the streets safer, streets that appeared 'full of life' also motivated festival-goers to walk and to follow different routes. This movement in turn combated dispiritedness and increased the streets' safety.[13] According to Charles Landry (2000: 73), "taming the car [does] not make places dull, slow-paced and uninspiring … [in] cities that encourage walking, the chance encounter and face to face contact foster creativity, wealth and well-being".[14] Walking sensitised festival-goers to their surroundings and fostered feelings of familiarity:

> Here I am just walking. It's fabulous. It is different and it gives you a whole other energy. It is that feeling of connecting and it gives you time that you did not have before … time to think and reflect and look around. If you drive you don't pay attention to your surroundings, but through walking you are almost forced to look at everything and just absorb it (Kai-Anne, festival-goer at KKNK).

> You can't walk in the Cape, because it does not feel safe. Last night we walked from the production to where we stay and it was clean and safe and it was not chaotic. You have

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[13] According to Jane Jacobs (1993: 35), when people use streets and sidewalks on a continuous basis, the activity generated in itself presents an attraction to others, thereby inducing people to watch animated side-walk and street activity, which in turn gives rise to a safer environment.

[14] Research (see Smith, Whitelegg and Williams 1998) has shown that there is a correlation between traffic levels, social interaction in streets and attachment to place. The slowing down of traffic levels provided more opportunity for connectivity between people and chance encounters through walking and cycling.

space here. The whole feeling is that you can move around freely. Twelve o' clock in the evening it feels as if it is only six, seven o' clock (Nelson, festival-goer at Aardklop).

Festival-goers at both festivals were nevertheless urged to lock up their property, to avoid carrying large amounts of cash, to hold valuable items tightly, to take care when approached by beggars and not to walk alone at night time (see Naudé 2001; Ohlson and Davis 2002a). Indeed, many did not perceive the festivals as being uniformly safe. Many festival-goers were more attracted to (fenced) areas with security and oversight, such as the respective arts and craft markets, while they avoided overcrowded areas, dimly lit streets, quiet alleys and places where people just seemed to 'hang around' purposelessly.

6.5.2 Festival transport

Festival-goers, apart from walking, had the option of using public transport during festivals. According to Reinecke (2006: 3), "public transport remains a space where people can come into contact and engage with people that are maybe different from them". Festival-goers had the option of utilizing specially initiated shuttle services to transport them to festival venues across the host towns and, in some cases, to other destinations of choice. The shuttle service at the KKNK at the time of fieldwork consisted of twenty marked minibuses chosen from the group of 83 that were grouped under the five main taxi associations – Swartberg, Unity, Protea, Norwichs and Uncedu (Botha 2004b: 151). The service covered five different routes, including the Bridgeton area. Similarly the Aardklop shuttle service consisted of a team of twelve minibus taxis, recruited from the Greater Potchefstroom Taxi Association as part of the festival's efforts to plough back money into 'the community'.

Ordinarily these taxis were the distinctive mode of transport for working-class people in these regions.[15] Although a majority of commuters in South Africa are reliant on them, minibus taxis have a poor public image. They are often not roadworthy and/or overloaded, while minibus taxi drivers are notorious for their disregard of road safety rules. During festivals the majority of festival-goers were 'white' and taxi drivers were keenly aware of this anomaly:

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[15] From Oudtshoorn's taxi rank located at the Union Plain, for example, 123 vehicles transported an average of 2500 passengers a day, of whom only a small percentage were 'white'.

During the festival you are mostly transporting whites so you have to address those questions and fears that festival-goers have regarding taxis. I also discovered that white people are looking for that exposure. We play Afrikaans music for them, because they say it is not a taxi if it is not playing music. And some insist that we should overload the vehicle. We squash five people in on the backseat whereas families are used to having a kombi for themselves with even the dog having a seat of its own. It's an experience for them (Louis, chairman of the KKNK taxi committee).

The educational process at the respective arts festivals evidently stretched further than encouraging festival-goers to attend productions and the casual familiarization of festival-goers with the festivals' layouts.

6.5.3 Festival accommodation

Both the KKNK and Aardklop had accommodation offices that handled the hiring out of private residences, hostels and temporary camping terrains during the festivals. Bookings for formal guesthouses and hotels were referred to the towns' respective tourism offices.

As I was sitting with Winnifred, the manager of the KKNK's client services department, shortly before the festival in March 2005, the phone rang. It was one of the town's residents wanting to register her home as festival accommodation on the condition that no 'non-whites', as she called them, stayed in her house. I listened as Winnifred tried to explain to her that the KKNK was very strict in its enforcement of 'color-blindness'.[16] After the conversation, she exasperatedly commented to me:

I will accept this woman's house, but I have to educate her in the process by making her aware that nowadays we don't have such preferences. So I utilize such opportunities to raise awareness amongst people … that these perceptions should be removed.

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[16] The executive committee of the KKNK decided in 1998 that no houses may be accepted for hiring out during the festivals if the house owner set any preconditions about tenants' race (9 February 1998).

173

It was impossible to determine how common or exceptional this kind of racist behaviour was, apart from relying on the statistics of the festival offices and the experience of local accommodation providers. A media furore erupted in 2002 when a 'coloured' man was refused accommodation by the 'white' homeowners and alternative housing had to be found for him. The KKNK festival office responded by saying that such people would be removed from their database (Basson 2002: 3).

Initially accommodation in Oudtshoorn was only centrally located, but the enormous need for accommodation and the inequity of the accommodation booking system compelled the committee to make houses and school residences available on their data basis across town. School hostels in the 'coloured' area of Bridgton were, for example, introduced as accommodation for festival-goers in 2002. Potential clients were informed about the quality of the accommodation, which was standardized according to a grading system, but they were no longer informed about the precise location of the accommodation in town.

I coincidentally encountered two 'white' female festival-goers who were disgruntled about being placed by the festival office in what they called *die lokasie* (the location) in whispered tones, despite the fact that both areas were located on the outskirts of Coleridge-View, close to the town centre. Their greatest concern, in addition to minor gripes such as barking dogs and the lack of warm water, was the lack of security. Both were adamant that they would stay somewhere else the following year.

Hazel Jonker, vice-chairman of the executive tourism council of Oudtshoorn, had long been involved with providing festival accommodation. According to her "more festival-goers are coming to our areas [the neighbourhoods formerly classified as 'coloured' under apartheid legislation].[17] They only stayed on the outskirts at first but now they are getting used to it". There were theatre practitioners in particular who insisted on staying in Bridgton year after year. Another resident from Bridgton, who was a resort manager in the area, also felt that the festival-

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[17] Hazel's Homestays in Oudtshoorn consisted of a number of family homes in Bridgton, and a few in Bongolethu, where tourists could stop over. Hazel told the media in 2001 how some of her guests cancelled shortly before they were due to arrive or simply failed to show up, and how sceptical some people were about staying in the so-called coloured areas.

goers had gotten used to Bridgton and had realized that it is not a 'danger zone'. According to him, the festival-goers at the resort felt safe and enjoyed staying there. However, other resident respondents from these former 'coloured' areas felt that the process of transformation was moving too slowly:

> The festival is not yet how we would like it to be. It must be an asset to all the members of the larger Oudtshoorn. They must not only have accommodation in specific areas in the town. There are people that would also like to see our culture, how we function and what we do. We would like the festival to occur in the whole of Oudtshoorn (Danie, Oudtshoorn resident).

Aardklop lagged even further behind in terms of providing accommodation across the host town. The accommodation office at Aardklop had 250 houses, 450 camping spots and 500 beds registered on their accommodation list in 2003, all centrally located in town. But it was envisioned that from 2004 onwards accommodation would also be available in Promosa and Ikageng (Viljoen 2003b: 3). Despite these intentions, an employee at the Aardklop accommodation office told me at the time of fieldwork:

> There is accommodation available in Ikageng and Promosa, but no one wants to stay there. Up to now we could not find a single person that wants to stay there over all these years. Even the black artists do not want to stay there. Those two residential areas are quite far from the festival terrain. And people are worried about their safety.

There have also been reports that people were refused accommodation in the town because of their skin colour (Viljoen 2002). The Executive Mayor of Potchefstroom, Councillor Raymond Mampe, sent an Aardklop commission of enquiry to Oudtshoorn in 2004 to investigate how the festival management of the KKNK handled the issue of accommodation. Their feedback report stated that the KKNK festival organizers have managed to secure several homes from the 'black' areas and those were rented to 'white' families. Moreover, a part of what they called 'crowd pullers' in the report – shows that attract more audience members – "was taken to venues in the black area and this enforced integration" (Part of Council Agenda 2004-05-26: 4).

The commission therefore recommended that "more shows that attract bigger audiences should be taken to the Ikageng, Mohadin and Promosa areas [in Potchefstroom] and that more 'white' families attending the festival should be encouraged to rent houses in the black areas for the duration of the festival".

Just looking at the experience of the National Arts Festival makes one doubtful whether festival-goers' movements could be manipulated in such a way. Despite the National Arts Festival's two-decade-long head start, the centralization of accommodation still presented a formidable challenge in terms of involving the broader community. It was reported in 1994 that race still seemed to be an issue for some, because ten 'white' hosts refused to have 'black' people stay with them (Taylor 1994). The township accommodation agency, which had only recently been established, experienced disappointingly low bookings in 1998 as it tried for the first time to bring 'festinos' into the heart of the township (Lamani 1998: 1).

The Rooms Project, spearheaded by Eastern Cape Premier, Nosimo Balindlela, in 2004 also turned out to be a fiasco. Homeowners living in the poorer areas of Grahamstown – Joza, Tantyi and Hlanani – were trained by the African Global Skills Academy in hospitality management. They were supposed to rent out their homes to officials from the Eastern Cape Arts and Culture Department, about 500 performers commissioned by the Department and interested members of the public for the period of the festival. However, the majority of residents involved never housed any guests and it was reported that "more than 50 disgruntled bed and breakfast owners who were expecting host guests during the festival were considering taking legal action against government after the visitors failed to arrive" (Haya and Ndangam 2004: 3).[18]

6.6 The facilitation of social *communitas* through the arts and public space

The arts festivals' potential for social transformation, as stated earlier, was intimately tied to whether festival-goers attended festival productions and to how they utilized public space.

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[18] The project has since been replaced by the 'KwameMakana' homestay project also launched by Eastern Cape premier, Nosimo Balindlela, in 2005. "About 140 Eastern Cape participants in the 'Wordfest' stayed at these newly established B&Bs for about R150 a night for which the South African government paid" (Hills 2005: 3).

During festivals, most festival-goers walked where they wanted to be and/or utilized public transport to reach production venues. This immediately put them into contact with surrounding others. But did the arts festivals succeed in facilitating social *communitas*?

It is important to note that to all the festival-goers visiting the host towns, the festivals were places of transit, not of residence, a place where the social encounters with others were often fleeting, arbitrary (Clifford 1997: 17). Even permanent residents experienced their hometowns as somewhat foreign, as stated before, because Oudtshoorn and Potchefstroom were utterly transformed during these festivals.

Festival-goers' social encounters took on a visibly different form as a result. Respondents, regardless of whether they were resident in the host towns or not, told me how they had brief, animated conversations with strangers during the festivals and 'then they were gone'. While almost all of my respondents attended the festivals with significant others (family members or friends), many commented on a mutual feeling of trust and well-being between festival-goers that extended beyond that bred by familiarity, feelings that were at least partly fostered by the 'common ground' of publicly gathering in the respective host towns and attending these festivals. A few expressed a specific delight in the intermingling between 'races' and said that they found the geniality 'refreshing'.

For many 'feeling the vibe' meant finding pleasure in unstrained interactions – the way 'everyone' chatted to everyone; the 'amazing goodwill' amongst festival-goers; the tendency to greet anonymous others wherever one went. Festival-goers seemed to have a need to freely and publicly associate and socialize with surrounding others. Respondents repeatedly commented on the *geselligheid* (conviviality) of the festivals. Festival time gave festival-goers a freedom that their everyday interactions lacked, according to their own accounts. This was confirmed by participant observation. I witnessed, for example, at the makeshift camping terrains how festival-goers invited passers-by to join them at their camp fires; campers easily exchanged household items with fellow campers and trusted them to keep an eye on their property.

Generally festival-goers also displayed a greater tolerance towards surrounding others, even to the extent of welcoming excessive physical closeness compared to that of the 'everyday': "Your

personal space shrinks from a metre to a ruler's width. But the interactions are mind-blowing. You are aware of yourself being part of this sea of other bodies and you just have to give yourself up to it" (Jaap, Oudtshoorn resident). Another KKNK respondent whom I chatted to shortly before her production was due to commence remarked:

> Many of the venues are desperately uncomfortable. You know there are those plastic chairs
> and no cushions. Sometimes [at open-air venues] you are sitting on a haystack with no
> backrest and someone's knee is in your back and you are pushing against someone
> with your knees but that is part of that intimacy with others (Gillian, Oudtshoorn resident).

A significant number of festival-goers derived satisfaction not only from 'being there' but from belonging to a festival fraternity that supported the arts.[19] Interviews revealed that festival-goers who were inclined to attend official festival productions had roughly the same concerns. They all wanted to reach a production venue on time; they all wanted to see the 'talked about' productions and to avoid the poorly rehearsed ones; they all wanted to secure good seats. Some respondents, moreover, revered the arts as a universal language that transcended linguistic barriers. The arts were thus, in some instances, the glue that figuratively bound the festival-goers together and made 'everyone' interested in them feel as if they 'belonged'. Eddie, an avid festival-goer whom I met at Aardklop, commented:

> We are all [referring to the audience at a production venue] speaking the same language.
> Because of the same love for the arts we are caught in the moment ['the sense of now']. We
> are all here with one purpose. It is making us understand each other. We speak the same
> language [we all have an appreciation of the arts] so we feel the warmth and we
> acknowledge the same things.

The perceived chemistry between fellow festival-goers as audience members could thus be attributed, at least in part, to the concentrated focus on the arts. Production attendance, which plunged festival-goers together into a relatively confined production space, offered them a peculiar camaraderie. The audience members' physical proximity (they leaned closer to each

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[19] The potential of the performing and visual arts to facilitate togetherness has been acknowledged in performance literature (see Brook 1968; Mason 1992).

other to speak in whispered tones), the joint anticipation of the event, the tacit knowledge of both spoken and unspoken rules of conduct and the awareness of fellow audience members' reactions to events on stage all facilitated togetherness.

One KKNK respondent, Sarie, felt that the experience of seeing a production in Bridgton, the 'coloured' area of Oudtshoorn, had opened her eyes to the people that were living there:

> A few years ago I saw Cat and the Kings [a David Kramer production] at the OKSK hall [in Bridgton]. It is a fantastic 'coloured community'. They speak our language [Afrikaans], they are part of us. They also moan about their kids and their husbands. They are my people.

Social *communitas* thus manifested itself in various arenas: onstage and off, behind the scenes or in front, at the beer gardens, production venues and in the streets. Social *communitas* also manifested itself in a multitude of ways: the sharing of ideas; the joint pleasure found in a dramatic performance; the working together at a craft stall or in admiring a product; the brief, yet satisfying, social exchanges between strangers; the rare gaining of insight into the lives of others. But social *communitas*, contrary to Victor Turner and the festival literature in general, was not inevitable.

While some festival-goers felt that the arts had the ability to transcend language barriers between people, festival-goers did not, for instance, all speak the same (theatre) 'language'. This was particularly evident from the social interchanges when theatre etiquette rules were breached. As the extract from the field notes illustrated, audience members vocally complained when someone's cell phone rang during a performance, for example, or reprimanded fellow audience members who attempted to take photos or to stand on chairs.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter introduces social transformation as a key goal of both arts festivals. The festival managements attempted to facilitate social transformation by creating celebratory spaces in public, motivating festival-goers to attend festival productions, to walk rather than drive, coaxing them into utilizing a form of public transport that many of them would not ordinarily use (the

minibus taxis) and attempting to extend festival accommodation to include the adjacent townships and stimulating interest in activities hosted there.

Evidently the process of 'educating' festival-goers during the arts festivals did not function in a hegemonic or straightforward way. The facilitation of a common identification and greater unity amongst Afrikaans speakers, and also other South Africans, was mostly regarded as a residual effect and not something to be purposively orchestrated by the festival planners. This was due to the belief that any effort to impose a superficial or forced unity would inhibit spontaneity, personal freedom, creativity and artistic expression – all qualities deemed essential to the respective festivals' success. The festival organizers also only exerted limited influence over festival-goers' movements. Rather the festivals invoked learned or rehearsed festival 'routines'.

The 'opening up' (diversifying) of the arts festivals was viewed as a gradual, organic process. Interestingly Lynette Marias, the festival director of the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown at the time, remarked to me in relation to the festival's goal of social transformation: "We have worked all of these years, slowly tapping away. You can't force these things. If you keep at it, it will slowly take its own course". Beth, an art project consultant whom I met at an arts exhibition at one of the Afrikaans-orientated festivals, believed "a festival can bring together people but you should not force people to integrate. You have to create fun events where people naturally flow together, but it happens *over time* [my emphasis]".

Briaan Blaauw, a member of the town council in Oudtshoorn at the time, told me: "The KKNK is a catalyst to unite the community on local level if it is managed correctly. It is slowly happening". Similarly Ronel Nel, the media manager of Aardklop at the time of fieldwork, was convinced that the festival could "change the old [apartheid] mindset but slowly". From a management perspective the respective festivals in this regard 'took a step forward every year'; peoples' attitudes were 'altered by the year', and so forth.

Karen Meiring reflected on the development of the KKNK in an interview that I had with her in 2008. She occasionally starred in a festival production over the years as member of a vocal group, *Cutt Glas*, and had personally experienced the transformation that had occurred within the

festival from 1995 up to 2006. According to her, festival-goers, judging by their responses, adjusted to (racially) 'integrated productions':

> … there is an absolute … the word is maturity … there is a maturity in how people engage with each other. I experienced it personally with the production of *Die Afrika mamas en Cutt Glas*. Audiences of 1998 did not like to experience all of us on one stage. You feel it. I experienced antagonism that I no longer felt at performances in 2004, 2005 and 2006.

Peoples' exposure to diverse others, across the 'colour line', was very restricted under apartheid. It is therefore significant that some productions within these festivals exposed audiences to seeing 'mixed races' onstage. Moreover, the festivals that emerged in post-apartheid South Africa temporarily created offstage spaces in which people could intermingle, at least in principle. The festivals could potentially facilitate conversations about South Africa's past and present – both onstage and off – and bind people together in treasuring the country's cultural heritage. The achievement of social transformation was, however, not an automatic outcome of festival attendance and participation. The following chapter elaborates on the social divisions, particularly of race and class, at these arts festivals.

CHAPTER 7

Social divisions as reflected, negotiated and bridged in the historical development of the arts festivals

7.1 Extract from field notes
Aardklop 2005 – Day 7

08: 15. I have returned to my former seat at *Die Akker* from where I can observe how Thom Street, the main artery of *Die Bult* (the neighbourhood in Potchefstroom where the festival is concentrated) is gradually being transformed into the so-called Castle Lager Lane. I know the South African Breweries had signed a contract with Aardklop that ensured that the company would remain the sole sponsor of alcohol in Thom Street for a period of three years. No business in the street will be allowed to sell the opposition's beer in the outside extensions or *kuier kroeë* that are established only for the period of the festival.

Festival workers are now assembling the notorious *kuier kroeë* – bars where festival-goers can socialize throughout the day – which consist of rows of wooden benches, brightly branded umbrellas, and fences that cordon the various extensions off from each other. I find it ironic that a massive promotional banner for the Castle brand completely obscures the posters advertising festival productions that have been put up against a wall in the street.

16:00. I am now sitting at one of the *kuier kroeë* in Thom Street which, in contrast to the quietness of the morning, are packed with festival-goers. I can't help but notice that the vast majority of the surrounding festival-goers are 'white'.

18: 00. I am at one of the temporary camping terrains. While we are chatting, a young boy starts loudly racing up and down the road on a quad bike. The respondent, clearly irritated, remarks to me that "there are always people who do not know how to behave themselves. Last night the guy at the camp site next to us started playing his techno music in the early morning hours".

KKNK 2005 – Day 8

11: 10. I have just exited the Bridgton Secondary Hall, a production venue in the 'coloured' area of Oudtshoorn. The festival-goers congregating outside the venue disperse quickly. As I unhurriedly walk along the short stretch of Voortrekker Road descending towards the central town, I am struck by the lack of festive decorations and production posters. The marketing campaigns of artists, sponsors and entrepreneurs clamour for visibility and audibility within central Oudtshoorn, but this part of town seems almost unaffected by the festival.

14: 30. I am at the Book Paradise. Here festival-goers, somewhat removed from the commotion, chat to each other over steaming cups of filter coffee and *koeksisters* (twisted pieces of dough that are fried and dipped in syrup), while both established and unknown literary figures in the background read extracts from their work. Some patrons guard plastic bags with newly acquired Afrikaans books inside. The atmosphere is one of refined relaxation.

7.2 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the arts festivals' potential to effect social transformation and to bring people together; this chapter, along with the following one, continues to assess the extent to which that potential was realized given the social divisions that existed. The festival literature, as set out in the literature review, claims that social divisions are temporarily suspended during festivals. It is claimed that festival-goers, instead of being divided, experience a sense of exquisite oneness or social *communitas*.

This chapter, as indeed the study as a whole, is sensitive to festival-goers' experiences of *communitas* during the festivals. But this chapter also illustrates, contrary to the literature and despite the achievement of *communitas*, how social divisions remained and were sometimes strengthened during these arts festivals. Two main tensions that were illustrative of the social divisions that existed, within the context of the KKNK and Aardklop, were the tension between so-called 'high culture' and 'popular culture', and the tension between centre and periphery.

These tensions are reflected in the field note extracts. The field notes illustrate how festival sponsorships sometimes came into conflict with the festivals' aim of promoting the arts.   They

illustrate how the numerous areas for socializing within these festivals differed – ranging from being subdued to being extremely loud and outrageous and how festival-goers had their favourite hangouts. They illustrate how not all festival spaces were equally animated. They illustrate that not all festival-goers got along with each other.

The chapter elaborates on these tensions, which reflected broader societal divisions between people of different classes and races. These ingrained divisions did not simply disappear at festival time, nor were they easily bridged. The chapter argues that the existing tensions, particularly the tension between centre and periphery, and the fact that the arts festivals were mainly attended by a 'white' elite, impacted negatively on the festivals' potential for fostering social *communitas*. This profound impact was evident from the accusations of exclusiveness that were levelled at the two Afrikaans-orientated festivals. The chapter examines these tensions and the issue of inclusiveness from a number of different vantage points by drawing on observations made during the arts festivals, the experiences of festival-goers and festival workers, the views of festival organizers and debates in the popular media.

The second half of the chapter indicates how the festival managements of the KKNK and Aardklop attempted to make the festivals more inclusive over time by securing greater artistic and economic involvement of a variety of people in the festival. The issue of language and linguistic involvement will be addressed in the following chapter. Both arts festivals, as this chapter shows, became more diversified over the years. This was partly in response to negative press and pressure exerted by funding institutions and role players from within the host towns. The diversification was evident in a number of areas. The final section concludes that, although the festival managements achieved a measure of success in overcoming the social divisions, the arts festivals to an extent remained divided events.

7.3 'High culture' versus 'popular culture'

'High culture' denotes aspects of a culture, often in the performing and visual arts, that are held in the highest regard. The arts include the performing and visual arts. The concept calls to mind judgements of taste and distinction; the ability to reflect on that which is aesthetically pleasing and of a supposedly superior standard. It is a matter of taste and a means of gradation, separating

that which is unique from the products of mass production/consumption. 'High culture' is therefore tied to financial, cultural and social capital. It is also often reflective of broader class divisions, since only those with sufficient monetary resources generally have access to it.

Mass or 'popular culture' represents the opposite of 'high culture'. It is easily accessible, often formulaic, repetitive and produced and consumed by 'the masses'. Although the two 'cultures' do not necessarily exist in opposition to each other, the term 'popular culture' is sometimes used in a derogatory way to refer to supposedly 'inferior' popular music and other forms of light, commercial entertainment.

Whereas 'high culture' purportedly offers opportunities for self-discovery, creativity, the broadening of knowledge and reflexivity, 'popular' culture purportedly allows the viewer to remain inactive and seemingly stagnant. The first is depicted as challenging; the second is not. This section argues that both festivals, since their inception, have been marked by a distinction between 'high culture', on the one hand, and 'popular culture', on the other.[1] 'High culture', in the context of the arts festivals, was naturally equated with the arts – the official productions, exhibitions, discourses and other events on the festival programmes. The festivals, by virtue of being allied with the arts, were susceptible to attack for being exclusive. The arts are after all still widely regarded as an elitist activity, serving the 'more educated classes' (see Morrison and Fliehr 1968; Mason 1992).

The arts at the KKNK and Aardklop, however, were by no means intended only for a privileged few. According to Temple Hauptfleisch (2007: 10), contemporary arts festivals in South Africa are premised on the idea of art for the people. "The festivals are for everybody, whatever their age, sex, race, language, value systems, religion, sexual orientation, social and educational status, and theatrical and cultural traditions". This idea was corroborated by Vincent Abrahams, a member of the festival's Board of Directors, in an interview that I conducted with him at the KKNK in 2004:

> People had very little access to theatre in the past – the atmosphere, the conviviality.

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[1] It is important to be aware of the malleability of these categories. The lines between them were not as clear-cut as these definitions might suggest. Rather they are recognized and employed throughout the text as socially constructed categories in order to engage with the issues that this chapter addresses.

Theatre used to be elitist; now we are bringing it to the people … it gives us the opportunity to build relationships and to bring people together. It is one element that can be used to create reconciliatory relationships amongst people that come from diverse backgrounds.

The festival managements and directors continually wanted to grow and diversify festival audiences. They tried to keep the cost of production tickets low and claimed that ticket prices were lower than in the metropolitan centres of the country. The KKNK and Aardklop also offered various discounts on tickets, but these discounts were either for large groups or for a person who booked many shows.

But invariably attending productions, in other words 'high culture', was relatively expensive. Although the cost of experiencing the arts at these festivals was considered to be relatively affordable, the average ticket price at the KKNK escalated from R20 in 1995 to R65 in 2005. Moreover, the expense of attending these festivals (travelling to host towns, paying for accommodation, the pressure to consume) also restricted festival attendance mainly to those with sufficient disposable income. Research indicated that accommodation, at both the KKNK and Aardklop, was the biggest expense for festival-goers. The average expenditure of a festival-goer at the KKNK was R2994.17 in 2006 (Saayman, Slabbert and Saayman 2006: 14), whereas the average expenditure of a festival-goer at Aardklop amounted to R1779.54 in the same year (Saayman and Saayman 2006: 16).

Commentators remarked over the years on how expensive everything at these festivals – mineral water, food, parking, production tickets and accommodation – had become (Van Zyl 2000b; Wicomb 2002; Topley 2005; Burger 2006). There was a feeling, which festival managements tried to combat, that festival-goers were in some instances being exploited for their money (Botha 2003).

Not surprisingly, visitors at arts festivals tended to be upscale, of a mature age, and high income earning professionals (Hall and Zeppel 1990: 89 cited in Craik 1997: 127). The Fest-Quest survey of 1987, conducted in Grahamstown during the NAF, suggested that the festival "tends to attract a particular kind of person: well educated, probably affluent and secure, and somewhat elite" (Davies 1988: 9).

Market research conducted at the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals revealed that the festival-goers at the KKNK and Aardklop fit a similar profile (see Keyser 1997; Van der Merwe 2004). The Institute for Tourism and Leisure Studies (North West University) conducted economic impact studies at both the KKNK and Aardklop over the past few years. The vast majority of the festival-goers at the KKNK were Afrikaans-speaking (93%) and 'white' (98%). Most were between 18-45 years old, educated and relatively affluent (Saayman, Saayman and Van Schalkwyk 2003). Aardklop yielded similar results (Saayman and Saayman 2006).

The distinction between 'high culture' and 'popular culture' is clearly an important one, because of the way it constrained the facilitation of social *communitas* during festival time. The statistics foreground the social divisions that existed between those people who were able to attend the arts festivals in the first place and those who were unable to do so. But the high/popular distinction could also be fruitfully applied to the sharp division that existed within these festivals between the arts and other low-brow festival activities that were perceived by some festival critics as uncreative or dismissed as mere merrymaking.

This division between 'high culture' and 'popular culture' in relation to festivals is not new. The former Afrikaner *volksfeeste*, as pointed out before, were marked by constant concern over the quality and standard of the festival programmes. Whereas political speeches, intellectual content, classical music and other high-brow activities were prioritised, activities such as target shooting, horse riding and other sports were looked upon as frivolous ('popular culture').

Hendrik Belsazar Senekal (1970: 275) argued in his doctoral thesis that the Afrikaner *volksfeeste* historically have a Christian connotation and therefore drum-majorette parades and beer gardens should have no place at these festivals. Professor Marius Swart (1987: 67-68), almost twenty years later, likewise cautioned that "the *volksfees* cannot merely satisfy the public need for entertainment, every presentation … has to bring about greater *volksbinding* (Afrikaner unity), *volkskennis* (knowledge about the Afrikaner nation) and *volksversterking* (strengthening of the Afrikaners)".

The former *volksfeeste* differed in this respect from most other festivals. Popular festivals across the world generally have never aspired to be 'high culture'. Many festival commentators in fact

lauded festivals, particularly carnivals, for subverting 'high culture' and embracing 'popular culture'. Mikhael Bakhtin (1968: 7), in a seminal work on medieval culture and festivity, wrote:

> Carnival does not know footlights, in the sense that it does not acknowledge any distinction between actors and spectators. Footlights would destroy a carnival, as the absence of footlights would destroy a theatrical performance.

Mikhael Bakhtin here implies a clear distinction between a theatrical event ('high culture') and a carnival ('popular culture'), but interestingly (as this section will show) the arts festivals in question contained theatrical as well as *carnivalesque* elements.

7.3.1 'High culture' – the official festival productions

Both festivals strove to include a broad range of genres in the festival programmes. Ideally these programmes had to offer classical, high-quality theatre, music and visual productions, as well as new, experimental work. It is important to note, though, that 'high culture' and 'popular culture' were not uniform categories. There was a lot of disagreement within these festivals over the content, quality and format of productions. Further distinctions of taste thus marked both 'high culture' and 'popular culture'.

Since the festivals' inception critics, for example, complained about the poor standard of the official festival productions. Complaints about the 'lack of artistic quality', 'uncontroversial material' and the 'increasing shallowness' of the official festival productions were lodged every year (see Maritz 2003; Van der Merwe 2004; Strydom 2004). Critics argued for imaginative, slightly confrontational and intellectually demanding festival productions. Gabriël Botma (2003a: 1) stated that part of the problem was that the very "format of arts festivals necessitates a certain type of production [relatively short productions with small easily transportable sets] … that can lead to uniformity".

7.3.2 'Popular culture' – the carnival feel

The sheltered and open-air arts and craft markets; the informal stalls that lined the main streets; the colourful decorations; the incessant noise from the informal music stages; the selling of

traditional foods such as *pannekoek* (pancakes) and *boerewors* (literally farmer's sausage); the offering of funfair rides; the street revelry and the casual socialization of festival goers around barbeque fires, particularly at the KKNK and Aardklop, were all associated with the *kermisgevoel* (carnival/fair/fête feel). Everything to do with this particular feeling was implicitly classified as 'popular culture'.[2]

The *kermisgevoel* or fête-like feel at the KKNK and Aardklop largely derived from the omnipresent *kuier* areas, described in the opening vignette, such as the street bars at Aardklop and the open-air music stages. Social interactions were often lubricated by alcohol within these areas. The close, albeit not essential, association between *kuier* activities and the consumption of alcohol is captured in the inflexion *gekuier*, a slang term that is used in Afrikaans to refer to someone who is tipsy. Festival-goers experienced these areas in different ways, as the following two contrasting comments indicate:

> Usually the beer tents are loathsome in the evenings. I don't go there, but I have been there and my friends tell me about it. Some people think it is a great *kuierplek* [place for socializing], but people get wasted and continue drinking until the early morning hours. They fall over each other and make rude comments. I avoid them (Ria, festival-goer at the KKNK).

> The vibe at the Castle tent is always great. People stand up to clap and to dance at the front of the tent. That is how I want it to be. There is a younger vibe at the Castle tent than at some of the other venues where the people do not sing along (Gerrit, festival-goer at the KKNK).

Unlike carnivals, where streets generally assume prominence, the arts festival organizers wanted festival-goers off the streets and supporting paid production venues ('high culture'). They did

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[2] According to Kapp (1975: 192), a *kermis* (fair) is an occasion that is organized by charity organizations in order to collect funds for a specific goal. "It is associated with money-making, noisiness and slight offensiveness". Similar to a fair, a bazaar usually occurs indoors and handmade products such as traditional dishes, puddings, needlework and toys are displayed on tables instead of in stalls.

not want to create the impression that the arts at these festivals were a free product. Instead they believed that festivals could help cultivate a habit amongst festival-goers to pay for productions.

During interviews festival organizers emphasized that two major goals of the festivals, in line with that of the NAF, were the attraction of festival-goers to productions and audience development. One of the stated goals of the Aardklop Board of Directors in 2004, for example, was to encourage festival-goers to buy more production tickets and to capture new, especially 'black', audiences. One suggested strategy was to have media reports only focus on the artistic offerings at the festival, in other words the theatrical performances and exhibitions and not the unofficial entertainment provided by other venues.

Festival organizers routinely stressed to me that the core purpose of the festivals was a celebration of the arts. A festival organizer, who declined to be named, felt that people who attended these festivals only for the *jol* (jollification) and not for the shows "ruined the look of the city". Karen Meiring also highlighted the centrality of the arts to these festivals – "for the true supporter the heart of the KKNK beats in the artistic productions". Festival organizers generally took a predisposition among the festival-goers towards the arts (using the National Arts Festival as an example), rather than simply the jolliness, as a sign of a festival's maturation.[3]

7.3.3 Managing the tension between 'high culture' and 'popular culture'

Festival organizers therefore attempted to broaden the appeal of the arts and to encourage festival-goers to support official productions and exhibitions through a variety of marketing campaigns. One of the most noticeable strategies was to make festival-goers aware of the shortage of time and the fact that they had only a limited amount of time to experience the respective festivals and to view productions. Clearly, festival attendance does not necessarily offer one relief from time constraints.[4]

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[3] It was common practice to resort to biological metaphors in relation to festivals as if they possessed "an inner principle of life" (Aitchison 1991: 197). Festivals were said to have 'lifetimes' of varying lengths; they were 'born'; experienced 'growing pains', reached 'puberty', became 'mature' and eventually 'died'.

[4] The 1987 Fest Quest Survey (Davies 1988) makes repeated mention of the demands made on festival participants' limited time. In fact, one of the most common dissatisfactions of festival participants was attributed to productions

Festival-goers were constantly urged during festivals (through festival newspapers, production reviews and public announcements) to remain 'on the move', to 'hurry over' to a particular show or exhibition or to make sure 'to catch' a once-off performance. They were cautioned 'not to miss' a memorable production or not 'to delay' the booking or the purchasing of their tickets, to include a specific item in their festival schedule or to put a certain activity on their 'to do' lists. They were also made aware of certain 'must-sees'.

Despite the festival organizers' intentions and efforts every year, both festivals were criticized for their pervasive fair or *kermis* character. Critics of these festivals felt that the open-air bars and restaurants, where *kuier* dominated, drew the most attention. Kobus Burger (2002: 6) complained that a 'remarkable' drama performance, *Mamma Medea*, directed by the highly acclaimed Marthinus Basson in 2002, only attracted a handful of Aardklop festival-goers, while the big screen at *Die Bult*, where rugby was screened, attracted scores of people. The critique applied to both festivals. Wilhelm Disbergen (2002: 1) wrote in reference to the KKNK:

> With serious art, theatre and music no longer functioning as a dictate to social value or aesthetics, but instead being replaced by advertising and marketing strategies that espouse brand recognition and loyalty, pop rules and art sucks.

Andries Vrey (2003a: 1) had a similar complaint about the KKNK the following year: "I am uncertain about the aim of the festival. Is it to be a display cabinet for the arts, or is it simply there to force commercial junk down our throats?" The same author, in another article entitled 'Quality at arts festivals endangered', remarked resignedly: "… wherever one attempts an Afrikaans festival, you will have to put up with the masses that are only there for the … beer" (Vrey 2003b: 1).

The tension between arts, on the one hand, and entertainment, on the other, surfaced in festival after festival. It became such a point of contention that *Litnet* (an independent Afrikaans journal that is published on the internet) arranged an online theatre indaba in 2004, where well-known role players from within the theatre industry could contribute to the debate. Johann Rossouw

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starting later and/or lasting longer than advertised (Davies 1988: 32). Although the study focused on the National Arts Festivals, the results are applicable to the KKNK and Aardklop.

(2004: 8), one of my respondents who served in the Arts cabinet of the KKNK for a period of time, warned that the KKNK was in danger. One of the reasons for this, according to him, was that the arts and entertainment aspects of the KKNK were 'out of balance'.

Jean Meiring (2003: 2) felt that it was the responsibility of the organizers of the arts festivals to decide whether the emphasis was on the arts or on 'trashy entertainment'. Many critics, such as Yolandi Groenewald (2004: 2), felt that the festivals had already decided: "Unfortunately many of the people that show up at the festival never see the inside of a theatre. They call the Bourbons beer tent home, and for them, the free band is king". While Mariana Malan (2006) critiqued the productions at the *jolige* (jolly) Aardklop for not yet offering sufficient food for thought, Johannes de Villiers (2006) commented on the large number of drunken festival-goers.

Despite this critique, the festival organizers realized that 'high culture' and 'popular culture' existed in a dynamic tension within these festivals. David Piedt, a former chair of the KKNK's Board of Directors, commented to the press that the festival is finely attuned to attaining a balance between arts and entertainment, and between challenging and less challenging productions (Smith 2005b: 5). The reason for this need for a balance between the two was that the festival managements could not recover the cost of staging festival productions only through ticket sales. They also could not afford too many stage productions that did not make money.

The income generated from the renting out of spaces for the temporary establishment of craft market stalls, music stages, open-air restaurants and other forms of 'popular culture' helped to pay for productions that were not commercially successful or risky. An arts festival without the entertainment provided by the carnival/fair element (the food stalls, the music stages, the beer gardens, the craft markets and so forth) was therefore not viable. Although there was a perception amongst some of the locals in the host towns that the arts festivals generated a lot of money, annual profits were directly reinvested in the following year's festival and specially commissioned productions.[5]

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[5] The arts festivals did not necessarily make a profit every year. The KKNK in fact suffered a financial loss of more than R2 million in the 2004-2005 book year, because of an over-projection of ticket sales (Wicomb 2005a: 1). Both arts festivals at times struggled to cover their running costs and to secure sponsorships.

It is important here to briefly take note of how the arts festivals were financed. The festivals were funded from three main sources: ticket sales, sponsorships and other business initiatives such as the income generated by the arts and craft markets, media sales and the renting out of festival accommodation.[6]

Sponsorships were vital to the success and ultimately the sustainability of the two festivals. The festivals distinguished between a variety of sponsors such as premier, senior, product and project sponsors that annually contributed to the festivals in cash or in kind. Media partners provided the festivals with much needed media exposure in exchange for their exposure at the festivals. The festivals increasingly entered into longer-term business partnerships with sponsors that allowed sponsors to earn money at the sponsored events in exchange for the initial funding. Many sponsors were therefore interested in securing a space on the main festival terrain that they could, for example, convert into an open-air music stage.

It is a well-known fact that "striking the balance between the needs of the commercial partners and those of the festival and events can bring with it a challenging set of compromises" (Robertson and Wardrop 2004: 126). The danger for arts festivals is that the freedom of creative and artistic expression might be compromised in the process. The importance of maintaining a distance between the festivals' Board of Directors and the festival sponsors, in order to prevent the sponsors from prescribing the format or content of productions, was therefore clear. Although sponsors pressurized the festival managements for maximum visibility and exposure at the festivals, they generally had limited influence over the composition of the overall festival programmes, according to the management members that I spoke to.

Giep van Zyl likened the financial management of an arts festival to a 'rollercoaster ride' in a recent interview with me in 2008. According to him, a number of variables such as the size of sponsorships and the success of productions play a role in determining whether an arts festival will make a profit or suffer a loss, and these cannot be predicted from year to year. New productions were incredibly expensive to stage and had to be cross-subsidized by means of other productions, because the festival run was too short to get a return on the investment in new

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[6] According to Fanie Buys, a member of Aardklop's executive management at the time of writing, sponsors provided about 39% of the festival's income and ticket sales 25%.

productions.[7]

Some of the festival organizers whom I interviewed felt that the carnival/fair feel, which was partly a result of the sponsors' involvement, was instrumental in generating a festival hype and creating atmosphere. The *Boekeparadys* (Book Paradise) at the KKNK, for example, would have been an unfriendly, deserted square without the chatting patrons at the tables under the umbrellas. The festival organizers conceded that the free entertainment provided, for example, by certain music stages and workshops was important to indicate that a certain income level was not necessarily a prerequisite for festival attendance. Fieldwork revealed that festival-goers quickly complained if they felt that the festivals provided insufficient free entertainment.

But the proliferation of these 'non-artistic' merry-making activities (many of which were not necessarily free, but substantially cheaper than the official festival productions) was a cause of concern for the respective festival organizers. Tim Huisamen, a former organizer of the National Arts Festival's Winter School, expressed this concern in relation to arts festivals in general:

> The festival management must constantly try to prevent the festival from turning into a Mardi Gras. It remains an arts festival. The artistic productions are the most important while the other activities such as the flea market are side shows. But the festival always threatens to take over the arts…the parties, the selling of trinkets … But you can't prohibit it.

The low ratio of production tickets sold, compared to the number of festival-goers, further strengthened the impression of the critics that the 'festival' itself ('popular culture') threatened to overpower the arts ('high culture'). The following table indicates the ratio between the number of festival-goers who attended these festivals and the number of tickets sold from 1995 to 2006. It also indicates the growth that the festivals have undergone since their inceptions:

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[7] Aardklop, for example, suffered a loss of R300 000 when the festival staged the ambitious production, *Op Soek na Generaal Mannetjies Mentz,* directed by Marthinus Basson, in 2000. This loss was suffered despite the fact that the production was continuously sold out for the period of the festival (Nieuwoudt 2000a).

	KKNK		Aardklop	
	Festival-goers	Tickets	Festival-goers	Tickets
1995	No data	30 314	-	-
1996	No data	61 297	-	-
1997	No data	81 310	-	-
1998	No data	99 100	25 000	15 000
1999	No data	104 028	60 000	43 000
2000	No data	128 927	100 000	63 000
2001	No data	160 451	130 000	83 500
2002	No data	163 890	No data	No data
2003	110 000	162 019	No data	No data
2004	No data	186 748	No data	85 800
2005	No data	191 252	No data	91 200
2006	No data	137 463	190 000	81 000

Fanie Buys told me that, although the annual increase in festival attendance at Aardklop was encouraging, the stagnation in ticket sales was a cause of concern. According to him, the financial support and attendance of 'more serious' arts initiatives such as drama, classical music, cabaret, word craft, poetry and dance at the festival were under pressure as a result.

The paradoxical coupling of high and popular – a tension that this chapter argues is inherent to the social construction of arts festivals as liminal events – was also evident in the division between the officially recognized production spaces, which were often enclosed and exclusively accessed by ticket-holders, and the purely entertainment-focused areas such as the informal music stages, which were mostly outdoors and open to everyone. The following sections focus on the informal music stages in order to further illustrate the tension between 'high culture' and 'popular culture', and by extension the division between festival-goers, at the KKNK and Aardklop.

7.3.4 The informal music stages

Because of their seasonality – the festivals were hosted in early and late summer respectively – weather conditions were conducive to the utilization of music stages. While *kuier* at the two Afrikaans-orientated festivals could take place at a variety of locations, it tended to centre on the so-called free or informal stages. Festival sponsors, in close cooperation with the festival organizers of the KKNK and Aardklop, set up the majority of these stages, dispersing them across the festival terrains.

The sponsors varied over the years, but prominent sponsors included the *Beeld* newspaper (in the case of Aardklop), the ATKV, SABC2, Klipdrift and *Huisgenoot* (see Glossary). Formerly completely free but later charging a nominal fee, they showcased music performances by various well-known and upcoming Afrikaans artists.

One of the areas described by festival-goers that I spoke to at the KKNK as 'the heartbeat' of the festival was the *Radiosondergrense* (Radio without Limits) area in front of the CP Nel Museum. Festival-goers at this designated area of 'penniless' entertainment could buy a cold beer and a *sosatie* (kebab) and sit on a hay stack for the whole day, as indeed some did. Apart from direct broadcasts of popular RSG programmes, a variety of artists were commissioned every year to appear on the open-air stage that had been established for the purpose.

Similarly structured spaces gradually multiplied at these festivals. When the KKNK started in 1995 there was one music stage. Six years later in 2001 there were the following open-air stages: Castle Laager, *Huisgenoot*, Parmalat, RSG, Rapport, PAWC (Provincial Administration Western Cape). All of these were allocated stages in return for their sponsorship of the festival.

Ironically, the names and marketing campaigns of these venues were inducements for festival-goers to visit and stay longer. The promotional manager of the music stage of *Huisgenoot*, a well-known Afrikaans magazine, showed me around the large marquee tent in Oudtshoorn: "We have everything here – a bar, good facilities, toilets – so people don't have a reason to ever go away from here. We have many people who arrive here in the morning and stay for the whole day". Johan, a venue manager, at Aardklop reiterated this:

Our patrons are people who want to sit and *kuier*. A festival atmosphere holds sway. They are in a *kuier* frame of mind so they sit and *kuier* longer than is usual. Sometimes they occupy the seats for up to four hours or longer.

Clearly, the managers of the music stages efforts to attract and retain audiences were in sharp conflict with the festival organizers' stated goal of encouraging festival-goers to attend different productions. The so-called *Beelddorp* (Beeld village) at Aardklop, sponsored by the Afrikaans weekly, *Die Beeld*, for example, implied that festival-goers could expect to fulfil their needs under one roof in their *kuier* area. The venue offered free performances from early to late on the *Beeld* stage, a media bar, an eating-house and a variety of competitions, exhibitions and promotional items as part of the proceedings.

The temporary book merchant at Aardklop, which in 2003 changed the venue's name from the Book Oasis to the Book Paradise, advertised the venue as a gathering place where one could escape the festival muddle. Here one could browse for hours in an air-conditioned venue, meet Afrikaans writers and find home-cooked food at the adjoining *Kuierkombuis* (Kitchen for Socializing). The ATKV stage, one of the most established at the KKNK, was advertised as follows in the *Krit* (Van Eeden 2002b: 11): [8]

> The pleasure is completely free. All you have to do to share in the entertainment is to find yourself a seat in time … You can sing along, clap hands and swing your hips till late night. It is Afrikaans and it is festival and that is how it is. No hidden messages that you have to unravel or complicated symbolism that you have to decipher. Only extremely loud *lekker* pleasure free of charge.

The ATKV stage was implicitly juxtaposed in the advertisement quoted above against official festival productions. Production attendance/theatre going generally entailed a degree of formality (admittedly scaled down at festivals), required fine timing, effort in searching and

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[8] The ATKV amphitheatre debuted at the 1997 KKNK. The '300-seat' theatre built by the Queen's Mall shopping centre was donated to the KKNK and the community of Oudtshoorn. Since its inception all the performances at the ATKV stage have been free and at the time of writing more than 60 quality productions had been presented during the festival, ranging from children's theatre productions, jazz, Afrikaans rock and light music to dance and traditional folk dances. Aardklop built a similar amphitheatre at Cachet Park in Potchefstroom in 2002.

travelling to production venues, physical restrictedness for the duration of the performance, a payment and concentrated attention. Moreover it was risky, because audience members never knew beforehand whether they were going to like the production or not. One festival-goer put it as follows: "Theatre can be boring; it can be the worst. And if it is bad and you have to sit there, you want to pull your hair out. It is different from a movie where you can walk out" (Francois, festival-goer at the KKNK).

The accessible stages, in contrast, offered free, 'uncomplicated' entertainment in Afrikaans. Although all stages had a published time schedule, these schedules did not serve strictly to regulate the movements of festival-goers, who casually entered and exited these venues throughout the day with none of the restrictions pertaining to the official festival production spaces.[9] As one respondent put it: "The chairs are not arranged in rows so it does not feel like church", or theatre, one might add. Indeed, from my encounters with festival-goers at these music stages it was evident that the popularity of these stages were partly due to the fact that they were perceived as being 'easier' to watch than productions:

> The shows are too stiff and sober. You can't make a noise or take a drink inside. Last year I sat ten minutes in a show before I walked out. I enjoy the open stages, because if I am fed up I can walk away. But to sit for an hour in a show that you don't like is not enjoyable (Erik, festival-goer at the KKNK).

The tension between 'high culture' and 'popular culture' at the KKNK and Aardklop was therefore not only manifested in physical spaces but also in the associated temporal qualities through which such spaces were constituted. The act of 'going to a festival production' (regardless of the genre), to those of my respondents who avoided it, was perceived as a time-exacting activity that required too high a level of commitment. Rather than being constrained by pre-booked performances, many festival-goers preferred to while away the hours at a music stage or around a *braaivleis* fire at their respective camping terrains. As different festival-goers phrased it:

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[9] The production ticket is after all an agreement that entitles the buyer in most instances to a particular seat in a particular venue, at a particular time and date, for a particular performance activity at a particular price (Bütow 2003: 16).

At this moment this festival is the best *kuier* in South Africa. The first couple of years we went to many productions, but then we decided to rather support the open stages, because you see everyone there in any case when they perform for half an hour. If there are many that we like, we sometimes end up staying three hours (Roux, festival-goer at the KKNK].

We are a group of friends that come from different directions. We always meet each other here and *kuier lekker* together. You have to be here to be able to *kuier*. Previous years I came and booked many productions, but this year I am here absolutely only for the *kuier* (Hettie, festival-goer at Aardklop).

The negative impact that these music stages exerted on production attendance is evident from the above quotes. Both festival-goers mentioned that they had attended productions during previous festivals, but ceased doing so. The open-air music stages and the paid production venues increasingly came into conflict at both festivals when it became apparent that artists were performing in half-empty halls, struggling to compete with the draw card of the free shows (Van Rooyen 2002; Strydom 2005b). Economic impact studies indicated that 84% of respondents at the KKNK attended free shows and that a majority (70%) spent most of their time at the craft markets and free shows (Saayman, Saayman and Van Schalkwyk 2003; Saayman, Slabbert and Saayman 2006).

Critics argued that the provision of free shows at open stages compromised artistic integrity and resembled "a loss of depth" that went against the grain of arts festivals (Jordaan 2003: 5). Cobus van Bosch (2002: 1) therefore cautioned that the perception that arts festivals revolve around the open-air music stages should be addressed. Gabriël Botma (2003b: 10) dreamt of an Afrikaans arts festival that "only offers challenging, innovative and boundary shifting drama, dance and music of international quality … the arts become the biggest, or only, measuring stick [for the success of a festival]". Schalk Daniël van der Merwe (2004: 21) pointed out that festival-goers are "distracted by non-artistic events", in other words the open-air music stages and beer gardens, and that active steps should be taken to keep the focus on the arts.

Festival organizers themselves expressed concern over what they negatively perceived as the creation of a so-called *feeskultuur* (festival culture) as a result of the music stages and the beer

gardens.[10] Although it is difficult to arrive at a precise estimation, a large proportion of festival-goers (sometimes derogatorily referred to as the Brandy-and-Coke brigade), many of whom I interviewed, rarely attended paid productions or exhibitions and came to expect only light, on-the-spot entertainment. They conceived of the festivals only as *kuierplekke* (places to socialize) and had little or no concern with the arts. This finding is corroborated by other research (see Van der Merwe 2004; Kitshoff 2006).

Despite being dependent upon the sponsorship money that the music stages generated, festival organizers therefore took active measures after 2002 to curtail these stages. An entry fee was levied in some instances to make festival-goers accustomed to paying for shows. Several festival-goers complained about the fact that popular venues at Aardklop that used to be free had started charging entry fees (Du Preez 2004: 1). The standard of performances was also raised. Half of the performances at Aardklop, for example, had to be live and half indigenous, which meant that original Afrikaans music, instead of mere translations, had to be played. Prominent music stages that used to occupy a central place on the respective festival terrains were moved to outlying areas.

In the 2004 festival guide the festival management of the KKNK announced their intention to limit the music stages. There were three stages positioned at the so-called *Musiekplaas* (Music Farm), sponsored by *Huisgenoot*, and patrons who paid a daily entrance fee could move between the three stages at will. Similarly, at Aardklop 2004 the *Huisgenoot* tent was moved from the main festival terrain to the entrance to the Sedgars Park cricket stadium and festival-goers were required to pay to see shows on the main stage, whereas free shows were still offered on a smaller stage alongside. These measures seemed to pay off. Kobus Burger (2005a: 3) reported in 2005 that the focus of the KKNK seemed to be on theatre and that festival-goers supported theatre productions, even those that lasted more than two hours, on a grand scale.

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[10] The creation of a *feeskultuur* at the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals was related to the "commodification of Afrikaner culture and identity [which] had become a lucrative business" in post-apartheid South Africa (Van der Waal and Robins 2008: 1).

7.3.5 The implications of the tension between 'high culture' and 'popular culture' for the facilitation of social communitas

Just as the festivals were exclusive on more than one level, festival-goers experienced different senses of *communitas* or senses of 'being included' within these festivals. Victor Turner only makes provision for a single, overarching sense of *communitas*. But the first half of the chapter has shown that the arts festivals contained different manifestations of *communitas*, depending on where and how a festival-goer was positioned within the festival. Festival-goers attending a riveting festival production, for example, might have experienced a different sense of *communitas* compared to festival-goers who socialized nearby at a beer tent.

Communitas is fostered when people are collectively stripped of all status attributes, thereby establishing a communion between equals. While the festivals did serve to abolish some social distinctions between festival-goers who mainly spoke Afrikaans, dressed in a casual fashion, stayed side by side in camping terrains and generally walked where they wanted to be, a tension between 'high culture' and 'popular culture', and between different cliques was evident.

Within the context of the arts festivals, theatre/productions and popular festivities were diametrically opposed. Rather than being "united as simple celebrants", in the words of Da Matta (1984: 2227), there was a distinct class division between Afrikaans festival-goers who primarily attended festivals for their artistic value and those who never set foot in a production venue and who preferred to attend only the cost-free 'fringe activities' such as the craft markets.

7.4 The tension between centre and periphery

The terms 'centre' and 'periphery' have an established use in political economy, especially in world systems and dependency theories. They indicate that a structural relationship of dependency exists between the 'centre' (usually developed countries in the North) and the 'periphery' (the developing and underdeveloped countries in the South). The periphery is subjected to the centre, which dominates. The centre-periphery model, as applied to the arts festivals, similarly implies an unequal power relationship; not only in a geographical or spatial sense with regard to the layout of the festivals, but also between those people who had easy access to these celebrations and those who had not.

The divisions within the festivals between high and popular, centre and periphery that are addressed in this chapter actually have deep historical roots. For example, in thirteenth-century Europe the public square of bazaars, puppet theatres and taverns (the centre of towns) was the domain of the common people, while the 'official' arts of the privileged classes were located by and large beyond the square (Bakhtin 1981: 132).

The same applied to the KKNK and Aardklop, where the tension between 'high culture' and 'popular culture' interacted with the tension between centre and periphery. 'Popular culture', in the case of the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals, largely coincided with the festivals' geographical centres. Seemingly, in the festival centres the availability of beer, the cheapness of the goods on sale, the vibe at the music stages and the quality of the *kuier* … those were the things that mattered. 'High culture' was mostly found on the festival peripheries/outskirts in the festival production and exhibition venues.

Renowned visual artists, in particular, often opted for an exhibition space off the beaten track (but still relatively easy to reach) where they knew the 'serious arts lovers' would seek them out. Those visual artists whom I interviewed believed an excess of space where each artwork could be viewed in isolation, without having to compete for attention, created a 'gallery atmosphere' and elevated the tone of an arts exhibition.

But, as stated before, these distinctions between 'high culture' and 'popular culture' were not fixed in stone. Even within the festival centres there were gradations between high and popular. The festival organizers branded the prime arts and craft markets, such as the 'Queens' riverbank and street market at the KKNK, as being exclusive. They wanted to avoid at all costs the appearance of a *skou* (show) where one could 'exhibit anything'. Crafters at both festivals therefore underwent a strict screening process beforehand to select the 'pick of the crop'; products had to be (mostly) handcrafted and uniquely South African and a certain percentage of crafters and products had to be new to the festival. Elite crafters were allocated stalls inside large marquee tents, with the option of having stalls furnished with power points, while outside crafters received little or no support in terms of infrastructure.

The distinction between these centrally located arts and craft areas and the outside areas was reflected in the pricing of crafting space. The minimum tender amount in 2005 for a 3 x 3 m food stall located on Cachet Park at Aardklop was R1300, while the minimum tender amount for a 7 x 7 m craft stall in the same location was R7000. The 'outside stalls' were much cheaper. Crafters who did not make the selection process or could not afford to apply, strove to be as close to the festival centre as possible, because of the concentration of festival-goers and hence buying power there.

7.4.1 Location of production venues

The tension between centre and periphery was also evident in the location of official production venues at the two festivals. Official production venues were dispersed across the host towns, but the majority were located within the vicinity of the central business districts. Although venue mapping was adjusted over the years by the festival managements to also incorporate the townships bordering the host towns, the festivals boasted only a few official township venues. The following table gives an indication of the clustering of production and exhibition venues and accommodation (mostly hostels and camping terrains) at the two arts festivals over the past twelve years:

FESTIVAL LAYOUTS

Years	Venue Total		Years	Venues in townships	
	KKNK	Aardklop		KKNK	Aardklop
1995	25	N/A	1995	2	N/A
1996	56	N/A	1996	1	N/A
1997	62	N/A	1997	4	N/A
1998	59	No data	1998	2	No data
1999	59	35	1999	0	5
2000	51	29	2000	3	2
2001	52	29	2001	1	2
2002	47	No data	2002	1	No data
2003	46	35	2003	3	3

2004	56	39	2004	3	3
2005	50	38	2005	3	2
2006	66	47	2006	4	1

These 'township' venues were often under-utilized, understaffed and poorly equipped. The festival managements gradually invested capital in improving some of these venues. The Nevada community hall in Bongolethu was renovated in 2005 and free shows were staged there during the KKNK (Wicomb 2005). The Sarafina hall in Ikageng, which was used as the main festival venue in the former township during Aardklop, was permanently darkened and adapted to be accessible for disabled persons.

The remoteness of the former townships from the festivities was a legacy of apartheid. The challenge of involving these areas in the festivals confronted all prominent South African festivals. Hazel Friedman (1997: 12), for example, reported from the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown that "the adjacent township … has retained the nickname 'ghost town' because it might as well be invisible for the duration of the festival". The management of the National Arts Festival, despite its twenty-year head start, was repeatedly critiqued for neglecting the township (see Meintjies 1991; Makgale 1998).

The lack of infrastructure and amenities, in addition to the distance (measured in kilometres) between the central towns and the townships, deepened the centre/periphery division. For example, only 50% of the roads in Bridgton and Bongolethu – two of the former township areas in Oudtshoorn – were tarred; the two areas had very poor and limited storm water and drainage systems; and there was insufficient accommodation. Festival-goers preferred activities to be centralized and centralization made events management easier.

During the arts festivals the festival vibe was therefore conspicuously absent from the townships where life, for the majority of the residents, carried on as usual. Both festivals were continually criticised for their failure to incorporate the 'whole' town and treating the township venues as an afterthought (see Ohlson and Davis 2002b). Pieter Jordaan (2004: 1) reported on the fiasco at the Ikageng stadium in Potchefstroom when performers and spectators equally failed to show up for the scheduled performances. The poor attendance was attributed to a lack of proper marketing in and around Ikageng. Two locals from Ikageng, whom I encountered at the Sarafina

hall in 2005, as a result described the township venues of Potchefstroom as "marginalized venues for marginalized people".

An economic impact study that was executed in 2006 indicated that the majority of respondents (70%) were still unaware or poorly informed about the productions in Promosa and Ikageng (Saayman and Saayman 2006: 22). The issue of race, which was central to the centre-periphery division at the arts festivals, will be addressed below.

7.4.2 Demographic profile of festival-goers

The Afrikaans-orientated festivals, which originated during the same period that the National Arts Festival was becoming more diversified, was constantly suspected and accused of *laer trek* (forming a laager). A journalist, Jean Meiring (2003: 1), for example asserts that "the Afrikaans arts festivals smell of *laer trek*". And Mike van Graan (2004a: 1), a South African columnist and theatre practitioner, talks of "the *volk's* (nation's) annual trek from the new South Africa to Oudtshoorn".

The laager, in post-apartheid South Africa, became an "expression of the Afrikaners' failure to adjust completely to the land in which they live" (Leach 1989: 51). Critics of the festivals claimed that Afrikaans-speaking 'whites' as a minority group, despite festival managements' protestations to the contrary, were asserting their constitutional right to self-determination by visibly retreating from a rapidly changing country in which they felt like they no longer belonged. This critique (as the following chapter shows) had merit, although it could not be applied to all the 'white' Afrikaans-speaking festival-goers who attended the arts festivals.

The tension between centre and periphery was not only reflected in the distribution of production venues, but also in the demographic profile of festival-goers. Since their inceptions in the 1990s the festivals have attracted mostly 'white' Afrikaans speakers. A journalist from the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper, Lauren Shantall (1998: 1), critiqued the KKNK festival for the fact that both the artists and the festival-goers were overwhelmingly 'white' and Afrikaans-speaking:

> The emptiness of the officially proclaimed attempts to be inclusive is reflected not in the
> token presence of black Afrikaans artists and performers but in the audiences the festival

attracts. Above all the *fees* [festival] serve as an indelicate reminder of an incomplete, and unresolved, transformation from pre- to post-apartheid South Africa.

Similarly the editor of *Beeld* newspaper, Tim du Plessis (1998: 8), reported after the first Aardklop festival in 1998:

> Those who are worried about the future of Afrikaans, probably were given new courage in Potchefstroom. But it is a pity that Aardklop was so absolutely predominantly white. Only in some places was a black face seen on a stage. And it seemed as if there were no coloured Afrikaans speakers interested in the arts.

The following year Henry Jeffreys (1999: 10), a member of the Board of Directors of the Aardklop festival at that time, also complained about the scant presence of 'coloured' South Africans in the audiences: "The absence of coloured people, who largely share Afrikaans as a mother tongue with white Afrikaners, was especially disappointing". Other voices over the years joined Jeffreys in complaining about the failure of strategies to involve 'black' and 'coloured' communities, especially from the Potchefstroom region, in the Aardklop festival.[11]

Both festivals were frequently critiqued as being *boerebazaars* (Nieuwoudt 2001) and 'unacceptably white' (Schoonakker 2001). Hein Willemse (2002: 10) wrote that, "despite the festival organizers' efforts to be inclusive, the overarching experience remained one of *boerekermisse* (Afrikaner fairs)". Stephanie Nieuwoudt (2003a: 17) reported: "Ultimately Aardklop is still a lilywhite festival – with only here and there a few darker faces who participate as festival-goers and artists".

Danny Titus (2004: 1) described how "weird" it felt to see "so many white Afrikaans-speaking people, thousands of them, gathered together" at Aardklop. "The new spaces in our country are surely no longer so white". Adrian Lackay (2004: 2) similarly complained that she was tired of being the only 'darkie' at the Aardklop festival. According to Lackay:

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[11] This critique about festival demographics was again not unique to the Afrikaans-orientated festivals. Zingi Mkefa (2004: 7) wrote in relation to the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown: "It seems to me that the same people who had the luxury of attending such festivals in South Africa' apartheid era, are packing theatres to see this year's productions … Where are the majority of South Africans"?

The town, the festival and the majority of supporters that the festival attracts are far removed from the development curve that the rest of the country is striving for; a curve that is aimed at inclusiveness, reconciliation and integration.

The KKNK was not exempt from critique. One of the discussants, Marlene le Roux, argued at one of the KKNK's panel discussion in 2003 that the "arts festivals indicate that society still consists of various 'cultural islands' … the artists, productions and audiences are representative of mainly white culture" (Louw 2003: 1). Mike van Graan (2004b: 5) also complained about what he termed "the ongoing ghettoisation" of South African theatre, in other words the lack of crossover between Afrikaans and English audiences within festivals.

Van Graan (2004a: 2), in another newspaper commentary, expressed the view that the KKNK would never be national and representative, no matter how hard it tried, as was evident from the "handful of black audience members, the sprinkling of black performers" at the festival. But Van Graan felt at the same time that the KKNK should embrace its identity as an Afrikaans festival that attracts various Afrikaans people. Critics as recently as 2005 described the festivals as "resolutely white" and "lily white" (Schoeman and Groenewald 2005; Prins 2005). Jerome Topley (2005: 9) asked in a *Krit* report "Why is there still a strong feeling amongst people that the KKNK is not for everyone that speaks Afrikaans, let alone for all the country's languages". Kees van der Waal and Steven Robins (2008), as recently as 2008 found that the KKNK festival continued to cater largely for 'white' middle-class families.

7.4.3 Racially motivated incidents at the festivals

A number of racially motivated incidents, apart from the racially exclusive demographic profile of festival-goers, also fuelled accusations of exclusivity. Festival-goers, for example, threw beer cans at Miriam Makeba, a world-renowned 'black' South African singer, when she performed at an open-air music concert at the KKNK in 1997. A 'coloured' man hit a 'white' festival-goer in the face, without provocation, when he was walking down Baron van Reede Street during the KKNK in 2001. He later died from a head injury (Basson 2001a).

The same year a racist brawl between two women marred the success of Aardklop. One 'white' woman told another in a threatening way to leave a bar along with some 'black' musicians with

whom she was socializing and who all appeared in a festival production. Giep van Zyl, the festival's director at the time, condemned the incident by saying "it is objectionable behaviour that is completely in conflict with our aim of uniting people through the arts". There were reports the following year about a 'coloured' man being prohibited from occupying his accommodation in a 'white house' and about intolerance at one of the music stages at the KKNK (Disbergen 2002: 1).

The most recent incident occurred at Aardklop in 2004, when a 'coloured' member of Potchefstroom's city council, Japie Fransman, and his company were confronted by a group of 'white' students at a hostel on the PUK campus. They were subjected to racial abuse and Fransman was assaulted (Botha 2004c: 3).

Such incidents also occurred during my period of fieldwork. One respondent, a manager of the technical crew at Aardklop, told me how she experienced Potchefstroom as a very racist town. She and the technical crew could all relate incidents of racist behaviour. She and some of her 'black' crew were sitting in the bar area of a restaurant in Potchefstroom just the day before when someone threw teargas into the area.

7.5 Integrating centre and periphery

The marked division between centre and periphery within the festival contexts, as was evident from particularly the distribution of production venues and the demographic profile of festival-goers, was reflective of a broader issue of festival involvement and the extent, duration and quality of such involvement. Both festivals from the outset prioritized broader community involvement. Nic Barrow and Karen Meiring told me in the interviews that I had with them about the early years of the KKNK and how difficult it was to draw people into the festival:

> We have a history of apartheid and people of colour looked from a distance … with every meeting and press release we said 'come help'. We are inclusive. It progressed slowly during the first three years, even nowadays one or another person will claim that the festival is too 'white' (Nic Barrow).

> Inclusiveness was an important word from the very first festival. Not everyone immediately

bought into it, but it was stated with sincerity. They tried to make the very first community meeting in 1994, where many people gathered, as inclusive as possible … The first Board of Directors consisted mostly of local people and had a community orientation (Karen Meiring).

Although both festivals established a community liaison committee to update host communities on festival developments and to give them greater input into the festivals, they continually grappled with the issue of inclusiveness.[12] The respective festival managements consciously attempted over the years to diminish the sharp division between centre and periphery by involving the broader community of the host towns, region and country in the festivals. There were three key aspects to the broadening of festival involvement: artistic, economic and linguistic. The first two will be addressed in this chapter, while the issue of linguistic involvement will be considered in the next chapter.

7.5.1 Artistic involvement in the festivals

Both festivals from the start took care to involve prominent people from within especially the 'coloured' and 'black' Afrikaans-speaking communities in the leadership structures of these festivals. The Board of Directors at both festivals thus became more representative as the following appointments by the KKNK testified.

David Piedt was elected as a member of the first Board of Directors of the KKNK and served as festival chairman from 2001 to 2006. Professor Russel Botman, the Vice-Rector (Education) at the University of Stellenbosch at the time, was appointed as the chairman of the KKNK's Board of Directors in 2006 (Maggo 2006). Dr Franklin Sonn, the holder of numerous chairman- and directorships and honorary degrees, served as patron of the KKNK along with Christo Wiese and Ton Vosloo. Patrice Motsepe, the president of Business Unity South Africa and the Chamber of Commerce in South Africa, was appointed as the fourth patron of the KKNK in 2004. The involvement of such distinguished 'non-white' Afrikaans speakers symbolized the broadening of the festivals to include the Afrikaans speech community in its totality.

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[12] The Board of Directors of the KKNK decided to establish a community liaison committee in 1997. Representatives of the municipality, the South African Defence force, the Afrikaans Chamber of Commerce, the Bridgton Civic Association and so forth served on this committee, which communicated information about the festival to the host community.

The arts festivals also launched a number of initiatives aimed at making the festivals more inclusive. The KKNK, in cooperation with the Western Cape government, presented the so-called *voorbrandfees* (meaning 'pave the way') since 1995 as an outreach programme to bring a much smaller and shorter version of the festival to communities of the Klein Karoo. These impoverished communities, which would otherwise not have experienced the festival, included Waboomskraal, De Rust, Dysselsdorp, Schoemanshoek, Ladismith, Zoar and Uniondale. "A Xhosa programme was also introduced in Beaufort West, George, Mossel Bay and Oudtshoorn" (Groenewald 2007a: 2).

The *voorbrandfees* used to take place as a prelude to the festival, but in 2005 this part of the festival was moved to the quieter period of August or September. Mobile theatres and community halls were utilized as production venues for mainly children's drama, dancing and music productions, many of them based on the prescribed works for schools. The *voorbrandfees* also arranged workshops, language competitions and evening concerts to inform people about the festival. Karen Meiring told me that "the point of departure of the *voorbrandfees*", which reaches about 30 000 people, has always been "reconciliation, enrichment and entertainment".

The KKNK presented two projects aimed at the development of potential in the early years of its existence. The first project consisted of a number of lectures, workshops and practical sessions in choir music. A group of front of house personnel also undertook a tour to Cape Town where they visited different theatres and attended two performances. Since 2004 the KKNK has also annually awarded a bursary in the worth of R50 000 to a talented but needy person under 30 years from the greater Oudtshoorn area to pursue a professional career in the arts.

The KKNK management also arranged for the North West University to present a course in arts management to formerly disadvantaged people in Oudtshoorn in 2004. During a launch ceremony of the KKNK in 2005 it was announced that from that year onwards there would be free performances at the Nevada Bongolethu hall in the township of Bongolethu. The same year seven best-selling artists performed for free at Bridgton Secondary School.

Another important aspect of the festival management's effort to make the KKNK more inclusive was the staging of a number of community productions. The festival management intended to

make these productions, which had Oudtshoorn as central theme, commercially viable by enabling locals to also star in the productions outside of festival time. Although this ideal was not fully realized, the productions were all successful at the festivals.

The first community production, *Struisvogelstories* (Ostrich Stories), was staged in 2000. The cabaret, which was written by AJ van der Merwe, told the history of the ostrich feather industry in Oudtshoorn. The KKNK, in cooperation with the Kango ostrich farm, brought in an outside director to workshop the production with the players, who were all locals from the region. The production was such a success at the festival that it won a *Kanna* Prize for the best production in the category 'Cabaret and musical theatre' the following year.

The festival's Board of Directors commissioned another community production, *45 grade* (*45 degrees*), in 2003. Hennie van Greunen wrote the text and directed the production, which was sponsored by the KKNK. Eleven amateur actors starred in the production, which told various stories about the people of Oudtshoorn (Beyers 2003: 2). Another community production, *Die Meermin* (The Mermaid), written by Malan Steyn and directed by Amelda Brand, was similarly workshopped and brought to the stage with the help of six locals from the greater Oudtshoorn area in 2004.

Aardklop also took active measures to reach out to the surrounding communities. The ATKV received a mandate from the Aardklop festival management to organize a free entertainment programme within Promosa and Ikageng, the former 'non-white' residential areas of Potchefstroom. Since the festival's inception the ATKV, under the auspices of Aardklop, has hosted workshops in the community hall of Promosa to introduce learners to different aspects of the entertainment industry.[13] Handcraft demonstration sessions, traditional dancing workshops and educational performances, aimed specifically at the youth, were introduced in later years. The world-renowned mime artist, John Jacobs, for example, presented a workshop for the youth of Promosa township and the most talented participants were included in his show at Aardklop in

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[13] The Board of Directors of the KKNK decided to establish a community liaison committee in 1997. Representatives of the municipality, the South African Defence force, the Afrikaans Chamber of Commerce, the Bridgton Civic Association and so forth served on this committee which communicated information about the festival to the host community.

2004. Workshops for drum majorettes and in traditional dancing were also held at the Thlokwe school hall in Ikageng in the same year.

From 2000 there were posters and initiatives, in response to criticism that Promosa and Ikageng were excluded, to make the locals from those areas aware of what were happening in town. One of the initiatives was the establishment of the Ikageng Aardklop committee in 2001. Aardklop, in conjunction with the ATKV and Artema, the Institute for Arts Management and Development of the North West University, also introduced a course in arts management in 2001. The course, which could be attended by people from the previously disadvantaged sector of the community, has been offered ever since. A group of at least thirty people from the Potchefstroom area was empowered to become arts managers and administrators in 2005.

Local groups performed at school halls and mobile stages in Ikageng and on sponsored music stages at the main festival terrain from 2001 onwards. Since 2002 a jazz festival has been hosted in Ikageng as "an attempt to empower local groups and expose them to bigger audiences" (Viljoen 2003c: 13). The production *Sophiatown* was presented in 2003 as part of the 'main' festival and the cast consisted of amateurs from the communities of Ikageng and Promosa (Nieuwoudt 2003a: 14).

Another example of a community production was the production *Anton Goosen en sy Umfaans*, which Aardklop commissioned in 2005. Auditions were held in the community hall of Ikageng. I attended one of the repetitions two weeks before the festival. Anton Goosen, a well-established Afrikaans singer, was unsure how the collaboration would turn out, but told me that the point of the production was to work with available talent from the surrounding community. A similar show, *Bra Pa en sy Umfaans*, was staged at the KKNK earlier that year with Anton Goosen and ten locals from the Bridgton area (Strydom 2005c: 4). *Die Wittebroodsdae* (The Honeymoon Days) was marketed as an energetic production and staged at Aardklop by a 'black' cast in Afrikaans in the same year. Reportedly the production was well supported by the 'white' audiences (Du Toit 2005: 1).

Official Aardklop documentation reveals that the issue of securing great local community involvement in the festival was an ongoing concern. During a Board of Directors meeting in

2001 it was, for example, decided that there must not be any differentiation between various communities within the festival; in 2002 it was decided that Ikageng should be incorporated into the safety plan of the festival and that the sale of tickets in the township should be organized better; in 2003 the Board of Directors decided that broader representation was needed; in 2004 the importance of persisting with outreach attempts was emphasized during a meeting and it was decided that more effort should be made to establish the artistic preferences of 'other cultures'.

Giep van Zyl, the festival's manager at the time, talked to me about the challenge of making the festival more inclusive. He singled out language and cultural differences, distance and ('white') festival-goers' perceptions about township dangers as the main factors that deterred festival-goers from visiting the township areas. However, *Gogos Groove*, a professional production that was a combination of Tswana and some Xhosa that was presented in the town centre in 2005 was also not attended well. Giep attributed this to the fact that the show was mainly in Tswana. According to him, festival-goers even resisted seeing shows in English. Marguerite Robertson, the programme manager of Aardklop at the time, also expressed disappointment over poor attendance at the production in an interview that I had with her:

> That is part of doing something for the first time. We specifically decided on a musical production rather than theatre, but the production is in another language. You want to say to people 'come closer, the arts festival is here'. We want everyone to participate, but you first have to break down those walls.

The festival's goal of social transformation, with education at its centre, was evident in her statement. She attributed the low audience turn-out to the fact that it was the first time that the festival presented a production in another language. The festival management hoped that the Afrikaans festival-goers would find a music production in another language more accessible than a theatrical production, but this did not happen. Implicit in her words was the hope that such an experimental effort in breaking down walls might be more successful the second time round.

The breaking down of walls was conceived as a two-way process. Just as festival-goers had to be gradually exposed to productions in which Afrikaans did not feature, so locals from Promosa and Ikageng had to be exposed to Afrikaans and the arts in general. Aardklop therefore

sponsored tickets for certain shows as part of 'audience development'. These tickets, which the Ikageng committee distributed, went to community organizations in Promosa and Ikageng, whose members in turn had to report on their experience of the shows.

The two festivals, as stated before, had a similar approach to the role of education in breaking down divisions between people. Karen Meiring and I discussed the Miriam Makeba incident, referred to earlier, that occurred in 1997 and damaged the name and the cause of the festival. According to her, the festival management decided the following year not to shy away from integration, so they took on a project with Laurika Rauch and Vusi Mahlasela – a 'white' and a 'black' musician who were both famous in their own right. She said to me with regard to the concert entitled *Samekoms/Kopano*, "we persisted with what we wanted to do. We did not allow an incident to put us off from such collaborations".

7.5.2 Economic involvement in the festivals

The series of economic impact analyses that have been commissioned almost every year give an indication of the economic spin-off effects that resulted from the towns' hosting of the festivals.[14] The festivals served as important stimuli of economic growth to the local and regional economies and encouraged investment in the host towns. The KKNK festival represented the third largest source of income to the town after the ostrich industry and tourism. The festival generated about R56 million for the local economy (Groenewald 2007a: 1). The total economic impact of Aardklop was estimated at R42.9 million (Saayman and Saayman 2006: 38). The revenue of many local businesses in both towns increased, along with the number of tourists that annually visited the towns (Saayman, Slabbert and Saayman 2006: 45).

Economic empowerment and job creation were not the key objectives of the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals; the celebration of the arts in Afrikaans was. But the festivals, especially in the light of the festivals' official commitment to social transformation, undeniably had a social responsibility towards their host communities. According to Vic Webb (2006: 35), Afrikaans can become an instrument in the struggle against poverty, inequality and discrimination; it must

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[14] The Institute of Leisure and Tourism at the North West University has been commissioned to annually carry out an economic impact study during the KKNK and Aardklop.

be experienced as a language of people who try to create employment and equal access to opportunities, rights and privileges. Johan Rossouw (2006: 140) makes a similar point: "A language will only develop when it is an instrument of community power and economic upliftment". The same could be said of the two Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals.

The KKNK and Aardklop (directly or indirectly) presented a number of chronically unemployed residents with their only opportunity to earn an income. Some worked for the festivals, while others were employed by local businesses. Unemployment presented a major challenge to both towns.[15] The following table indicates the employment rates of the two towns:

TABLE 1: EMPLOYMENT RATE OF THE HOST TOWNS

Town	Black/ African	Coloured	Indian or Asian	White	Total
Oudtshoorn					
Employed	1432	14417	23	4688	20,560
Unemployed	1317	8881	6	258	10,462
Potchefstroom					
Employed	24199	2202	186	10279	36,866
Unemployed	19645	1433	11	679	21,768

Statistics South Africa Census 2001

Initially few locals viewed the festivals as an opportunity to generate income, but as the attendance numbers grew, the festivals became increasingly commercialized. The applications for work during the festivals that the organizers received thus increased over the years. Companies, in the case of Aardklop, were given the opportunity to tender for the provisioning of security and temporary personnel at the festivals. The temporary workers were assigned to various divisions such as the craft markets, logistics, technical aspects, sponsors, marketing

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[15] Unemployment almost doubled from 1990 to 1999, according to the Integrated Development Plan for Potchefstroom (2002: 23).

logistics, cleaning and as overseers at venues. Preference was given to locals from within the host towns, except where the festival positions required specialist knowledge.

The organizing committee of the KKNK received about 3500 applications for temporary work in 2004 (Coetzee 2004: 2). As a result of the hosting of the festival, 650 employment opportunities were directly created by the festival for the local community in 2004, whereas 636 job placements were made in 2005. The appointments were made to reflect the demographic profile of the South African population. The applications were almost equally divided between men and women and the majority were 'coloured' (60.4%), followed by 'whites' (28.1%).

A number of permanent job opportunities in the host towns were also created as a result of the festivals. There were some complaints by locals that the festivals employed the 'same people' year after year and that some of these people such as teachers were already permanently employed elsewhere. Naturally residents whose applications were unsuccessful were disappointed:

> I would like it if everyone could find work. Every year there are only certain groups that work at the festival. I've applied for the past three years. You get your application form from the Seppie Greeff building [the KKNK's offices are located there] and then you submit it with a copy of your ID. I have never had fixed employment; I only casual here and there (Charlene, Bridgton resident).

The festival managements responded to accusations that the festival only benefited certain sectors of the communities by implementing measures to allow more community members to benefit economically from the festivals. One such a measure was the awarding of a number of so-called *gemeenskapstalletjies* (community stalls) on merit to locals who applied for a stall at the festival. The KKNK supplied a 3 x 3 m framed stall with a roof covering. The successful applicants had to pay an administration fee and the basic cost for electricity and/or water, if needed.

The KKNK also instituted a tender procedure according to which community and service organizations such as schools and churches could apply to manage temporary restaurants in certain identified areas during the festival. According to Karen Meiring, 'the noble intention'

216

was to give the community the opportunity to take advantage of the festival so that part of the money generated during the festival would remain in the town.

A prime area was awarded to an institution on the condition that the institution took on a so-called *bemagtigingsvennoot* (empowerment partner). This was a historically disadvantaged institution that did not have the facilities or the expertise to make a success of such an endeavour on its own. The empowerment partner had to share in the profits proportionate to the financial and supportive contribution that it made towards the endeavour.

The idea was that the *bemagtigingsvenoot* would be provided with an opportunity to generate funds and empowered to eventually manage a temporary restaurant independently through the transfer of skills. Even though some of the previously advantaged institutions protested against these new measures, they had to adhere to them in order to acquire some of the prime festival terrains.

When Bridgton Junior Secondary and Bridgton Senior Secondary (located in the former 'coloured' residential area of Oudtshoorn) received a three-year tender to manage a centrally located temporary restaurant at the KKNK in 2000, it was a first both for the school and for festival-goers. One of the school principals, Albie Ellman, told me how he experienced his involvement with the *Struiskombuis* (Ostrich Kitchen) as the 'restaurant' was called:

> We took the chance. It was an enormous challenge. Nobody gave us a chance, but the festival's Board of Directors supported us. The festival-goers started viewing people of colour differently. It changed peoples' views and perceptions at that point in time in the town and in the country. Our school helped with that empowerment process. We feared that people would not buy from us, but perceptions changed. We received good support from everyone. It was not branded as a 'coloured' eatery.

Another success story was the partnership between the Kango Valley Dutch Reformed Church and the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa in Oudtshoorn. The stall, *Die Kango Kombuis* (Kango Kitchen), had a significant financial turnover in 2005. Two members of the respective congregations, Rosie Schoeman and André Boezak, a preacher, told me how they experienced working together:

It is a challenge for us. It is not easy. You get to know each other's good and bad points. You work together 18 hours a day. Sometimes you get on each other's nerves. But you get to know each other well. You can't keep up a front. You learn to laugh with each other (Rosie Schoeman).

We took a lot more from the experience than money. The cooperation, the discovery of each other ... we could read each other's faces. Structured negotiations and discussions would not have been able to achieve that. I have a lot of hope for this country (André Boezak).

While Aardklop did not have a similar empowerment initiative as the KKNK, festival workers there also commented on how team work brought them closer together. An Aardklop respondent, who manned a food stall at the festival as a fundraising effort for their church, said that the experience of working together has brought the church members closer together. He attributed it to the fact that "you stand here for five days working shoulder to shoulder. You share each other's joys and sorrows".

The experience of working together side by side during festivals thus also facilitated social *communitas*, in addition to attending festival productions and/or relaxing together. But the economic incentive of the festivals, in the same way that it bound people together, also drew them apart, as the numerous 'turf wars' that erupted between stall holders during these festivals testified.

The KKNK was also involved with a project of Bridgton Junior Secondary to upgrade one of their residences for festival accommodation and, with Morestêr Secondary school, to help develop a terrain that could be used as a parking lot during the festival (Coetzee 2004: 2). The money collected during church services that were held during the KKNK was also donated to local organizations.

Aardklop, similar to the KKNK, introduced an initiative for so-called *gemeenskapstalletjies* (community stalls) with the aid of the city council and tourism department in 2003. The tourism department provided those hawkers who were selected to exhibit at the festival with start-up capital. I spoke to some of these stall holders, all from Ikageng, who sold beaded products and

other traditional items such as dresses and mats at the festival in 2005. They were generally happy with the placement of their stalls compared to the previous year, when they were not as close to the 'festival core'. Festival-goers expressed interest in their wares and they valued the exposure. There were some complaints, though, that the inside space was insufficient to display their products properly.

7.6 Centre and periphery: the tension persists

According to the festival rhetoric, every year more people took ownership of the KKNK. Gerrit Brand (2005b) wrote that the increasing diversity of the "relatively white" KKNK festival was remarkable, given that attending festival is typically a middle-class leisure activity. But he nevertheless felt that more could be done to involve the local community. Some festival commentators, however, interpreted the "full festival programmes" within the local townships, as propagated by the festival managements, as a sign that the festivals were not exclusive and involved the 'whole' community (see Badenhorst 1999; Viljoen 2001; Labuschagne 2002; Lewis and Eloff 2004; Wicomb 2005b). Reportedly festival audiences were getting more used to racial integration and seeing mixed races on stage together (Smit 2005: 14).

Significantly a number of respondents that I interviewed at the KKNK, more so than at Aardklop, felt that this was indeed the case. All of them emphasized of their own accord that the perceived diversity in the festival was a recent and gradual development:

> The vibe of the [KKNK] festivals is definitely changing. More people from Oudtshoorn are attending the festivals. They never used to go to it, but they are becoming more involved. You could always see that people did not care for it in Bridgton – the area where my family stays – but now they are in town. They used to say everything is too expensive. But now everything is even more expensive and yet they go to the festival (Ross, Oudtshoorn resident).

> The people were sceptical about the first one [the first festival]. They thought it was again a *boerefees* [Afrikaner festival]. The appointment of coloureds in the management team was a front. It gradually changed. There is now a more genial intermixing. But it is still largely a white and a coloured festival; there are few blacks involved (Frank, Oudtshoorn resident).

219

The festival was lilywhite in the beginning, but now everyone is mixed. That is good. We should give them ['coloured' people] also a chance to be here. It is something that we have to get used to (Gerda, festival-goer at the KKNK).

The festival had changed tremendously. We were still shell-shocked from the apartheid era when the festival began. Particularly coloured and black people saw white people as exploiters who only protected their own interests. It was a view at that time. It was only later that the perception changed. A sense of mistrust had always been a dilemma but that had changed completely (anonymous Oudtshoorn resident).

When I prodded the resident from Bridgton, who wished to remain anonymous, about what brought about these 'tremendous changes' in the festival, he continued: "The festival undeniably contributed hugely to the change in perceptions. It became more genial and comfortable as people came to recognize and deal with their underlying differences". Herman Kitshoff (2004) found that the KKNK was more diverse in terms of race and programme composition than in the first ten years of its existence. There was certainly evidence that the local community, on both sides, underwent a change in disposition for the better. The amount of temporary applications by locals for work during the festivals increased over the years. There was increased community involvement from different groups.

The festival managements have progressed with making the festivals more representative of the Afrikaans language community and the South African community at large judged by the location and content of festival productions and the comments and observed interactions of residents, festival-goers and festival workers. Yet fieldwork revealed that the centre/periphery division to a large extent remained firmly in place.

This was particularly the case with Aardklop. Residential areas in Potchefstroom such as Mohadien, the former Indian residential area in Potchefstroom, were completely removed from the festival activities. Local community artists performed for overwhelmingly 'non-white' audiences in the township areas, but were seldom incorporated into the festival mainstream.

Some Potchefstroom residents complained among each other, to the festival management, to the press and to me about this. Suliman Rajah, one outspoken critic of the Aardklop festival and the administrative assistant to the councillor of infrastructure in Potchefstroom, said to me:

> Sure it is an Afrikaans festival and I don't have a problem with Afrikaners, but I have a problem with them trying to build an Afrikaner identity separate from other identities whereas we are trying as a nation to bring people together in Potchefstroom in order to build a single South African identity.

The respondent's critique was based on the lack of capital outlays and signs of development in the former townships and the fact that, according to him, only businesses, restaurants, guest houses and schools that were centrally located in town benefited economically from the festival. The outreach attempts by Aardklop and its partners to make the broader host communities feel involved achieved a measure of success, but some people that I spoke to from these areas felt that the festival management did not cater for their specific interests. Another local critic of the festival said:

> Do you want my true opinion of the festival? I think Aardklop in terms of appealing to a wider community still has a lot to do. There is a greater Potch [Potchefstroom] with different communities. They have to change the way they operate as Afrikaans cultural organization to include other communities. They must involve communities in deciding what kind of entertainment people want to see. That is why they failed at the stadium [where the jazz festival was hosted]. They organized artists without knowing what people want.

Interviews and informal conversations with festival-goers revealed that there was generally a complete lack of interest in the townships amongst festival-goers. Participant observation confirmed that few festival-goers and residents visited these outlying areas.

This lack of interest extended both ways. When I enquired why certain residents were not involved in the Aardklop festival, answers varied. Some simply did not know about the festival, while others were uninterested in it. A member of the city council in Potchefstroom who has never attended Aardklop said: "Aardklop is not my style. I think it is there to promote the

Afrikaner culture. That is my understanding. I am not an Afrikaner. I am Xhosa. I have not given it a chance".

7.7 Conclusion

Social divisions, inherent to the festivals' construction and reflective of broader South African society, were evident at both these festivals since their inceptions. The critique that the festivals were divided (and divisive) events did not abate during successive festivals. These ingrained divisions, most notably between 'high culture' and 'popular culture' and between centre and periphery, constrained the extent to which these festivals could actually function to bring diverse people together, to achieve social transformation and to facilitate social *communitas*.

While the festival literature depicts festivals as unrestricted events in which festival-goers jointly participate, actual participation at the arts festivals was restricted to a large degree to those who could afford to attend. Although the festivals attempted to make the arts accessible to a broader public, productions were expensive and time consuming. Production attendance generally required knowledge of theatre 'language' and theatre etiquette, in addition to an understanding of the spoken language in the production. This discouraged some festival-goers from attending.

Festival participation at the arts festivals furthermore assumed a variety of forms. The main distinction was between festival workers and festival-goers. Festival workers primarily attended these festivals to earn an income and hence had little time to participate in the festivities. They had a markedly different orientation to time and space than festival-goers.

Public space was also by no means neutral, as the festival literature seems to suggest. There was a prominent tension between centre (the festival core) and periphery (areas that were somewhat removed from the festival action) within the arts festivals. Festival workers competed with each other for space and the buying public's attention. Various temporary enclosures such as beer tents and craft markets were established at festival time and served to regulate and restrict freedom of movement.

The widespread tendency to portray festivals as a time when the whole world, metaphorically-speaking, comes alive, assumes that this enlivening process occurs across the entire festival

setting. But the animation of spaces during these festivals was not nearly as self-evident as the festival literature seems to suggest. While the host towns were said to be 'dead' by some residents in contrast to the liveliness of festivals, there were some spaces within festivals that appeared 'dead' whether because of being removed from the festival cores or as a result of lack of festival-goers.

This chapter, whilst not denying that festivals can indeed be a cohesive force, shows how all of the aspects that purportedly fostered cohesion festival time – the perceived 'neutrality of public space', the abolition of distinctions between festival-goers, celebration of key community values, communal involvement, widespread festival participation and the fostering of belonging – were much more complex than a reading of the festival literature suggests.

Public space within these festival contexts was by no means as neutral, festival participation not as widespread and the absence of distinctions between festival-goers not as absolute as the festival literature claimed of festivals in general. Both festivals were exclusionary on more than one level because of the elitist reputation and nature of the arts, the festivals' layout that restricted public access to these festivals, and the political-economic restrictions that constrained festival and production attendance. Ultimately, *communitas* was largely reinforced in terms of being 'white' and Afrikaans-speaking, an issue that is addressed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8

Analysing the interplay between Afrikaans and social *communitas*: perceptions of festival-goers

8.1 Extract from field notes
KKNK 2005 – Day 8

11: 45. I walk through the teardrop banners of established Afrikaans publications - *Die Burger*, *Sarie*, *Huisgenoot* – that cover a grassy area within the closed-off section of Baron van Reede Street, the main street of Oudtshoorn. A promotional banner for SABC2, the television channel for the screening of Afrikaans content, provocatively asks: 'Do you speak (SABC2) language'. A few metres further another advertising slogan playfully warns: *As jy die jol wil jol, moet jy die taal kan rol* (If you want to take part in the jollity, you have to speak the language, in other words Afrikaans)!

The festival landscape is indeed suffused with Afrikaans. Temporary eating establishments boast names such as *Knibbel en Kuier* (Nibble and Socialize) and *Hap en Tap* (Bite and Pour). Pamphlets, advertising some of the 200 festival productions on offer, are thrust into my hands. While I concentrate on finding my way through the festive throng, I am conscious of the refrain of an Afrikaans song by Amanda Strydom, reverberating across the area: "I can rock in my language, I can go berserk in my language, I can shock in my language!"

I hear the Cape minstrels before I notice their blue and red satin suits and their white hats as they march down the road, playing on a variety of wind instruments. Behind me two festival-goers, who clearly have not seen each other recently, embrace each other. The one asks in one breath in Afrikaans: 'Where have you been, what [performances] have you seen?" The other one exclaims: "Isn't it wonderful that everything here is Afrikaans!"

8.2 Introduction

Chapter 5 gave a detailed analysis of the social and spatial construction of the arts festivals as liminal events. The festival settings, despite numerous continuities with the 'everyday', differed markedly from everyday settings. Temple Hauptfleisch (2007: 9), in an attempt to capture this

contrast, called the arts festival in Oudtshoorn "another kind of country". This description could equally fit the Aardklop festival in Potchefstroom. More than one respondent told me at the festivals that they felt like the world had become a 'different place'.

This chapter foregrounds another crucial aspect of the festivals' different-ness compared to the 'everyday', namely the overwhelming presence and dominance of Afrikaans. Clearly, as the fieldwork vignette illustrates, one could not visit the KKNK and Aardklop without constantly being aware of the centrality of Afrikaans to the festivities. The central thesis throughout this study is that the Afrikaans-orientated arts festivals, as liminal phenomena, created contexts in which specifically Afrikaans identities in post-apartheid South Africa could be renegotiated, reworked and/or re-imagined in diverse ways. This is illustrated in the field notes where the Cape minstrels playfully performed within the same 'festival space' as Amanda Strydom, who is known for a completely different style of Afrikaans music to theirs.

This final chapter builds on the previous chapter in critically evaluating the extent to which the festivals as liminal events served as a cohesive force, or alternatively put, assessing the festivals' potential for fostering social *communitas*. The festivals, as stated before, have been accused of promoting separatism rather than unity. Whereas the previous chapter focused on the social divisions that arose within these festivals, as manifested in the tension between 'high culture' and 'popular culture', and between centre and periphery, this chapter pays particular attention to the role of language.

The first section examines the complex position of Afrikaans within the two festivals by respectively paying attention once more to the festival organizers' approach to Afrikaans, the festivals' production content, and the tension between Afrikaners and *Afrikaanses*. The following sections examine how the festival-goers themselves, as well as other festival role players, experienced the festivals, with specific reference to Afrikaans. Afrikaans, as shown in Chapter 3, had historically become the core symbol of Afrikaner identity in the development of the ethno-nationalist process. The emphasis on Afrikaans within the arts festivals functioned to confirm Afrikaner identity for many festival-goers in a new post-apartheid context. But a section in this chapter, as the title of the section indicates, also highlights divergent ways of 'being

Afrikaans' at the festivals. The chapter concludes with the finding that the festivals were characterized just as much by the presence as the absence of social *communitas.*

8.3 Unashamedly Afrikaans

Both arts festivals were open to other 'language expression' in addition to Afrikaans. Giep van Zyl, the former festival manager of Aardklop, said in relation to the festival's productions that "the festival is essentially Afrikaans, but the festival's selection committee is open to other cultures and languages". The focus on Afrikaans extended to all aspects of festival management. When explaining Aardklop's selection procedure for 'front of house' personnel (see Glossary) Kobus Lodewyckx, who was in control of the process, for example told me:

> We listen to how he or she speaks Afrikaans. Afrikaans is exceedingly important. Aardklop is an Afrikaans festival; it is not a hodgepodge festival. The shows are Afrikaans and the people who attend it are Afrikaans speaking.

8.3.1 Production content: an overview

This focus on Afrikaans was also evident in the composition and content of the festival programmes. The following tables provides a rough breakdown of the productions at the KKNK and Aardklop in terms of language.

KLEIN KAROO NATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL: PRODUCTION OVERVIEW

Years	Production Total	Afrikaans	English	Afrikaans and other	Other language	Language neutral
1995	90	71	5	8	3	3
1996	166	111	10	27	6	12
1997	215	129	13	55	3	15
1998	228	135	15	45	7	26
1999	212	143	5	36	3	25
2000	202	131	8	45	2	16
2001	227	137	23	35	10	22
2002	189	123	13	30	2	21
2003	213	135	12	43	6	17
2004	200	116	9	57	0	18
2005	210	122	7	60	2	19
2006	138	80	5	40	-	13

AARDKLOP: PRODUCTION OVERVIEW

Years	Production Total	Afrikaans	English	Afrikaans and other	Other language	Language neutral
1998						
1999	117	64	9	12	0	32
2000	113	74	6	18	0	15
2001	103	61	10	12	2	18
2002	129	79	17	16	3	14
2003	142	75	10	21	6	30
2004	156	88	7	19	9	33
2005	137	89	7	16	4	21
2006	84	56	3	12	3	10

Clearly Afrikaans predominated in the official production content. The festivals, for example, over the years staged classical works by Afrikaans writers such as Eugene Marais, CJ Langenhoven, C Louis Leipoldt, Uys Krige, NP van Wyk Louw and Breyten Breytenbach (see Glossary).

The targeting of primarily Afrikaans speakers was evident, not only in the actual production content, but also in the promotional material that the respective festivals, productions there and reviewers of productions employed. Everything at the festivals seemed to revolve around Afrikaans. The press, for example, referred to 'the Afrikaans world' (Meiring 2002b), 'Afrikaans entertainment artists' (Griebenow 2002), 'Afrikaans rockers' (Meiring 2004) and so forth when advertising or reviewing festival productions.

The predominance of Afrikaans was also evident in the annual lecture series – constructive conversations in which experts from different disciplines shared their opinions on topical issues – that both festivals held. The interactive seminar series, known as *Oopgesprek* (Open Discussion) has been presented by *Die Burger* at the KKNK since 1999. The *Sol Plaatje Lecture* series was instituted at the first Aardklop festival in honour of the writer, politician, philosopher, playwright and cultural activist who lived in the Potchefstroom region for part of his life.

Although some of the lectures addressed broad South African issues, lectures were mostly targeted at Afrikaans speakers as reflected in the Afrikaans topics at the KKNK: *Die oorsprong van Afrikaans* (The origins of Afrikaans) (KKNK 1999), *Hoe gaan Afrikaans en ander nie-dominante tale oorleef in Suid-Afrika?* (How are Afrikaans and other non-dominant languages

going to survive in South Africa?) (KKNK 2001), *Gender en seksualiteit in die Afrikaanse gemeenskap* (Gender and sexuality in the Afrikaans community) (KKNK 2002), *Kappies, kopdoeke en kommuniste: Afrikaanse vroue van toeka tot nou* (Bonnets, head-cloths and communists: Afrikaans women from the past to the present) (KKNK 2004) and *Verraaiers en profete: Afrikaner dissidente* (Traitors and prophets: Afrikaner dissidents) (KKNK 2005). One of the topics in the *Oop Gesprek* lecture series of *Die Burger* at the KKNK in 2006 addressed the issue of whether the attainment of a 'multicoloured' Afrikaans community was a possibility. Panel members discussed the reasons for the distance between the 'white' and 'coloured' speech communities.

The targeting of Afrikaans speakers in the lectures was equally evident at Aardklop, judging by some of the Afrikaans lecture themes. The English translations of the themes are provided here: 'NP van Wyk Louw: The literary heritage' (Aardklop 1999); 'We are again talking about *Boetman*' (Aardklop 2000); 'Afrikaans advertising' (Aardklop 2000); 'Afrikaans copywriters are fed-up' (Aardklop 2000); 'The voice of young South Africa – how young people feel about the future of Afrikaans' (Aardklop 2002); 'Mother tongue education: Is my child going to speak my language? (Aardklop 2005).

It is interesting to note how many of the lecture topics revealed angst, however subtle, about the survival of Afrikaans under post-apartheid conditions. The lecture series at both festivals were, however, structured to represent the views of a broad spectrum of Afrikaans speakers. During the lecture series at Aardklop about the youth's feelings on Afrikaans in 2002, the panel discussants, for example, explicitly distanced themselves from a language struggle that was framed in exclusive, 'white' and conservative terms (Willemse 2002: 10).

The festival managements wanted to avoid being accused of equating Afrikaner or 'white' interests with the views, interests and experiences of Afrikaans speakers in general and overlooking 'non-white' members of the speech community, as had happened under apartheid.

8.3.2 The onstage tension between Afrikaners and Afrikaanses

Both festival programmes were broad in scope. Yet a content analysis that I undertook of festival and related publications over the past ten years revealed a curious tension between a

focus on and targeting of Afrikaners (in other words 'white' Afrikaans speakers in the narrow sense of the term) and *Afrikaanses* (all Afrikaans speakers, regardless of race).

The term 'Afrikaners' (Bütow 1998; Fouché 1999; Nel 1999; Wasserman 2000; Breytenbach 2004; Strydom 2005d; Lee 2005c) and related terms such as *Afrikanerdom* (Meiring 2002a; Burger 2005b), 'Afrikaner culture' (Van Niekerk 2000), 'Afrikaner psyche' (Booyens 2004) and 'Afrikaner nation' (Botha 2005) frequently appeared in the festival publications and reviews of festival productions.

Since the festivals' inception a number of productions delivered social commentary on the state of the Afrikaners. The diversity in production themes, however, made it difficult to delineate distinct themes and patterns in the ways in which Afrikaner identity was addressed. Rather than engaging with Afrikaner identity in a coherent way, the two festivals provided a forum where 'white' Afrikaner identity could be (sometimes simultaneously) examined, critiqued, reinforced, protected, celebrated or deconstructed onstage. This engagement with Afrikaner identity was not restricted to a single genre or format, and productions dealing with Afrikaner issues ranged from cabarets to comedies and musicals.

The drama *Donkerland* (Dark Country) that was performed at the KKNK in 1996 was an example of an attempt to redeem Afrikaner identity. It was described in the official festival guide as "the story of the Afrikaner nation … without apology". Some of the other shows at the KKNK and Aardklop were also marketed as 'being finished with the constant guilt' over apartheid.

Such shows were staged at the time of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, when many Afrikaners felt that they were constantly expected to apologize for apartheid (see Du Plessis 1996). The issue of apologizing (who, when, why, how many times, under what circumstances) was very controversial at the time. Some felt that there would never be true reconciliation in South Africa before everyone in the country admitted that they were guilty of racism (see Rademeyer 1996). The work of the TRC was viewed as one means to deal with peoples' different perceptions and past experiences. There were pleas that everyone, including those who 'passively' supported apartheid simply by voting, should be called to show repentance, to

confess and to apologize (Kotze 1996: 1). Some (see Pretorius 1996) felt that the TRC was the best way to deal with the past, while others (see Latakgomo 1996) were doubtful whether the TRC could remove the bitterness over apartheid.

According to KKNK festival guides *Dit kom van ver af* (It comes from far away), a production that debuted at the KKNK in 1998 with a follow-up production in 1999, was an effort to preserve the legacy of Afrikaner *volksmusiek* or folk music.[1]

A play performed at KKNK and Aardklop, *Boetman is die bliksem in!* (Little Brother is really annoyed) in 2000 depicted a widely publicised fight between two generations of Afrikaners.[2] The performance gave rise to considerable controversy. One view was that Afrikaners should cease their reproaches and self-pity; another was that the controversy surrounding the performance was evidence that the Afrikaners have not yet fully come to terms with the past and apartheid; yet another was that the debate allowed a group of embittered Afrikaners to be heard and that it would be cathartic for them to deal with the pent-up emotions and frustrations they felt towards the previous regime.

Spanner, a production at both Afrikaans-orientated festivals in 2002, explored the psyche of the Afrikaner male. The same was said of the drama *Drie Susters* (Three Sisters) in 2003 (Viljoen 2003d: 4). The production 1*975*, which debuted at the KKNK in 2003, looked at Afrikaner guilt from two women's point of view. And in 2005 the tensions between an Afrikaner father and son with diverging political viewpoints were exposed in the play *Boesman my seun* (Boesman my son). A review described another KKNK production, *Erwe* (Plots), in 2005 as an Afrikaans theatre piece that gradually uncovers the secrets of a 'genuine' Afrikaner family (Strydom 2005d: 11).

A theme that did emerge strongly at the arts festivals was the identity confusion experienced by many Afrikaners. A theatre piece *Mot en vlam* (Moth and flame) that premiered at Aardklop in

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[1] The FAK published a volume of Afrikaner folk songs (many were German with Afrikaans translations) in 1937.

[2] Journalist Chris Louw, in an open letter to politician Willem de Klerk, accused De Klerk's generation of sending many of the generation of Afrikaner men who are now between 30 and 50, to the border to die in order to maintain a morally corrupt system. Now the same generation has to suffer under affirmative action.

2000 was said to be inspired by the 'search for Afrikaner identity'. Two stage plays at Aardklop were summed up as "present-day actors are looking back to make sense of the [Afrikaner] mistakes of the past and trying to determine the way forward for the Afrikaner (Nieuwoudt 2000c: 3). Cobus van Bosch (2003: 18) writes of the Aardklop festival of 2003 that the productions seem to "look back on the sweet and sour of that group of people that have less and less confidence, or conviction, to call themselves Afrikaners".

The drama *Terre'Blanch* that featured at the KKNK in 2004 centred on the question: 'How do the Afrikaners make sense of their identity?' According to a *Krit* review, the text gave "theatre-goers a well-thought-out and balanced look at the lot of a nation that struggled to associate itself with current South African society" (Breytenbach 2004: 16). The futuristic drama *Skroothonde* that premiered at Aardklop in 2004 was set in a completely different physical setting – a scrap yard at night – but engaged with the same theme. It focused on a group of post-apocalyptic Afrikaners in 2204 that survived and were trying to trace their roots.

While the angle varied from year to year, the interest in collective Afrikaner issues did not abate. Tom Gouws, for example, won the fourth KKNK *Nagtegaal* script price in 2005 for his script, *Nag van die langmesse* (Night of the Long Knives). One of the judges described the script as 'a total onslaught on *Afrikanerdom*' (Burger 2005b: 3). A stage hit at both the KKNK and Aardklop was the comedy, *Gehang*, which playfully engaged with Afrikaners' fears and negative characteristics in the process delivering social commentary on the state of the Afrikaners in 2005. A cabaret by Gys de Villiers, simply called *Die Afrikaner*, which premiered at Aardklop in 2006, gave audience members a synoptic overview of the history of Afrikaners in an attempt to define them.

Reviewers remarked not only on the production content, but also on the social demographics of the festival audiences and performers. Johan van Zyl (2002a), reviewing the show *Mime le France* by the well-known mime artist John Jacobs, for example, wrote: The *boereboude* (Boer bums) rose from the orange plastic chairs at the end [of the production] to reward Jacobs for an hour of the best entertainment on this year's KKNK". Yvonne Beyers (2002b: 12) in similar vein described the members of the Afrikaans band *Beeskraal* with reference to their stereotypical "khaki shirts, beer breaths and pot-bellies" as *Boerseuns* (Afrikaner sons).

Stephanie Nieuwoudt (2003b: 13) positively referred to Aardklop as a *volksfees* and wrote that there was nothing wrong with *die volk* (nation) proudly displaying their *hartsgoedere* (things that are close to their heart) to others. Delia du Toit (2006: 1) wrote about the shocked expression on the 'white faces' of Afrikaners in the audience at an Aardklop show that combined reggae and Afrikaans.

The fact that reviewers sometimes described festival audiences in this way could be taken as subtle evidence that in terms of demographics the festivals were not yet as inclusive, and the audiences not yet as diverse, as the festival managements liked to proclaim. It was also revealing that reviews, especially those that appeared in the English press, tended to adhere to stereotypical ideas about Afrikaners. Admittedly, some of the festival productions gave the impression that the festivals were in truth 'cultural' festivals for the Afrikaners (as some festival-goers indeed believed themselves) rather than inclusive celebrations with a strong focus on the Afrikaans arts.

In terms of production content, however, the festivals did not only engage with Afrikaner-related issues in the same way as the former *volksfeeste* did. Numerous productions acknowledged and celebrated the diversity of Afrikaans by employing several Afrikaans variants. Productions such as these did not only celebrate the diversity of Afrikaans. They also served to acknowledge the contribution of various 'non-white' Afrikaans-speaking communities that were marginalized under apartheid to the development of Afrikaans, contributions that were previously overlooked.

The dialect of the people who spoke so-called Cape Afrikaans, namely the 'coloured' people, was stigmatised under apartheid, as stated before. This contributed to their estrangement from the white language community (Ponelis 1987: 10). As part of the attempt to overcome the historical rift between Afrikaans speakers, a number of festival productions therefore re-examined the birth and development of Afrikaans over the years, thereby highlighting its multicultural roots. Many productions were also staged in non-standard Afrikaans.

For example, at the 1995 KKNK *Bobaas van die Boendoe*, a play by widely acclaimed writer André Brink, the main character was described in the festival guide as speaking "the Cape language – the language of the coloureds which gave to Afrikaans its most colourful and lively character". A play entitled *Aku vang 'n ster* (Aku catches a star) written in *Griekwa* (Griqua)

Afrikaans and a production called *Namakwaland in 'n lied gegiet*, (Namaqualand caught in a song) written in the regional dialect of the *Namakwalanders* (people from that region), premiered at the 1996 KKNK festival.

A word craft and poetry item *So is ek gebek* (This is the way I am beaked), which spawned two follow-up productions, was advertised in the same year as presenting "Afrikaans in all its forms". *Broerse*, the first drama in Griqua Afrikaans premiered at the KKNK in 1997. It was described in the festival guide as "a must for everyone whose minds are open enough to listen to Afrikaans … that does not always sound the way people [conservative Afrikaans speakers] think it should".

Speels gesê (Playfully said), a recital programme, illustrated the polyphony of Afrikaans at the KKNK in 1998 together with *Vonke uit die vuurklip* (Sparks from the firestone), a compilation of Afrikaans highlights over the past century, was commissioned by the KKNK to illustrate how vital Afrikaans continues to be. This particular production was pertinently described as a "production about *Afrikaanses*, not [a production] for 'white' Afrikaners" (Van Vuuren 1999: 4). Similarly Aardklop staged *Blouberg* in 2001; this was a production that consisted of traditional Afrikaans songs, which were rewritten and reinterpreted in a more contemporary idiom.

A combination of Afrikaans humour, poetry and monologues was utilized to address the identities of 'coloured' people in *Ons maak eit* [We make out], which was staged at both festivals. A dramatic presentation, the *Sondagdigters* (Sunday poets), which premiered at Aardklop in 2001, centred on the words of five 'black' Afrikaans Dutch Reformed preachers, whose poems had been published in a collection as part of an attempt to show that there are "other voices in the townships for whom Afrikaans is important" (Aardklop Festival guide 2001).

A production at the 2005 KKNK, 'Angels Everywhere' (the original title), was written largely in so-called *Capey* dialect to illustrate how Afrikaans is spoken in the townships of the Western Cape. And in the same year *Ma se melk!* (Mother's milk), an Afrikaans word craft programme guaranteed to upset language purists, was staged. Similarly the production *O Mri vannie*

Padkamp premiered at Aardklop in 2006 and presented the gospel of Matthew in *Tsotsi* Afrikaans.[3]

Festival productions like *Goema*, in which the cast sang "it [Afrikaans] comes from here, it comes from there – after many years a Cape mixture flows through our veins", credited the historical cross-cultural contributions of various people, particularly the slaves at the Cape, with the development of a colourful Afrikaans.[4] This production, which was staged at the KKNK in 2005, implicitly emphasized that Afrikaans was by no means the exclusive property of Afrikaners.

This tension between productions, exhibitions and promotional material that focused on Afrikaner issues, on the one hand, and productions that took a broader approach to Afrikaans and *Afrikaanses*, on the other, reflected a deep-rooted tension between inclusion and exclusion within the festivals. This tension raised a central question that remained a key concern of the festival organizers: how to celebrate Afrikaans in an inclusive way? The festival managements could not, and arguably did not want to, be prescriptive with regard to how people at these festivals engaged with Afrikaans.

Afrikaans usage within the various festival and production spaces correspondingly varied between Afrikaners and *Afrikaanses*; between subtleness and crudity; between standard and dialect; between pure and mixed; between casual and formal; between dramatic and simple. Festival-goers' experiences of Afrikaans and the festivals in general were just as varied. The following sections bring the festival-goers into the limelight.

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[3] Tsotsi Afrikaans is a code language which used Afrikaans, English, the Nguni languages, Sotho and Portuguese. Gangs in places such as Sophiatown and Marabastad used it especially before 1976 to conduct criminal activities without the police noting what was happening.

[4] *Goema* refers to a type of Cape music that is usually performed at funerals, minstrel carnivals and other celebrations. *Goema* music is rooted in the slaves' unique interpretation of European folk songs and the use of musical instruments that were brought to the Cape in the seventeenth century by the DEIC.

8.4 Festival-goers' experiences with specific reference to Afrikaans

This section examines how festival-goers at the KKNK and Aardklop experienced these festivals, with specific reference to their experience of Afrikaans. The fieldwork vignette at the beginning of the chapter illustrated how festival-goers were constantly reminded, through various environmental, auditory and other signs, that the festivals celebrated Afrikaans. The festival rhetoric, while playful, implicitly cautioned: 'You are welcome, but ideally you need to know Afrikaans in order to fully experience the festival'. Almost all notions of festivity hinged on a basic understanding or at the very least a general appreciation of Afrikaans.

8.4.1 Kom dans Afrikaans (Come dance Afrikaans)

Afrikaans, in the words of one of my respondents, was after all the honorary guest at the festivals, an honour that annually led to a brief, exponential increase in its market and use value. Festival time provided festival-goers, regardless of their first language, with a compelling incentive to use Afrikaans. Afrikaans became ultra-fashionable. Official festival productions and sponsors' advertising campaigns attempted to employ Afrikaans creatively. Brand-new Afrikaans words and expressions such as the title phrase *kom dans Afrikaans* (come dance Afrikaans), which originated during the KKNK's marketing campaign in 1996, were coined in such a way.

Afrikaans could be approached in virtually any way except as a lifeless 'museum piece'. Afrikaans publication houses were geared towards releasing new publications at the festivals; Afrikaans readership enrolment actions were launched, and copywriters received accolades for creative engagements with *die Taal* ('the language', as Afrikaans is sometimes referred to tongue-in-cheek) during festivals.

According to their own accounts, the festivals made festival-goers, including those who lived permanently in Afrikaans-orientated settings such as the host towns, aware once more of the expressiveness, the suppleness, the maturity, the beauty of Afrikaans. A respondent at the KKNK poetically remarked: "We return year after year because every time we are carried away by the sound of our language". Another laughingly said: "Afrikaans is the language in which we pray and make out [make love]".

Afrikaans has been depicted as harsh, guttural and coarse in other contexts (see Krog 2003), but was clearly elevated to a status above that of mere medium of communication during the festivals. This foregrounding of Afrikaans, perceived as excessive by a few festival-goers, was in sharp contrast to the everyday linguistic experience of the majority of Afrikaans-speaking respondents, many of whom felt that where they lived, it was 'difficult to be Afrikaans'. The reasons provided by respondents varied, but all centred on an involuntary preference for English. A tendency amongst Afrikaans speakers to favour English in discourse and everyday life has indeed been well-documented (see Steyn 1980; Steyn 1984; Dirven 1987; Van Rensburg 1997).

Some seldom spoke Afrikaans or always conducted conversations with strangers in English out of habit. Others felt that they needed to 'ask permission' to speak Afrikaans. Yet others admitted to sometimes feeling 'guilty' when speaking it. Some respondents enrolled their children in English-medium schools to secure better futures for them, adding somewhat defensively 'What will they do with Afrikaans?' Two KKNK respondents, Frans and Josias, who attended the festival together, told me:

> Here I listen to and speak Afrikaans and I buy the t-shirt, but the rest of the year I am English-orientated. I work for an English company and I come from a home that is half English. Most of my friends in Cape Town are English-speaking.

> I have to hear Afrikaans at least once a year. I don't listen to Afrikaans artists at home. I won't say I am embarrassed by Afrikaans music, but here you catch the vibe and then you listen to it. I even bought an Afrikaans album!

The festivals thus even enticed Afrikaans festival-goers, who lived everyday lives in which Afrikaans did not feature strongly, to listen to the language and to act out 'being Afrikaans'. For many, the adjustment from a predominantly English- to the Afrikaans-orientated environment of the festivals took one to two days.

Within these festivals, where 'everything is Afrikaans', where one could 'hear Afrikaans everywhere', where 'everyone speaks Afrikaans', where one addressed strangers and 'they even reply in Afrikaans', festival-goers told me that they could satisfy a suppressed hunger for the language. The omnipresence of Afrikaans was further confirmed by festival workers who, when

queried, said that they mostly served Afrikaans clientele. One respondent at Aardklop added that he could count the number of English speakers that he encountered during the festival 'on one hand'.

Festival-goers, as confirmed by participant observation, generally displayed an Afrikaans assertiveness, insisting for example in public places on being served in Afrikaans or complaining about restaurant menus that were not available in Afrikaans. Some admitted to even feeling irritable when hearing English. Seemingly for them only Afrikaans could create a pleasant atmosphere.

Respondents, in accordance with the carnival spirit, commonly satirized their extensive, everyday use of English. Functionally bilingual respondents laughingly exclaimed: "Here [at the festival] English is only used for emergencies".[5] A resident respondent, who waitressed at a restaurant in Oudtshoorn that catered mainly for foreign guests, remarked: "At the Fijne Keuken where I work I have to greet guests in English. 'Good evening, Madam, Sir, table for two?' But that time [festival time] I say: Excuse me, I can't speak English; I only know one language" (Sonja).

8.4.2 Keeping Afrikaans alive

The festivals, to these Afrikaans-speaking respondents, were a *riem onder die hart* (a support for the heart). Surrounded by multiple testimonies of the vitality of Afrikaans, widespread fears about the gradual demise of Afrikaans as highlighted in earlier chapters somehow seemed unfounded. Numerous respondents lauded the KKNK and Aardklop for creating festival environment(s) in which Afrikaans, perceived as marginalized on all terrains, could flourish anew.

Naturally the Afrikaans language issue was more complicated than this. While the festivals temporarily highlighted Afrikaans, thereby creating the impression that Afrikaans was unthreatened, fears about the demise of Afrikaans were not without foundation. The fact that the

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[5] "Almost all white Afrikaans-speaking people are to some degree bilingual and can at least communicate in English about their usual day-to-day affairs" (Dirven 1987: 155).

language was widely spoken at festivals did not diminish the fact that the higher functions of Afrikaans were compromised in 'everyday', public life. According to Lawrence Schlemmer and Hermann Giliomee (2001: 117-118), "there is little doubt that Afrikaans will survive in sport stadiums, bars, cafes and sitting rooms", but the current position of Afrikaans as language of policy and management, justice and science is gradually being undermined.

Many respondents were convinced that Afrikaans in everyday contexts was 'struggling'; that it was 'being pushed aside everywhere'; that Afrikaans was an 'endangered language'; that it needed to be 'preserved'; and that it was time to 'fight for Afrikaans'. For them the festivals were a way of 'letting a light burn' and 'keeping our language alive', something that was deemed especially important in the 'present time'. The following comments by respondents were illustrative in this regard:

> I experience displacement strongly, especially with regard to radio. We no longer even switch the television on. They [the South African government] can keep all the SABC channels. What do we have left that is Afrikaans? Only the news and *Sewende Laan* [Seventh Avenue, a popular Afrikaans soap opera]. They can take everything away like the schools and the street names, we will find a way to make the language survive (Katryn, Oudtshoorn resident).

> I think the festival is a good thing to keep Afrikaans as long as possible in the country, while English is destroying it. You don't hear Afrikaans every day. English is the ruling language. It is *kwaai* [great], because everyone is Afrikaans. It is a means to help Afrikaans. That is why we cling to Oudtshoorn (Ruan, festival-goer at the KKNK).

> I attend the festival for the *lekker* vibe, the music and the culture. One has to support Afrikaans culture, because the country is becoming so English. Nothing remains of Afrikaans. Everywhere they try to exclude Afrikaans; that is why I say it is going to die out. They are trying to kill our language … the country, the government. There are so many languages and so few people that still speak Afrikaans. I can't speak English or one of the other [official] languages. It is too difficult (Susanna, festival-goer at the KKNK).

The festival is about Afrikaans with an exclamation mark! That is what makes the festival our own. We want the festival to be Afrikaans. We understand it better. I don't know why they even involve English people. The festival is there to promote Afrikaans. I don't have a problem with their ethnic languages, but they [the government] must leave us alone (Lisbé, festival-goer at Aardklop).

The festival is incredibly important to us, because the government wants to remove our language. Look what is happening at our schools and universities. We have to fight … These kinds of gatherings … you will notice that the people are not only here for the *jol* [party]. They draw something from the festival (Jan, festival-goer at Aardklop).

Clearly respondents' framing of the festivals as a means to revive Afrikaans and to keep it alive differed markedly from the officially endorsed views of the festival managements. Festival managements, for reasons discussed earlier, wanted to avoid the festivals being perceived as a *taalstryd* (language struggle) at all costs. They wanted to make Afrikaans accessible to all people interested in it, without giving the festivals an overt language agenda.

But the vast majority of festival-goers whom I encountered, many of whom had no inclination to support paid performances, passionately believed that they were celebrating Afrikaans primarily, rather than the arts. During these festivals, to paraphrase a figure in one of Hennie Aucamp's short stories, "their existence, their identity, their core, everything became tied up in Afrikaans; an existence in another language would have been second hand" (Steyn 1984: 21).

My findings markedly differ from those of Van Der Vyver and Du Plooy-Cilliers (2006: 201-202) who found, based on survey research of the KKNK in 2004, that the festival "seem to be coupled with great … language tolerance" and that "preserving Afrikaans does not seem to be one of the major concerns for festival-goers". These emotional quotes given above, however, indicate in contrast that Afrikaans was of extreme importance to festival-goers and that their passion for Afrikaans bordered on militancy.[6]

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[6] Successive economic impact studies that were conducted at the KKNK and Aardklop also found that a majority of respondents primarily visited the KKNK and Aardklop because these festivals were Afrikaans (Saayman, Saayman and Van Schalkwyk 2003; Saayman, Slabbert and Saayman 2006; Saayman and Saayman 2006).

8.4.3 Relaxing and socializing in Afrikaans

Many of the Afrikaans-speaking respondents equated speaking Afrikaans with the ability to be spontaneous, something they were convinced they could only truly be in their first language. They felt secure enough to (freely) express themselves in Afrikaans, without first having to consider what to say. But respondents who identified themselves as Afrikaners attributed their hesitancy when speaking to non-Afrikaans speakers not only to the fact that they had to resort to English, but also to the fact that they were uncertain as to how to refer to themselves and others in the new dispensation.

As Afrikaans was being celebrated at these festivals, ironically some felt themselves to be increasingly voiceless. One Aardklop respondent introduced himself to me as a *boer* (farmer) and then, referring to the political 'tenseness' of the term *boer*, commented: "Nowadays you don't know how to speak".[7] Respondents were aware that the end of apartheid required a degree of political correctness.[8] But during the festivals there was little pretence at non-racialism as was evident when a female respondent at the KKNK confidently introduced herself to me as an *opregte boeremeisie* (genuine farmer's girl).

Many respondents thus experienced Afrikaans as the ultimate language of relaxation in which they could loosen their ties, kick off their shoes and let go of many everyday pretensions. Naturally *kuier*, as this difficult to translate word indicates, could only take place in Afrikaans. Neither the bland English translation of the word *kuier* as an 'outing', 'visit', 'stroll' or to 'call on someone' (Bosman, van der Merwe and Hiemstra 1999: 279) nor an explanatory Afrikaans dictionary's definition of "visiting with the ulterior thought that it might last a long time; to walk at ease; to walk to and fro" (Odendal, Schoonees, Swanepoel, Du Toit and Booysen 1994: 591) adequately described the *kuier* phenomenon as it was manifested within these contexts.

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[7] The Afrikaners became known as a nation of *boere* (farmers) before the onset of industrialization in the twentieth century. The Afrikaans word *boer* came to refer in a derogatory manner to either a farmer or a 'white', Afrikaans-speaking male, but it could also be a term of honour when adopted, as in *Boere-oorlog*.

[8] 'Political correctness' is the term used to describe constrained actions seeking to avoid giving offence to other identity groups.

Generally *kuier* is predicated on the co-presence of people (the 'being there') and fairly intimate, face-to-face contact between people who feel comfortable and relaxed in each other's presence. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the festival communality – a characteristic also commented upon in the festival literature – was the ways in which festival-goers were able to *kuier* together, even though they might have been strangers a moment before.

8.5 A homecoming in Afrikaans: the link between language and identity

During these festivals many Afrikaans-speaking festival-goers became freshly aware, not only of Afrikaans as the language in which they felt themselves most at home, but also of belonging to a distinct language (and ethnic) community. Many respondents ironically felt that they had to leave home and travel to one of the two festival host towns in order to experience belonging. The host towns were experienced through social interactions with fellow Afrikaans speakers, which rendered them as comfortably familiar to festival-goers. They were idealized as *plekke waar jy jouself kan uitleef* (places where one can express oneself fully):

> You know where you belong at the KKNK. You fit in and you don't have to try and speak English and you don't have to accommodate others. It makes you proud of being Afrikaans. There is such camaraderie amongst festival-goers, because you feel like you are contributing to the preservation of Afrikaans. It offers some of your best times to *kuier* with fellow Afrikaners (Marietjie, festival-goer at the KKNK).

> It's about a feeling of being at home; you become displaced in your own place. There is a brother- and sisterhood, cordiality and relaxedness at the festival. You understand the humour, because you are raised in the same language community. It is the same people with whom you were raised (Magda, festival worker at the KKNK) .

> You stand in a queue with strangers and everyone chats in Afrikaans and discusses the shows that they've just seen – it is like one big family. You are reminded about communal interests. It is Afrikaans. And it is strange for me to say something like that because I am not a stalwart Afrikaner. I don't even own an Afrikaans record (Chris, festival-goer at Aardklop).

The communal spirit at the Afrikaans festivals is wonderful. It gives you a feeling of still belonging somewhere. The Afrikaner is on the backburner in the new South Africa. Here everything is Afrikaans. You eat and drink and shop in Afrikaans. That exposure is important. It is great to see that it is Afrikaans and it works (Veronica, all round festival-goer).

It is noteworthy that all of these festival-goers identified themselves as Afrikaners and were comforted by the fact that they could celebrate Afrikaans with 'fellow Afrikaners'. The experiences of these festival-goers can be fruitfully analysed in the light of Emile Durkheim's insights on religion as set out in 1912 in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. According to Durkheim (1976: 345), religious beliefs attain their greatest intensity when people are assembled together and are in immediate relations with each other. The efficacy of a religious rite derives from the fact that *everyone* partakes of the *same* idea and the *same* sentiment and at the *same* time (my emphasis). Religious beliefs need to be revivified on a regular basis, because of the gradual loss of "original energy". When people gather to worship during religious ceremonies "the common faith becomes reanimated in the heart of the group; it is born again" (Durkheim 1976: 346).

The festivals functioned in a similar way to regenerate Afrikaans. Language, like religion, has the ability to stir up emotions quickly. The exaggerated identification with Afrikaans within the festivals led to underplaying of difference and overstressing similarity between assembled festival-goers. But for many festival-goers, contrary to the missions of the festival managements, the festivals also became a means to renew or affirm festival-goers' common faith in a unique (and separate) Afrikaner identity. The festivals, in short, put the collective into action. Like the worshippers on whom Durkheim focused, festival-goers found comfort in uniting and assembling. They felt an organic connection with (certain) surrounding others who were simultaneously engaging in similar festival activities.

Both Fenton (1999) and Fishman (1989) draw a link between ethnicity and kinship. According to Fenton (1999: 107), "The association of ethnicity with 'high affect', a deeply felt and enduring identity and allegiance, is expressed through reference to the bonds of kinship". 'Kinship' is also the "basis of one's dependency, sociability and intimacy" with others (Fishman 1989: 25). Many

respondents' kinship references and appeals to family likeness such as 'it feels like one big family' and 'it is the people with whom you were raised' were racially exclusive.

Ironically the arts festivals and the celebration of Afrikaans there thus activated the very ethnic identifications that the festival managements wanted to avoid or overcome.[9] The festivals called festival-goers' use of language, and by extension their *Afrikanerskap*, into consciousness. Both festivals were inevitably characterized, at least to an extent, by an emphasis on Afrikaner 'cultural' uniqueness and difference and a sharp differentiation of perceived 'cultures'.

8.5.1 Praat Afrikaans of hou jou bek (Speak Afrikaans or shut up)

Though many festival-goers only felt a connection with fellow 'white' Afrikaans speakers, they placed a renewed emphasis on Afrikaans, rather than 'race', as a unifying factor that could be openly and confidently expressed. According to Neville Alexander (2002: 96):

> there is a real danger [in the new South Africa] that a language fault line will displace the racial fault line which, however, will continue for the foreseeable future to demarcate an unbridgeable gulf between those who are 'in' and those who are 'out'.

Both fault lines, to use Alexander's terms, were at work at the KKNK and Aardklop. Clearly the two festivals to an extent, and despite the festival rhetoric, reinforced linguistic and racial boundaries. Afrikaans still functioned for some respondents as a powerful symbol of Afrikaner identity.[10] Many people who identify themselves as Afrikaners, in fact believe "the main distinguishing quality of Afrikaner character [*Afrikanerskap*] is the language, the form in which the Afrikaner can distinguish himself outwards and inwards" (De Wet 2004: 69). This was illustrated by the following incident that occurred during my period of fieldwork.

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[9] Research conducted by *Idasa* found that many South Africans feel strongly about being a member of an identity group and that they felt closer to members of their identity group than to other South Africans (Burgess 2002: 88-89).

[10] Chris Brink (2006) writes about a recent development: the so-called neo-Afrikaners. These Afrikaans-speaking 'whites', by appearing to be only concerned about Afrikaans, are subtly attempting to re-engineer *Afrikanerskap*. They appeal for minority and group rights and believe that those who 'are alike' should congregate. "The neo-Afrikaner agenda", according to Brink (2006: 80) "includes a pro-Afrikaans agenda".

Ironically a stone's throw away from the production venue where *Goema* (described in a previous section) was being staged, two young Afrikaans-speaking 'white' men, oblivious to the symbolic significance of the performance of *Goema* being staged inside, defiantly wore short-sleeved shirts depicting the old South African flag, with printed underneath it the bold Afrikaans logo: *100% Boer*.[11] When questioned about the contentious article of clothing, one of them told me that "these T-shirts are like old memories". His friend added:

> the festival is an opportunity for the Afrikaans *white* population [my emphasis] to share cultural goods that we are proud of, but we will accept you with open arms if you want to see and experience it. Everyone is welcome.

Despite the words 'everyone is welcome', the conditionality in the respondent's words was clear: 'we want to set the terms on which the festival participation of "non-whites" may proceed'. One respondent remarked that "others" are welcome to attend "as long as they do not criticize the festival". Another felt that others are welcome as long as they "do not interfere in the way we do things. It is not a Sotho festival". This tension between inclusion/belonging, on the one hand, and exclusion/estrangement, on the other, was reflected in the remarks of numerous 'white' Afrikaans-speaking respondents: "They [other races] are welcome to come, but they won't want to come"; "We will accept them, but they won't enjoy it"; and "They can come but the festival must not change to accommodate them".

Some respondents' comments were blatantly racist; in others the racism was camouflaged in the subtext. For example, one respondent told me that what she liked about the Aardklop festival was the 'Afrikaans atmosphere'. When I probed further she responded that she liked the fact that mostly *boeremens*e attended it. I knew that she referred to 'white' Afrikaans speakers, although she dared not say it blatantly. Others such as the following respondent were more forthright:

> The festival is very nice. Here are few blacks and your audience members are white; it almost feels like the old days [of apartheid]. And it is very Afrikaans – the music, the craft

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[11] Mike van Graan (2005: 1) criticised the festival-goers who attended these festivals "in defence of *volk* [nation] and *taal*" [language] and who implicitly proclaimed "a pure, organic ancestry, unfertilized with the blood of local slaves and servants" by wearing T-shirts with offensive slogans such as '100% Boer'.

stalls, the exhibitors. It is difficult to explain without being perceived as racist (Gerhard, festival-goer at Aardklop).

Clearly many of the 'white' Afrikaans speakers at these festivals still functioned within an apartheid paradigm in which people were categorized according to the 'cultural' differences between them; differences that were seen as fixed and largely incompatible. One Aardklop respondent explained to me why he had no problem with the idea of having two separate festivals, one in Potchefstroom and one in Ikageng, by saying that "it is about culture. There are two radically different cultures. It is like the soccer and the rugby". According to John Sharp (1988: 1):

> To many South Africans it is self-evident; a matter of common sense, that society consists
> of different racial and ethnic groups, each of which forms a separate community with its
> own culture and traditions. It is believed that such groups actually exist objectively in the
> real world.

This was also the case with many of the festival-goers who attended these arts festivals. Respondents made it clear that 'they', in other words other 'cultures' in South Africa, had their own cultural practices and festivals that were relevant to them. The festivals' aim of diversifying Afrikaans failed to register among these respondents who stubbornly clung to the very perceptions that the festival managements wanted to combat. A respondent's erroneous view that "Afrikaans is mostly a language for 'white' people" was illustrative in this regard.

'Coloured' respondents were sometimes on the receiving side of such false perceptions. Solomon Lions, the Afrikaans-speaking principal of Promosa Secondary in Potchefstroom, told me in an interview how he and his family in the late 1990s attended an informal musical performance. They eventually decided to leave, because they did not like the performer's musical style. When they walked away they overheard a 'white' bystander comment to another one that they were probably leaving because the singer was performing in Afrikaans. The respondent saw this as an example of people's preconceived ideas about who speaks, and who ultimately has the right to speak, Afrikaans.

Even when claiming that they were including all Afrikaans speakers, regardless of race, when referring to 'our language', 'our people', 'my culture', 'people of my kind' or 'my line of people', I felt uncomfortable at what I sensed to be a discrepancy between the implicit and explicit meaning of some festival-goers' words. These respondents wanted to be credited with being tolerant and egalitarian, whilst still retaining a racist mindset. To many 'white', Afrikaans-speaking festival-goers South Africa's nation-building rhetoric simply meant a country in which 'cultures' remained separate because of the perceived irreducibility of their differences.

According to one respondent, one only had to attend one of the two Afrikaans-orientated festivals to realize that "you understand your own people [Afrikaners] better" (Gerbrand, KKNK festival-goer). Some of the most popular craft market stalls at the KKNK and Aardklop sold clothing and other items displaying Afrikaans slogans and puns, some of which openly defied the inclusive ideals expounded by the respective festival planners. *Praat Afrikaans of hou jou bek* (Speak Afrikaans or shut up) was an example of such a slogan. The festival managements took action to prevent the selling of such clothing at these festivals. Notorious shirts with slogans such as *100% Boer* were removed at Aardklop, along with shirts that showed the old South African flag (Nel 2005: 6). The festival managements, however, had no jurisdiction over the products that were sold from stalls located on private premises.

These festivals, in arousing intense emotion, thus allowed a section of 'white' Afrikaans speakers to cling to an (often vague) notion of who the Afrikaner was. Apart from Afrikaans (and implicitly 'whiteness'), none of the characteristics formerly deemed to be essential to Afrikaner identity featured prominently in the conversations with my respondents.[12] This was especially evident in my engagement with the younger generation. Respondents, when encouraged, instead highlighted one or more of the following associated qualities: hospitality, approachability, humour, joviality, spontaneity, boldness, talent, an accommodating spirit, diligence and teamwork (in the light of festival workers' efforts to make these festivals a success). One KKNK respondent saw Afrikaners as 'outdoor people' who enjoy Afrikaans music, beer and *biltong* (dried, salted meat).

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[12] According to Mads Vestergaard (2001: 49), spiritual characteristics associated with Afrikaner nationalists included honesty, studiousness, faithfulness and heterosexuality. Other predispositions associated by Hein Willemse (2004: 2) with Afrikaans under apartheid included brutality, narrow-mindedness and racism.

The festivals, and the positive affirmation of their (Afrikaans) nature, thus reoriented the respondents in a world where many, especially Afrikaans-speaking 'whites', felt 'displaced', as if they did not 'fit in' or did not 'belong'. Few of my respondents were willing to elaborate on the concerns that gave rise to these feelings. Festival time was not suited *om derms uit te ryg*, an expression that, literally translated, means 'to pull out one's entrails', in other words to ponder or reflect on complex issues. But I coaxed them into discussing some of their concerns with me.

8.5.2. Escaping the new South Africa

According to Steve Fenton (1999: 89), in many instances of ethnic mobilisation one finds "a pattern of resentment/disenchantment expressed in a language of ethnicity". The post-1994 era in which the Afrikaans-orientated festivals arose, as explained in the introduction to this study, was one in which many festival-goers, particularly 'white' Afrikaans speakers, felt themselves besieged by the demands posed by a new democratic order.[13] Willem de Klerk (2000: 52) describes the consequences of apartheid's demise for the Afrikaners in terms of loss, whether loss of power, loss of status, loss of morale, loss of language, loss of opportunities, loss of credibility. Similarly, according to Steyn (2001: 156), "there is an acute sense of loss of the familiar, loss of certainty, loss of comfort, loss of privilege, loss of well-known roles".

The statement by a festival-goer that "the festivals are all that we have left" was extremely significant in this regard. This feeling of loss, instead of being tempered with the passing of time, persisted strongly more than a decade after democratization. Many of the disenchanted 'white' Afrikaans-speaking respondents, who felt that they were worse off in the decade after apartheid than before, expressed a nostalgic longing for the 'old days'. Nostalgia "works most strongly as a sense of loss in the recent past, and it is therefore particularly characteristic of societies undergoing rapid change" (Tosh 2000: 12).

It was evident from interviews that these respondents, in addition to their perceived infringement of their language rights, were concerned about highly publicized issues such as the national government's official policy of affirmative action; the escalating attacks on 'white' farmers; the

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[13] Between 1995 and 2005 many highly qualified Afrikaans speakers chose to leave the country. As the pace of emigration accelerated, the distribution of specifically Afrikaners thus attained a visible spatial dimension and a kind of Diaspora mentality arose.

countrywide increase in violence, the inefficiency of the public service and the replacement of Afrikaans place names.[14] All of these concerns bore testimony to the painfulness of dealing with the loss of political power and of the slow adjustment to minority status in South Africa. Whereas the government approached name changes as a necessary step in the transformation process, many respondents perceived these actions as a direct challenge to their Afrikaner heritage.

The arts festivals offered an escape valve, a breather; also from the need for 'constant contrition' over apartheid and the reality of transformation. As an Aardklop respondent said: "The festival makes you feel as if you can still laugh despite changing circumstances the past ten years". These respondents conceived of the festival landscapes as secure cocoons in which their fears and frustrations could be tempered. They felt they needed a *plekkie* [nook] to be themselves. The festivals provided that *plekkie*, given that they were partially insulated from 'unwanted elements' such as members of other 'races', language groups and beggars.

Rather than viewing the festival landscape as "open to everybody where, first of all, a society's inner contradictions could emerge freely and openly and, second, where people could begin to deal with these contradictions and try to work them out" (Berman 1986: 477) – an approach that would have been in line with the prevailing festival rhetoric of meaningful 'cross- and intra-cultural' communication – the festival-goers wanted to be surrounded and comforted by the *volkseie* (belonging exclusively to the Afrikaner people). The respondents evidently glossed over internal differences between ('white') Afrikaans speakers in producing an apparently homogeneous *volkseie*.

For some the festivals came to represent all that they had left in the new South Africa – a success story that was 'wholly theirs', something that the national government finally could not claim. This kind of thinking was reminiscent of the historical Afrikaner *volksfees* rhetoric. It ran directly counter to the festival managements' views.

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[14] Interestingly the name changes also affected one of the host towns. Potchefstroom was due to undergo a name change (Groenewald 2007b). About 5000 mainly Afrikaner residents of Potchefstroom protested against a proposal to change the town's name to Tlokwe in 2006 (*Mail & Guardian* online, 19 October 2006). The municipality was renamed the Tlokwe local municipality in 2007, but the new name only applied to the municipality and not to the town.

They believed these festivals could (once more) function as a binding factor, at a time when some festival-goers felt 'everyone' blamed the Afrikaner. The Afrikaans festivals, in the words of a respondent, "can bring everyone that still believed in the same things together and allow them to continue shoulder to shoulder". They became a means to recapture a measure of the patriotism and pride that some of these festival-goers, who remained alienated by the new South Africa, felt that they had lost.

8.6 Divergent ways of being Afrikaans

Naturally, not all 'white', Afrikaans-speaking festival-goers identified with the views expressed by respondents above. The media, particularly the English press, were nevertheless quick to label and/or dismiss the arts festivals as 'white' Afrikaner gatherings, also glossing over the internal differences between festival-goers. Instead of being mere Afrikaner gatherings, however, the two festivals were illustrative of the multitude and divergent ways of 'being Afrikaans'.

A 'coloured' respondent at the KKNK told me that he used to live with 'eye patches', but that the arts festivals made him aware that not all 'white' Afrikaners were the same. Ethnic attachments were indeed manifested to differing degrees at these festivals. The festivals were also illustrative of the frictions that sometimes arose on identity issues between 'white' Afrikaans speakers. The following discussion of an informal conversation that I had with two respondents (a middle-aged woman, Carina, and her teenage niece, Cindy) at Cachet Park during Aardklop in 2005 was illustrative in this regard. The two respondents approached the festival in markedly different ways:

Researcher (Esther): "How important is Afrikaans to you at the festival?"

Cindy: "The language [at the festival] does not matter to me. But it is mostly Afrikaans bands that I listen to here".

Carina: "Afrikaans is everything. Everyone here is Afrikaans".

Cindy: "I think it is wrong. They should make it twelve languages".

Carina: "No! There is one tent at this year's festival where they have many 'black' bands performing. It irritates me just to walk past it. I avoid that area. The sound is

deafening".

Cindy: "We must be so irritating for them. It does not feel right. The festival is so cliquey and everyone moans all the time".

Carina: "The 'blacks' took over what used to belong to us. This festival is something that we as Afrikaners can keep for ourselves".

Cindy: "I think you should separate our answers. They [her family] come from the Free State. Some people there are very racist. I think the Afrikaner is anyone that is proud of Afrikaans. It does not matter whether you are white, pink or purple".

Carina: "I must add that there is a strong police presence at the festival. You don't feel threatened in any way".

Cindy: "I agree that it is very safe, but all the police make me scared. Why are there so many of them here?"

Cindy's nonchalance about Afrikaans, her willingness to engage with diverse people at the festival and her frustration with her aunt's views were noteworthy. According to Giliomee (2003: 664), the year 1994 "also brought with it a sense of relief. Many of the younger generation were delighted to rid themselves of the stifling cultural conformity of Afrikaner society".

Different forms of *Afrikanerskap* (being an Afrikaner) became legitimate for Afrikaans-speaking 'whites' in post-apartheid South Africa. One respondent, an Afrikaans Catholic priest from Oudtshoorn, commenting on these issues on leaving a production, felt that the festivals contributed to the fact that one could be "a catholic, a communist or black in Afrikaans". Another KKNK respondent said to me: "*Afrikanerskap* stretches across boundaries. An Afrikaner is not only the 'white' Afrikaans-speaker. It refers to someone who was born here [in South Africa] and who speaks Afrikaans". This definition differs markedly from how a 'typical' Afrikaner was defined under apartheid: as a 'white', Afrikaans-speaker of West European descent, who voted for the National Party, belonged to one of the three Dutch Reformed Churches and shared a distinctive history with the rest of the Afrikaner group (Louw-Potgieter 1988: 50).

Respondents who defined *Afrikanerskap* broadly were more open to the idea of extending the festivals' support base to make it more inclusive. They extended acceptance and respect to the notion of other 'cultures' precedence over the need for the protection of 'Afrikaner culture'. One respondent at the KKNK felt: "The festival will be even *lekkerder* [greater] if they involve more languages. It is now basically only Afrikaans. They should extend it so that more people can come". A respondent, Cobus, at Aardklop said:

> It is a positive thing if you find English people at an Afrikaans place. It exposes them to different ways of thinking and habits. I think it is a good thing; you find cultural integration.

Afrikaans respondents also differed with regard to how they approached Afrikaans within the festivals. There were 'white', Afrikaans-speaking festival-goers present at these festivals that passionately identified with Afrikaans, without resorting to the parochial thinking and racist language that marked some other Afrikaans respondents' comments. They felt themselves a part of, rather than apart from, the new South Africa. Many of them identified themselves, not so much as Afrikaners, as *Afrikaanses* or *Suid-Afrikaners* (South Africans). An Aardklop respondent felt that she wanted to celebrate Afrikaans, 'without taking up weapons'. Another ('white', Afrikaans-speaking) respondent at the same festival called Afrikaans her *hartstaal* (language of heart), but did not in any way see herself as an Afrikaner.

Other Afrikaans festival-goers were not excited by Afrikaans, despite the 'festival hype' that surrounded the language. A 'white', Afrikaans-speaking respondent at the KKNK described the festival as a *kultuurskok* (culture shock). He was concerned that people were getting excited about 'his language' and that he could not become excited with them, because he did not like Afrikaans music.

A significant number of festival-goers in fact had little interest in, or patience with, what they viewed as a ceaseless obsession with Afrikaner identity. Afrikaans for them did not function as a symbolic glue of the Afrikaners. They did not disavow their 'Afrikaans being', but felt estranged from the majority of festival-goers around them. One KKNK respondent captured the sentiment of many when he remarked:

The glorification of the language mentality makes me feel *ontuis* [not at home] in Oudtshoorn. I can't handle the people who sit in a beer tent the whole day and think that they are making a contribution [towards the arts]. And they all bitch together about the decline of Afrikaans. It is a platform for misplaced Afrikaans patriotism.

The distinction between 'high culture' and 'popular culture', introduced in the previous chapter, was closely intertwined with that of belonging versus estrangement. Certain Afrikaans festival-goers shied away from what they perceived to be popular culture. 'Popular culture', within the context of the KKNK and Aardklop, acquired a distinct Afrikaner taint – the 'massive church bazaar', the 'smell of barbeques everywhere', the 'Afrikaans backtracks', the 'drunken Afrikaners on the streets'.

'Popular culture' was what some respondents had in mind when they exclaimed: 'It makes me shy to be an Afrikaner'; 'If that is how Afrikaners behave, I don't want a part of it'; 'I don't feel at home amongst an exclusive group'; and 'I don't speak Afrikaans like that'. Some literally stood outside of 'popular culture' by avoiding the festival cores, preferring to attend only festival productions. As Gerhard Marx, a highly acclaimed stage designer put it: "The KKNK is everything that you run away from in your own culture in one place. It is the worst of Afrikaner 'culture' and then there are good shows."

Many respondents who enjoyed 'being Afrikaans' distanced themselves, not only from 'fellow' Afrikaners, but also from the language struggle that, to an extent, raged within these festivals. *Die Taal* (Afrikaans) was simply not such 'an issue' for them. The fact that some of them emphatically used the English phrase 'not an issue' implicitly emphasized that they did not feel that strongly about language purity and preservation.

8.7 The absence of social *communitas* in the presence of Afrikaans

It was interesting to note how the arts festivals influenced peoples' perceptions of Afrikaners and 'white' Afrikaans speakers in general. Some 'coloured' Afrikaans-speaking respondents whom I spoke to at these festivals felt excluded from the surrounding festivities. A well-spoken young woman told me how distanced she felt from the festival-goers and the festival activities at the KKNK. She expressed her 'sense of exclusion', as opposed to sense of *communitas*, as follows:

It is an atmosphere … the stance of the people … I have been to see shows and people stare at you. I was often the only *klora* ['coloured'] there … the festival has to transform … You can sense when the new South Africa has not yet passed by some people … at the eateries as well … you can sense it (Catherine, festival-goer at the KKNK).

Her reaction was not unique. Merlé Hodges, a respondent who felt positive about the KKNK festivals, noted that she was often the only 'coloured' person, along with the cleaner, at productions. Respondents who felt excluded struggled to pinpoint the exact cause of their discomfort, but maintained that they could detect an unwelcoming atmosphere. Mampe, a 'black' festival worker at Aardklop who had some knowledge of Afrikaans, said "they look at you as if they are see ing a ghost when you walk around and even at our people's stalls [the empowerment stalls]".

Other 'coloured' respondents perceived the festivals, particularly the KKNK, positively. Kef, a sliding-door operator of one of the taxis that operated during the KKNK and a local from the former 'coloured' area Toekomsrust, commented to me: "It is a pleasure to work with these people, they are very friendly. They like us to drive them around, they treat us courteously. We are Afrikaans and the people make us [him and the driver] feel at home". This was confirmed by my observations of their interactions with festival-goers when driving around with them on their route.

Some 'coloured' respondents admitted that they expected to feel out of place at the KKNK, but that they were pleasantly surprised by their exposure to the arts festival. Two respondents who were sceptical about the KKNK festival, before they became closely involved in it, were Ronnie Samaai and Merlé Hodges. They were at the time both *Kanna* panel members. It is possible that this status slightly biased their responses. They were, after all, part of a certain 'festival elite'. Both only had praise for the KKNK:

I did not know what it [the festival] was about. I thought it was a 'white' festival; that was my perception. Many people continue to think that it is exclusively Afrikaans and synonymous with the 'white' Afrikaners. But I was proved wrong (Ronnie Samaai).

I enjoy it immensely. I expected an Afrikaner milieu, but I feel part of a broader group of

people. You encounter people that spontaneously chat with you, make eye contact, smile – everyone is here to enjoy themselves (Merlé Hodges).

The comfort and sense of homeliness that (most) Afrikaans respondents experienced during these festivals, was in sharp contrast to the experience of some festival-goers, none of whom were first language speakers of Afrikaans, who described the atmosphere at the KKNK and Aardklop as 'unwelcoming', 'uneasy', 'nerve-racking' and even 'threatening'. One respondent, a theatre practitioner whom I met at the KKNK, lamented: "I would love to be part of it, but I can't *praat die taal so lekker*" (speak the language so fluently).

The functioning of language as a means of social exclusion was evident in the experiences of some of the festival-goers who could not understand Afrikaans. Festival-goers' linguistic capabilities, or lack thereof, also at times proved anathema to social *communitas* or togetherness within production venues. Because most shows at the KKNK and Aardklop required at least a basic understanding of Afrikaans, they were inaccessible to a broader audience. Some festival guides even warned festival-goers about dialects and/or accents that might be difficult to understand. The following comment by a frustrated festival-goer was revealing:

On my second day I was very disappointed because I went to a play only to find that it was Afrikaans and I can't understand it, so I had to sit for an hour in a play where 90% percent of the audience was laughing and clapping hands and the other 10% could not follow the lines and could not catch the jokes. We did not hear anything … the title [*Angels Everywhere*] was misleading. We expected it to be English (Busi, festival-goer at the KKNK).

Clearly feeling welcome did not necessarily follow from being welcomed in principle by the festival rhetoric. Looking around them, non-Afrikaans festival-goers saw people sharing what they described as a mutual understanding and an unique sense of humour. They (rightly) concluded that the majority of Afrikaans festival-goers were not interested in speaking English. While I never personally witnessed discriminatory incidents, a few respondents claimed that local business owners and festival entrepreneurs seemed to help queuing Afrikaans-speaking people first.

Some non-Afrikaans speakers loved the Afrikaans vibe, but for those who felt excluded from the festivities, it became somewhat of an ordeal. The host town in fact became a place where you had to 'hold out', where an hour felt 'like ages' and a day or two at the festival became 'a long time to stay'. This is in sharp contrast to the treatment of time in the festival literature. Festival time is generally depicted as offering an unrelenting emotional high (see Graburn 1978). Judging from the literature, festival time exists only as an even, drawn-out continuum of joyful celebration – a perpetual present – spanning the entire festival period. Festival time is portrayed as highly intensified but undifferentiated, thus little distinction is made between turning points within festivals, climaxes, changes in pace and varied perceptions of time amongst celebrants.

8.8 Linguistic involvement

Over the years the festivals became increasingly hospitable towards 'other cultures'. The festival guides and websites became one hundred percent bilingual. The 'hospitality' was evidenced in a number of productions that attempted to engage with so-called 'African' themes. Venda and Xhosa translators were, for example, used onstage during KKNK discussion sessions for the first time in 2005 (Le Roux 2005).

Aardklop over the years also increasingly provided the stage for other language expressions. The South African press noted this trend (see Burger 2001; Skosana 2003).   The festival introduced a jazz festival in 1999; in the same year Hugh Masekela and *Brasse vannie Kaap* performed at the festival; Mandoza, a famous black performer, made a festival appearance in 2003; and at the *Sol Plaatje* lecture series sensitive, topical issues that transcended linguistic boundaries became discussion topics. The Dutch Embassy was involved in the festival since the festival's inception and over the years the embassy's involvement grew. Aardklop staged 6 productions in 2003 with the embassy's support (Viljoen 2003e: 11).

A few festival productions within both festivals purportedly made 'blacks' part of the mainstream theatre in Afrikaans (Pienaar 2005b), while others incorporated elements from different 'cultures' in a musical way (see Coetzee 2000; Pienaar 2005). *Diphosophoso*, Sol Plaatje's translation of the Shakespeare play *A Comedy of Errors* into Setswana, was performed both in the central town of Potchefstroom and Ikageng during Aardklop in 2005.

Imbumba/Samesyn, a production that married Afrikaans, English and Zulu, debuted at Aardklop in 2005 and won the *Beeld Plus Aartvark* prize for the most innovative work at the festival.

8.9 Conclusion

Festivals as publicly situated events are commonly portrayed in the literature as being tolerant of difference, allowing different subcultures to flourish (see Ronge 1993; Quick 1996; Friedman 1997). People are purportedly freer to express themselves in 'a thousand different ways' during festivals as one respondent, who wished to remain anonymous, put it. One could indeed witness the diversity of Afrikaans being celebrated at the two arts festivals, just as one could witness the celebration of Afrikaans in diverse ways.

The arts festivals evidently offered the majority of Afrikaans-speaking festivals-goers the opportunity of rediscovering and reconfirming social relationships with surrounding others. Every year since the inception of the festivals, the festival organizers and sponsors emphasized the integrative potential of the festivals, and by extension the arts, in helping to bring together in amity Afrikaans speakers (and to a limited degree other language speakers) formerly divided by apartheid.

But social *communitas*, the festival ideology aside, was clearly not all-encompassing nor was it inevitable at these festivals. While festivals generally might invoke different senses of belonging or *communitas* amongst festival-goers, festivals can also be experienced as alienating. Not everyone felt equally 'at home', just as not everyone identified equally with Afrikaans within the context of these festivals. Afrikaans did not serve to bind even all 'white', Afrikaans-speaking festival-goers together, as certain respondents' distancing from fellow festival-goers' 'poor command of the language', 'mixed language', 'faulty grammar' and 'swearing' showed.

The festival-goers and festival workers who felt themselves excluded from the festivities at the KKNK and Aardklop felt so for two main reasons: the dominant focus on Afrikaans and the behaviour of 'white' Afrikaans speakers. The assumption of a communication competence in Afrikaans on the part of festival organizers and festival-goers, combined with the over-emphasis on Afrikaans within the festivals, made some festival-goers (including a minority of Afrikaans speakers) feel ill at ease.

The festivals were simultaneously open and closed; they encouraged tolerance and could be construed as a time of heightened intolerance. Afrikaans speakers, despite exuberant claims to the contrary, had not yet fully severed their links with apartheid. Afrikaans was experienced simultaneously as a unifying and a divisive factor. There were still signs of estrangement within the festivals: both between 'white', 'coloured' and 'black' Afrikaans speakers, and between different linguistic 'communities'. The ambivalence of 'being Afrikaans' was revealed in the tension between belonging and estrangement felt by some respondents at these festivals.

The following and final chapter reflects on the study as a whole and summarizes the key findings.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

It is a fact of life. It's going to happen, you anticipate it; you structure your life to take account of it and when it's gone you breathe a sigh of relief and carry on with your life (Patricia, Oudtshoorn resident).

I used to have the festival blues afterwards, because you miss the intense conversations and the openness that you experience at the festival. You draw from a collective energy during the festivals. Then you go home and suddenly that energy is gone; there is a gap and that is what I call the festival blues (Johann, festival-goer at the KKNK).

The most exhilarating moment for me is when I'm hitting that gas pedal and leaving the town, knowing that I've done well after a festival. It is massive, hey. Last year for eight hours a day I had a sale of 100 bucks every minute. So I have to speak to about 2000 people a day, it is high-energy work and afterwards I have to sit somewhere for two to three days just to calm down before I go home (Lionell, festival worker at the KKNK).

9.1 Both hopeful and sceptical

It was evident from the very start of my fieldwork that everyone I encountered, depending on where they were positioned within the two festivals, experienced the festivals differently. The above quotes by an Oudtshoorn resident, a festival-goer and a festival worker at the KKNK reflected this disparity. For every person who felt rejuvenated by the festival, there was someone who felt drained and relieved that it was over. Whereas some lived for the atmosphere and conviviality, others judged the success of a festival strictly by the amount of money earned during one.

Expressed in ideal terms, festival participation is always renewing and fulfilling, but in reality festival workers and festival-goers did not feel good all the time. Once the festival has ended, there was sometimes a feeling, particularly amongst festival workers, of wasted time, energy and money, especially if they did not make a satisfactory profit. While festival participation could be invigorating and exciting, it could also be tiring, frustrating and tedious at times.

Both festivals were massive events with numerous offshoots. It is probably more fitting to talk about 'festivals within a festival' to indicate the numerous smaller events. As a result of the scale of the festivals, and the diverse reactions to them, it is virtually impossible to depict, review and compare both of them in their entirety. What this study could do was to offer a carefully considered perspective on the festivals, guided by the core research focus and drawing on the issues that featured strongly during the fieldwork and research process.

According to Herman Wasserman and Sean Jacobs (2003: 18), "emerging cultural expressions [such as arts festivals] should be evaluated with an eye that is both hopeful and sceptical". The two arts festivals can be evaluated from various angles, ranging from the quality of the artistic productions, to the smoothness of the logistic management, to the attendance patterns. The conclusion, which is indeed both hopeful and sceptical, returns to the guiding questions of the study, namely the extent to which the arts festivals have progressed in celebrating Afrikaans and the arts inclusively and the identity implications of celebrating.

It is impossible, and probably not sensible, to attempt a conclusive final assessment. There have been numerous small and large successes in terms of the pronounced festival aims. The arts festivals have extended the arts beyond the centralized metropolitan theatres to the country. The festivals have certainly succeeded in making theatre more accessible and less formal. New audiences were exposed to the arts. Artists were provided with performance opportunities. The arts festivals' temporality, however, constrained what these events could achieve in terms of advancing the arts in the country.[1]

Annually the festivals created festival environments that raised awareness about Afrikaans, environments that (explicitly and implicitly) invited festival-goers to embrace Afrikaans. The relatively diverse festival programmes, advertising and sponsorship material were testimony to the festival managements' concrete efforts to diversify the celebration of Afrikaans through the arts. The festivals undoubtedly offered a nuanced experience in and of Afrikaans.

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[1] Reportedly the arts industry in South Africa is still not flourishing, because of a lack of proper financing and the absence of an effective permanent structure to take care of the interests of the arts (Engelbrecht 2004).

The festivals to an extent succeeded in bringing diverse groups of people together: from various parts of the country; from different generations, genders, appearances, backgrounds, statuses and professions; in various capacities; with various interests; both onstage and offstage. Despite the fact that mainly 'white' Afrikaans speakers attended the festivals, the festivals succeeded in capturing and reflecting some of the diversity and richness of the different mother-tongue speakers of Afrikaans.

There was also greater inclusiveness evident in specifically the 'coloured' participation in the artistic productions – both backstage and front of stage – and with regard to those who found temporary employment during the festivals. There was evidence of the festivals' achievement of stated goals: many locals were financially empowered, the festival environments provoked, stimulated and (in some instances) enhanced social interaction and debate; conversation forums were created; certain cultural misperceptions were removed; some people were reconciled; festival-goers and festival workers alike were exposed to varying degrees to different life worlds through the arts, their use of public space and their encounters with surrounding others.

But one of the festivals' biggest challenges continued to be to involve Afrikaans speakers from across the spectrum such as directors, artists, writers, residents and festival-goers in the festivals, as well as speakers of other indigenous languages. The festivals were inclusive in principle, but there was a marked discrepancy within both festivals between official festival policy and actual festival practice(s). For every success story and change of heart, there was an incident that damaged the cause of inclusive celebrations. Most of these incidents resulted from the behaviour of festival-goers and festival workers that were beyond the direct control of the festival managements. Festival-goers' behaviour in some instances testified to a preoccupation with Afrikaner identity that strengthened the very stereotypes and negative perceptions about 'white' Afrikaans speakers that the festivals tried to remove.

9.2 Identity implications of celebrating

The identity implications of festival attendance are conclusively discussed on the basis of two, by now certainly familiar, key concepts: social *communitas* and liminality.

9.2.1 Social communitas

When it comes to the identity implications of celebrating, the festival studies generally seem to be in agreement: a festival, regardless of its location, scope, duration or type, is an event in which 'the whole' community purportedly takes part. The postmodern critique of holism and homogenization to start with, however, render simplistic references to a 'whole community' problematic.

It was, firstly, not possible to use geographic boundaries to delineate the 'festival community' at the two arts festivals, because the festivals attracted locals from within the host towns, festival-goers and festival workers from across the country and a few from abroad.

It was also not possible to fully determine the nature of the 'festival community' by using ethnic identification as a criterion, because the arts festivals, in sharp contrast to the historical Afrikaner *volksfeeste*, were not aimed at uniting a narrowly defined, exclusive 'community' of Afrikaners. Instead of affirming and renewing an existing allegiance of the so-called Afrikaner *volk* to *Afrikanerdom*, the festival planners envisioned the arts festivals as vehicles for the fostering of ideological *communitas* – an elevated sense of collective belonging or communion between all Afrikaans speakers – that did not exist when the festivals were started in the 1990s.

The arts festivals, moreover, were multi-vocal, which meant that it was not possible to distil a core set of 'community values' that were displayed and enacted during festivals. While most of the festival productions were Afrikaans, and the festival executive committees sometimes commissioned specific productions to premier at the festivals, the festival organizers overall exerted only a limited influence over the actual content of productions which addressed a bewildering array of topics.

The only 'community value' from an organizational point of view was an unambiguous commitment to the full-scale celebration of the arts in Afrikaans. The fact that many of the festival productions indeed targeted 'Afrikaners' was more a reflection of the demographic profile of festival-goers and theatre practitioners' attempts to generate revenue than a statement about the festivals' ideologies.

Judging from the festival literature, festivals' 'community-building' role, and by extension the facilitation and experience of social *communitas*, is primarily reliant on festival-goers' feeling and acting in common. But not all of the festival-goers shared the same goals when attending these festivals, as respondents' divergent experiences of Afrikaans indicated. Some believed that they were contributing to the survival of Afrikaans by attending; others distanced themselves from the 'language struggle', but enjoyed encountering Afrikaans on- and off-stage; for a minority the arts took precedence over any language. The differing intentions of festival-goers shaped their festival activities. Whereas some attended one festival production after the other, others preferred to stroll through the craft market stalls.

It therefore came as no surprise that it was difficult to speak in general terms about 'white' Afrikaans speakers. The field results called for a more nuanced and textured analysis. The findings of the study echo those of Melissa Steyn's (2001) study of 'white' identity in a changing South Africa. Similar to so-called 'whiteness', it was appropriate to think in terms of different forms of 'being Afrikaans'.

The category 'Afrikaners', which in the first place was never primordial or immutable, nor as homogeneous as the Afrikaner nationalists imagined, had been destabilized by post-apartheid conditions. This was especially evident from festival respondents' generally vague and varying definitions of 'the Afrikaners'. Whereas many commentators in the immediate post-1994 period predicted that Afrikaners would have to find new ways of defining their *Afrikanerskap* and modernizing it, the study found that for many white Afrikaans-speaking festival-goers the concept had lost much of its meaning and import.

The dissection and classification of the Afrikaners (see Groenewald 2007c), both within and outside festival contexts, and the debates about Afrikaner identity nevertheless continue unabated.[2] The same applies to reflections on the future role of Afrikaans in South Africa. Without overtly intending to do so, the festivals foregrounded Afrikaner ethnicity as an issue. The salience of Afrikaner identity was, at least in part, due to the prominence of Afrikaans within

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[2] Leopold Scholtz (2007), for example, engaged with the question of "when one can 'resign' as Afrikaner" in a newspaper column. Dr Theuns Eloff (2007: 1), the vice-chancellor of the North West University and chairman of the Aardklop festival, distinguished between four types of Afrikaners, depending on how they approach Afrikaans and 'culture'.

the arts festivals and the audiences that the events attracted as a result.[3] The study confirmed that 'white' Afrikaans speakers were quite divided on issues of identity. It was possible, though, to distinguish two broad reactions amongst respondents: withdrawal and engagement.

Those who 'withdrew' from the new South Africa saw Afrikaans as one of the few remaining symbols of a perceived communal, unique and separate identity in which they could take pride as 'white' Afrikaners. The arts festivals offered them a retreat from a social-political environment that they perceived as tense and alienating. These Afrikaners continued to feel marginalized in the country, perhaps to a greater extent than directly after the democratic transition. Evidently for them the sense of crisis that precipitated the establishment of the two arts festivals continued to prevail. They were, however, oblivious of the festivals' aim, namely to celebrate the Afrikaans arts inclusively.

Ironically, exclusivity and reticence marked their behaviour within the festivals. Many of them were unwilling to mix with 'culturally different others', specifically within the contexts of the festivals. Their inflexible views on, and experiences of, 'being Afrikaans' and the way they obstinately continued to believe in the strict and necessary separation between 'races', illustrated that identity, while fluid, is not completely malleable. Although the arts festivals had no overt political aims, they seemed to offer, on the face of it, the potential for the renewed construction of Afrikaner identity in post-apartheid South Africa. According to Mai Palmberg (1997: 3),

> four cornerstones are needed in the construction of ethnic identity as a political project:
> ideas about the need for a common front against threats to the interests and the very
> existence of the group; conceptions about a shared history; the bonds of language and
> religion and the creation of structures to protect and advance the interests of the group as an
> ethnic minority.

Three of these cornerstones were prominent at the two arts festivals. Firstly, numerous 'white' Afrikaans-speaking festival-goers felt threatened by the new South Africa. Secondly, they continued to believe in the existence of the Afrikaners as a separate (and superior) *kultuurgroep*

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[3] "There are social circumstances in which the consciousness of ethnicity is central or even dominant" (Fenton 1999: 21).

(cultural group) with a shared origin. The festivals provided a temporary delineated geographical territory where they could gather. Thirdly, they experienced the bond of the Afrikaans language, at least during the festivals, as strong and unbreakable.

However, the fourth cornerstone for ethnic mobilization was missing at the festivals. Importantly there was no conscious mobilisation along ethno-political lines occurring at the festivals, partly because the leadership that is usually present in ethnic mobilisation (while existing in conservative politics) was absent. Although some of the festival-goers might have perceived them thus, the festivals did not function 'to protect and advance the interests' of the Afrikaners in any concrete way. They merely offered Afrikaners a temporary escape from a multitude of concerns, brief episodes of connectivity and a measure of reassurance that they could still claim an event for themselves.

But many others, judging by their comments and festival participation, defined and experienced 'being Afrikaans' differently. There was a strong awareness of the preciousness of Afrikaans and a desire for self-actualization in one's own language that was not explicitly ethnically orientated. Many respondents expressed joy simply in the *lekkerte* (the pleasure) of 'being Afrikaans'. Clearly the assertion of minority language rights did not have to be equated with the assertion of 'white' minority rights or seen as a resurgence of Afrikaner nationalism. It was possible to celebrate Afrikaans in a relaxed, open and inviting way as the festival organizers envisioned and the experiences of many festival-goers testified.

The arts festivals also allowed 'white' Afrikaans speakers to interact in a limited way with others across linguistic lines as they examined, explored and reinvented in new, imaginative ways their 'being Afrikaans'. However, given the Afrikaans focus of the festivals, they did not really lend themselves to fundamental, meaningful engagement with 'culturally different' others.

9.2.2 Liminality

Identity processes increasingly play out on virtual, imaginary and, in the case of festivals, liminal terrains. These liminal terrains are removed from the daily production process. Afrikaans-speaking respondents who referred to surrounding others at these festivals as 'family' often led separate everyday lives. Their contact with each other during festivals, though perceived as

264

profoundly meaningful by some, was mostly fleeting and sporadic. How durable then was the sense of togetherness or *communitas* that was experienced, the emotional responses elicited, the bridges crossed, the lessons learnt? Could these liminal effects be expected to outlive the end of each ephemeral performance, the end of each ephemeral festival?

The temporal scope of the study, and the fact that most of the research was carried out during the arts festivals, constrain the extent to which the longer-term identity implications of festival attendance and the sustainability of social *communitas* can be assessed. Respondents (excluding locals within the respective host towns) were only observed in festival settings where they found themselves removed from their everyday surroundings. The observation of the 'play' with identities was thus restricted to festival time.

The fact that there was little observation of respondents' everyday actions outside of festival time complicates the task of assessing how, if at all, "people shift and alter their ethnic ascriptions in the light of circumstance and environment" (Jenkins 1997: 44). However, the semi-structured interviews and informal conversations with respondents did yield information about their everyday lives as they compared and contrasted their festival experience(s) with that of the 'everyday'.

Their responses provided sufficient grounds for asserting that, while the festivals' liminality constrained what the events were able to achieve, the togetherness that the festivals facilitated was not necessarily completely momentary. There were festival-goers for whom a festival had become an annual institution. Groups of friends annually trekked from different directions to gather at the festivals where they spent hours socializing and catching up on each other's news.

It was also not unique for festival-goers to form lasting friendships with fellow festival-goers that they met at these festivals. More than one respondent whom I encountered attended the festival with acquaintances whom they knew from a previous festival. The endurance of the bonds of friendship that were formed during festivals was particularly evident in the case of residents in the host towns who made their houses available for festival accommodation. One respondent told me how a family that annually stayed at her house visited her throughout the year and how they phoned each other on special occasions.

9.3 The final act

Although the festivals have made progress in redeeming Afrikaans and divorcing the language from its exclusive past, the challenge to build bridges internally and externally between Afrikaans speakers and other language groups, remains. Many commentators (see Lloyd 2005) comment on the historical divide that continues to exist between the 'two Afrikaans communities' or between 'white' and 'coloured' speakers of Afrikaans. The challenge of building bridges was an ongoing one, which was not restricted to the festivals as the recent establishment of an *Afrikaanse Taalraad* (Afrikaans Language Council) in 2008 indicated.[4]

The arts festivals, in conclusion, were numerous things simultaneously – and it is precisely this multiplicity that made these festivals such vital and interesting, even magical, events. They were simultaneously inclusive and exclusive, forward-looking and sentimental, accessible and inaccessible, tolerant and intolerant, repetitive and groundbreaking. They will probably continue to be so in the future.

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[4] This Council is an inclusive, coordinating body that represents about 40 Afrikaans organizations. The Council is intended to serve as a central office for the management and coordination of Afrikaans interests and the advancement of a non-racial, progressive Afrikaans. The establishment of the Council was seen as a sign of 'white' and 'coloured' leaders working together to advance Afrikaans (Brand 2008: 4).

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GLOSSARY

Aardklop: An Afrikaans-orientated arts festival that is hosted annually in Potchefstroom, South Africa.

Aartvark: This prize is awarded to any production or event that debuts at the Aardklop festival and that is believed to shift existing artistic boundaries. It is not necessarily awarded to the best or most popular production. It was first awarded in 1999 in an effort to stimulate renewal in the arts.

ABSA: The largest commercial and private bank in South Africa, offering a full range of services including internet banking.

Afrikaanses: Collective term for anyone who speaks Afrikaans and/or appreciates the language.

Afrikaner: The term is used in diverse ways but mainly refers to a distinct white *volk* whose home language is Afrikaans; members of the 'white' population group which forms part of the South African nation together with other ethnic groups and everyone who speaks Afrikaans, regardless of other qualities.

Arbeidsgenot: The name of the house in Oudtshoorn that the writer CJ Langenhoven and his wife occupied in 1903 and where he died on the 15th of July 1932. It was Langenhoven's permanent residence for most of his working life and has been declared a national museum.

ATKV (Afrikaanse Taal- en Kultuurvereniging): The Afrikaans Language and Culture Society is a cultural organization that exists since the 1930s as a non-governmental organization. According to its official mission statement, is aimed at promoting Afrikaans language and culture as an indispensable part of the new South Africa. It is involved with several outreach initiatives, including an extensive involvement at the KKNK and Aardklop arts festivals through the provisioning of free productions, workshops and so forth.

Barrow, Nic: The businessman and community leader from Oudtshoorn is known as the father of the idea to host an arts festival in the town. His foresight and initiative contributed to the establishment of the KKNK in 1995.

Baxter theatre: One of the major live theatre venues in Cape Town, South Africa.

Beeld: The only Afrikaans daily that appears six days a week in the South African provinces of Guateng, Mpumalanga, Northern province, Northwest and KwaZulu-Natal. National Media Ltd. – an affiliate of *Naspers* – distributes it.

Biltong: Dried and salted meat cut into strips.

Black-out: When the stage is darkened, in other words all lights are switched off, often at the end of a scene or act. The term within the context of festivals also refers to the temporary darkening of venues for festival productions.

Boere/Boers: The term refers to 'white' Afrikaans speakers/Afrikaners. It is can be used either to refer to 'white' identity in a proud way or disparagingly.

Boerewors: Kind of sausage associated with Afrikaners that has attained almost iconic status, particularly at the Afrikaans-orientated festivals.

Braai: A barbeque.

Braaivleis: Meat grilled over an open fire.

Breytenbach, B: [1939-]. The poet, writer and painter became a committed opponent of apartheid and left South Africa in 1960, settling in Paris in 1962 with his Vietnamese wife. When he returned to SA in 1975 with a false passport, he was arrested, charged under the Terrorism Act, and jailed for seven years. After his release he returned to Paris where he obtained French citizenship.

Brink, A: A prolific Afrikaans writer who published at least twenty novels between 1958 and 2002. His work, which has been widely translated, has received many awards.

Butler, G: [1918-2001]. As a poet, an artist and a playwright, he also served as the head of the English department at Rhodes. There he inspired the creation of three departments: Drama, Journalism, and English Language and Linguistics. He founded the Grahamstown Area Distress Relief Association (GADRA), the Institute for the study of English in Africa (ISEA) and the National English Literary Museum (NELM). He helped to build the Rhodes Theatre, advocated the building of the 1820 Settlers Monument as a centre for the arts and fathered what was eventually to become the National Arts festival. He served as chairman of the Festival Committee for many years.

Cachet Park: Large, open grassy plain in *Die Bult* residential area of Potchefstroom that served as the main festival terrain during the Aardklop festival.

Cango caves: One of the world's greatest natural wonders, the caves lie in the Swartberg mountain range in a limestone belt. The caves started to form some twenty million years ago. As the water level dropped the water seeped into the limestone, creating cavities. It was discovered about 10 000 years ago, but the first guided tour was only undertaken in 1891. The present visitor route extends 1.2 km into the cave, with another 4.1 km kept closed to the public for conservation reasons.

Civic Centre: The only formal theatre venue in Oudtshoorn was located here.

Coleridge-View: A formerly 'coloured' area in Oudtshoorn.

CP Nel museum: A signature sandstone building in Oudtshoorn that dates from the second ostrich-feather boom period that lasted from 1910 to 1914. It was declared a national monument in 1981.

Cyclorama: Also known as a 'cyc' or backdrop it refers to a plain cloth or reflecting screen which closes off the back of the stage. It is hung down to stage level, extending up and out to create an impression of great space.

De Wet, Reza: A female South African playwright who has won more theatre and literary prizes than any other South African playwright. She was involved with the Drama department at the Rhodes University in Grahamstown. Her Afrikaans plays include *Drif*, *Mirakel*, *Mis* and *Drie Susters*.

Die Bult: The suburb in Potchefstroom is synonymous with the University of the North West that is located there. Known as the town's second central business district, the area offers a wide variety of restaurants, shops and other recreational opportunities.

Die Burger: (The Citizen). The daily newspaper published in Cape Town, South Africa, is the largest of the country's newspapers written in Afrikaans. It is published every morning, except on Sundays.

Eskom: South Africa's primary electrical supplier.

FAK: The *Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge* (Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Associations) was established in 1929. The FAK played a pivotal role in various Afrikaans language and cultural actions, particularly during apartheid, when it was used as a vehicle to advance Afrikaner nationalism. Its current mission includes: advancing Afrikaner interests, liaising with other Afrikaans organizations to initiate Afrikaans projects and to prevent duplication and encouraging the involvement of the Afrikaans community in various Afrikaans initiatives.

Festival guide: A comprehensive document that provides festival-goers with all the needed information on the specific festival such as the entertainment on offer, essential services and amenities and so forth.

First language: The primary language of a person.

Floor plan: A scale drawing which shows the exact position of the openings, walls, windows and so forth in a stage set.

Fourth wall: The imaginary wall that separates the audience from the stage in a proscenium theatre.

Front of House Management: They are responsible for the effective management of all the activities and areas that affect the audience at a theatre production. Basic responsibilities include the sale of tickets directly before the show at the venue, the management of complimentary tickets, general access control, directing audience members to exits and changingrooms, the handing out and/or selling of programmes and production souvenirs, the management of complaints by the public, clean-up between shows and enforcement of all theatre rules.

Goema: A type of Cape music that is usually performed at funerals, minstrel carnivals and other celebrations. *Goema* music is rooted in the slaves' unique interpretation of European folk songs and the use of musical instruments that was brought to the Cape in the seventeenth century by the DEIC.

Grahamstown Foundation: This is a non-profit South African company that manages a wide variety of projects, including the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown to fulfil its mission statement: to enrich the educational and cultural life of the people of South Africa. The foundation operates from and administers the 1820 Settlers National monument.

Great Trek: Lasting from 1835 to the 1840s, more than 10 000 Afrikaner settlers, known as the *Voortrekkers*, left the Cape Colony with their ox wagons and trekked north and north-east into the interior. The reasons for this exodus were their economic problems, the danger of conflict with the Xhosa who settled on the other side of the Fish River and dissatisfaction with the British authorities, who provided insufficient protection to them and postulated the equality of 'whites' and 'non-whites'. They eventually founded the independent republics of Natal, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal.

Hap en Tap: A well-known temporary eating establishment at the KKNK, managed by Oudtshoorn High School.

House: The front and auditorium rather than the stage and backstage areas, of a theatre.

Huisgenoot: An Afrikaans magazine that boasts a readership of more than two million South Africans. Its English twin, the *You* magazine, reaches more than one-and-a-half million people. Both have sponsored music stages at South African arts festivals.

Integrated Development Plan: Municipalities, rather than merely providing services, have received a developmental mandate. The principles underlying this mandate are enshrined in the South African constitution as well as national developmental legislation.

Kanna: The Kanna awards are given to the most outstanding productions and artists at each KKNK festival. The 19 categories include the best presentation, most popular production, best direction, most inspiring artist and best upcoming artist. The adjudication is managed by a Kanna panel consisting of directors, members of the Arts cabinet of the KKNK, journalists, experts from the entertainment world and experienced festival-goers.

Kerkorrel, Johannes: [1960-2002]. Born as Ralph John Rabie, he became a well-known alternative Afrikaans singer. He established the *Gereformeerde Blues Band* in 1987 and embarked on a career as full-time musician. A concert called 'the first alternative Afrikaans rock concert' and a nationwide tour of university campuses in South Africa in 1988, called *Voëlvry*, upset the Afrikaner establishment. This tour was an attempt to help free Afrikaans from its negative political associations. Kerkorrel toured across South Africa throughout his career; performing at various festivals, including the NAF and the KKNK.

Kermis: An Afrikaans word that refers to a fair, fête, funfair or carnival. It entails a gathering of stalls and various amusements for public, usually outdoor entertainment.

KKNK (Klein Karoo National Arts Festival): An Afrikaans-orientated arts festival that is hosted annually in Oudtshoorn, South Africa.

Klein Karoo Co-operative Ltd: The co-operative was founded in 1945 to facilitate the ostrich farming and marketing sector in a structured and orderly manner. It has become a leader in the ostrich industry as the worlds' foremost supplier of ostrich-related products, supplying 70% of all ostrich meat, leather and feathers.

Koeksisters: A very sweet and sticky traditional dessert – pieces of dough are braided, deep-fried and covered in syrup.

Krige, U: [1910-1987]. He worked as a journalist and war correspondent during World War II. He later became a distinguished translator into Afrikaans of French and Spanish poetry. His work consists of a huge range of Afrikaans poems and dramas, translations of other writers, short stories and a novel. He was awarded the Hertzog Prize twice – in 1974 for poetry and in 1985 for drama.

Krit: The official newspaper of the Klein Karoo National Arts Festival in Oudtshoorn that is only published during the festival. The first editions appeared at the first KKNK held in 1995.

Kuier: The popular Afrikaans expression refers to the act of visiting a person or a place, as an act of friendship, on business or out of interest. It simply refers, in popular usage, to the socialization of people who feel at ease with each other.

KykNet: A South African television channel that broadcasts solely in Afrikaans. Owned by pay-TV operator M-Net, it was launched on the DSTV satellite service in 1999.

Laager: The term derives from the practice of the *Voortrekkers* during the Great Trek to position their ox wagons in such a way as to form a half-moon-shaped enclosure, in the centre of which fires were lit and domestic and recreational activities took place.

Langenhoven, CJ: [1873-1932]. The famous Afrikaans literary figure qualified as an advocate, but later became involved in journalism and politics. He became member of the Cape Provincial Council, the House of Assembly and the Senate. He played a major role in promoting the use of Afrikaans as medium of instruction in schools – the first time Afrikaans has been recognized in legislature in South Africa. He wrote numerous texts, including what was eventually to become the national anthem of South Africa, and he facilitated the acceptance of Afrikaans as official language on a par with English in 1925.

Leipoldt, CL: [1880-1947]. This multi-talented man worked as a journalist and editor before and during the Anglo-Boer War. He later became a doctor, specializing in paediatrics and orthopaedics, but carried on his journalistic work. His published work spans a variety of literary genres and he received the prestigious Hertzog Prize twice.

Lekker: One of the most commonly used words in the Afrikaans language. Plainly translated it means 'nice', but it has many usages. Generally it indicates pleasure or satisfaction, for

example, when referring to the taste or smell of objects or the weather. The word has achieved such popularity as an all-encompassing expression that is used by many South Africans, regardless of their first-language.

LitNet: An independent Afrikaans journal that is published on the internet and managed as a joint cooperation by Lightprops 3042 and Media24.

Marais, Eugene N: [1871–1936]. As a literary figure, he was one of the first champions of Afrikaans as a written language. He became known for his contributions on a variety of terrains. He was a journalist, playwright, reviewer, jurist and writer, but was especially honoured as poet. His poem called *Winternag* [Winter night] was utilized in the Afrikaans language struggle shortly after the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) as an example of what Afrikaans could achieve.

Melktert: A traditional dessert that usually consists of a pastry crust with a sweet, creamy filling that is lightly spiced with cinnamon.

Moerse: Afrikaans swearword meaning 'hell of a', 'almighty'.

Namaqualand: A region in South Africa.

Naspers: A multinational media group with its principal operations in electronic media and print media in South Africa. It creates media content in a variety of forms and through a variety of channels, including television platforms, internet services, newspapers, magazines and books. The group is known as the founding sponsor of both the KKNK and Aardklop festivals.

Nataniël: South African singer/songwriter/entertainer and cult figure launched his solo career in 1987 with the release of his first single, 'Maybe Time'. Since then he has released 13 albums, staged more than 40 original theatre productions and published 10 books.

National Arts Council (NAC): The NAC supports the development and promotion of excellence in the arts. It provides funding by transfer payments to the widest possible range of arts and culture organizations, NGOs and individuals, based on the recommendations in particular artistic fields of discipline-based panels.

National Arts Festival (NAF): The festival, which annually takes place in Grahamstown, began in 1974 as a project of the Grahamstown Foundation. It offers a wide-ranging programme over ten days, with hundreds of exhibitions and performances in venues across the town. It is widely marketed as the premiere showcase for South African performance genres and is coupled with two craft fairs.

National Settlers Monument: The national monument was erected in Grahamstown to honour the legacy of the British pioneers that came to settle there in the 1820s. The monument was officially opened on the 13th of July 1974. The building that is managed by the 1820 Settlers Foundation was meant to function as a 'living monument' and serves many purposes. Graduation ceremonies and festival productions are staged there and it often serves as a conference and exhibition venue.

North West University (NU): The former Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education originated from the Theological School of the Reformed Churches in South Africa in 1919. It amalgamated with the University of the North West in 2003 to create a new educational institution that consists of four campuses: Potchefstroom, also known as the PUK, Vaaldriehoek, Mafikeng and Mankwe. The institutional head office is located in Potchefstroom. The Potchefstroom campus had 33 713 enrolled students in 2004.

Oom: Literally translated the term means 'uncle', but it can be used to address any older man, not necessarily a relative. Although it is mostly used to indicate respect, it can also indicate playfulness or even disrespect.

Opperman, Deon: His career as playwright, director and producer for theatre, film and television started in 1984. He has written about 40 dramas in Afrikaans and English that have been professionally performed. He has also directed and produced more than 50 theatre productions. In 1996 he opened AFDA – the South African School of Motion Picture Medium and Live Performance.

Pannekoek: The main ingredients of these thin, large pancakes are cake flour, eggs and milk. They are traditionally layered with cinnamon sugar, rolled up and ideally eaten when still warm.

Pansa: The Performance Art Network of South Africa is a national network of individuals, companies and institutions that are engaged in the performing arts. It aims to provide a national forum and organizational base for performing arts practitioners, set an agenda and act in their respective and collective interests in the performing arts.

Potjiekos: This is a part of South Africa's culinary tradition and usually consists of a variety of meat and/or vegetables that are cooked over an open fire in a pot. It dates from the first settlement of Dutch settlers at the Cape when food was cooked in a black cast-iron pot hanging from a chain over a kitchen fire.

Promosa: So-called former coloured area in Potchefstroom where the ATKV has outreach programmes during the Aardklop festival.

Proscenium arch: The proscenium is the wall dividing the auditorium from the stage. In the wall is the proscenium arch and through this frame or proscenium opening, the audience watches the play.

Puk: Main campus of the North West University in Potchefstroom.

Queens Mall: A shopping centre in Oudsthoorn. During the KKNK the parking terrain of the centre is transformed into an arts and craft market.

Radiosondergrense: The national broadcaster in Afrikaans. As broadcasting sponsor the RSG gives considerable free exposure to the Afrikaans-orientated festivals in the run-up to the festivals. During the festivals some of the broadcasts are based at the festivals.

Rigging: The technical preparation for a production.

SAB: The South African Breweries.

SABC2: A national broadcaster that boasts 9 million viewers. 76% of the programme content is locally produced and more or less a third of the channel's programmes are Afrikaans. It is the only channel that has daily news broadcasts in Afrikaans. It is involved in both the KKNK and Aardklop as a sponsor.

Sarie: Media24's oldest women's magazine. As the biggest, Afrikaans glossy, it covers a wide range of topics ranging from the latest fashion trends to recipes, handicraft and health.

Set: To set is to get the stage ready for the coming scene by putting everything in its correct position. Also, the set or setting is all the scenery, furniture and props used to create a particular stage picture.

Shebeen: Informal drinking establishment.

Snoek: South African barracuda.

Sol Plaatje Diskoersreeks: Aardklop's discussion programmes were so named in honour of the Tswana-speaking community leader who lived and worked in the North West region. He was an activist, writer, philosopher and playwright who translated six Shakespeare dramas into Tswana.

Spat: The official, yet independent, newspaper of the Aardklop festival that is held annually in Potchefstroom. The newspaper is only published during the festival and the first editions appeared in 1998, the year the Aardklop festival was initiated.

Technical Rehearsal: A rehearsal at which all the technical elements are rehearsed and integrated into the production.

Technical Rider: A document that provides all the technical specifications for a production such as the minimum stage size that is required, a stage plan, storage requirements, a lighting plan and a listing of special effects.

Totius: [1877-1953]. Prof. JD du Toit, better known as Totius, was countrywide a well-liked figure amongst the Afrikaners as theologian, poet and cultural leader. One of his greatest achievements was the first translation of the Bible into Afrikaans, published in 1933.

Transnet: A South African freight transport and logistics company comprising ports, rail and pipeline assets.

Van Wyk Louw, NP: [1906-1970]. He was a professor of Afrikaans from 1950 to 1958 at the University of Amsterdam and from 1958 to his death held the same position at Wits University in South Africa. He had exceptional poetic skills and on five occasions was awarded the prestigious Hertzog Prize for Afrikaans literature. Despite his critique of the apartheid

nationalist government, he wanted to ensure the survival of Afrikaans and advance the Afrikaners' spiritual life.

Volk: The Afrikaner people/nation.

Voorbrandfees: The so-called *voorbrandfees*, meaning 'festival to pave the way', was presented by the KKNK in cooperation with the Western Cape government as an outreach programme to bring a much smaller and shorter version of the festival to communities of the Klein Karoo that otherwise would not have been able to attend or afford the festival. Communities where the programme was presented included De Rust, Dysselsdorp, Schoemanshoek, Ladismith, Zoar and Uniondale. Mobile theatres and community halls were utilized as production venues for mainly children's plays, drama, dancing and music productions. It was restructured in 2003 to take place after the festival.

Voortrekkers: First Boers to move into the interior of South Africa in the 1830s (see also Great Trek). It is also the name of an Afrikaner youth movement, similar to the Boy and Girl Scouts.

Vredefort dome: Situated in the southwest corner of Potchefstroom's Municipality boundary is the newly established Vredefort Dome Conservancy (VDC), a World Heritage Site. Recognized as the largest visible meteorite impact point on earth, it is a significant tourist attraction. The meteorite that struck the earth about 2000 million years ago was ten cubic kilometres in size but created a crater 126 kilometres across.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FESTIVAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME:
SURNAME:
AGE:
GENDER:
FIRST LANGUAGE:
FESTIVAL POSITION/ROLE:
RESIDENT AREA:
CITIZENSHIP:
DATE:

- How did the festival originate?

- What does the festival celebrate?

- What experience do you aim to offer visitors?

- How does the festival committee and municipality work together to host the festival?

- What are the main aspects that need to be considered when planning the festival?

    - safety considerations
    - creation of ambiance
    - crowd management
    - maintenance of public order
    - planning of particular events and performances for day/night time
    - festival peak times
    - festival fringe events
    - allocation of venues
    - sponsorship rights
    - craft market selection procedures
    - spatial lay-out

- How are local residents taken into account?

    - capacity-building
    - outreach projects
    - challenges

- What kind of collaboration is there between the various festivals, if any?

- What impact does the festival have on the host town and region?

- How has the festival changed over time?

  - lessons learnt

- What did you learn about the festival-goers since you have been working as member of the festival organizational committee?

  - who attends
  - reasons for attendance
  - catering for participants' needs

- Do you have suggestions on how this interview schedule might be improved?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR RESIDENTS IN THE HOST TOWNS

NAME:
SURNAME:
AGE:
GENDER:
FIRST LANGUAGE:
OCCUPATION:
RESIDENT AREA:
CITIZENSHIP:
DATE:

- How long have you been resident in town?

- What impact does the festival have on the town and region?

    - changes in natural and built environments
    - improvements in infrastructure
    - increases in permanent residents, tourists
    - growth in local businesses

- What are your expectations of the festival?

- Do you attend the festival?

- What is the festival celebrating?

- Have you met people at a festival?

- Have you noticed changes in the festival over time?

- What would you change about the festival, if anything?

- Do you have suggestions on how this interview schedule might be improved?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR FESTIVAL-GOERS

NAME:
SURNAME:
AGE:
GENDER:
FIRST LANGUAGE:
OCCUPATION:
RESIDENT AREA:
CITIZENSHIP:
DATE:

- Have you attended the festival before?

    - If yes, what memories of previous festivals stand out?
    - Are there specific places/spaces that you re-visit?
    - Any festival changes that you have noticed?

- Why do you attend the festival?

- What is the festival celebrating?

- How long do you attend the festival?

- With whom are you attending the festival?

- Where do you stay at the festival?

- What do you do while you are here?

    - favourite hang-outs
    - willingness to visit the township
    - safety concerns
    - structuring of activities
    - role of language

- Have you met people at the festival?

- What is your impression of the festival?

- What is your impression of the town?

- How do you feel about Afrikaans at the festival?

- Do you think the festival helps to bring people together?

- Would you attend the festival again?

- Any suggestions on how this interview schedule can be improved?