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Past and passed in the present

Persistence of history in Wesbank, a post-Apartheid township in South Africa

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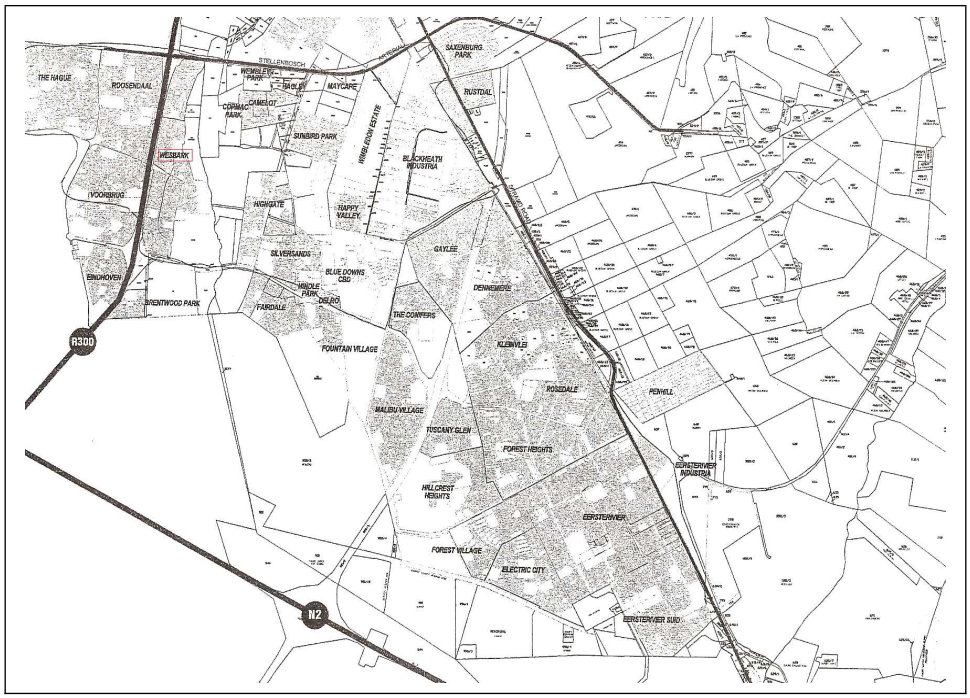
Introduction

1. Formulation of the problem and contextualisation

1.1. Formulation of the problem: Wesbank as 'rainbow nation' in the new South-Africa?

Wesbank was established in 1998 as part of the housing project within the framework of the Reconstruction and Development Programme, implemented by the new South African government, to tackle the economic, spatial, and racial legacy of Apartheid. This post-Apartheid community was built in order to reallocate 25 000 people who never owned a house before or lived in informal settlements. Situated in the Cape Flats - 'the sandy, dumping grounds of Apartheid' - Wesbank is considered to be the first 'rainbow nation' in this area, giving home to deprived people, irrespective of colour. Whereas the Provincial Government initiated the project and was responsible for the planning-side, the Municipality of Oostenberg - under whose jurisdiction Wesbank is registered - was appointed to ensure the further development and supply of services and facilities.



Blue Downs and environments Source: City of Cape Town. Oostenberg Administration. D. Diedericks

Area of the Cape Flats. Source: http://www.capeflats.org.za/overview.htm

As for the multifarious socio-economic and socio-linguistic research that has been conducted in Wesbank, the voices from within the schools and the community organisations have been heard predominantly. But what is the story of 'the man in the street', of the residents who do not come to the fore in the community? The starting point of our fieldwork was to obtain a general view on the 'profile' of Wesbank's inhabitants, mainly focussing on issues regarding place and identity. Where do the residents come from? Which routes did they follow to arrive in Wesbank? Which aspects influenced their migrations? How do they perceive their new 'home'? To what extent do they have contact with their neighbours? How far reaches their commitment in the community? How do they explain the occurring frictions? What is their feeling of the 'rainbow nation'? How do they try to turn the new circumstances into opportunities for themselves and for the community? How far do they bring to bear identity markers as a way to distinguish themselves from 'others'?

This attempt to reconstruct an oral history of Wesbank and its inhabitants was confronted with the official, 'factual' side of the story. When was the project initiated? What was the main aim of the project and the motivation behind it? Who is responsible for the area? Where is Wesbank situated? What characterises the relation between the residents and the officials, both at local and provincial level? Which key-factors were and are decisive for the development of the community?

The main finding of the analysis of the data of our empirical research concerns the paradoxical nature of these data. Moreover, a striking persistence of history was the leading thread running through the opinions, perceptions and attitudes of the interviewees. The notion of these extant paradoxes and obvious persistence of history, forms the cornerstone of the final formulation of the problem in this thesis. To what extent can this persistence of history be considered as an explanation for these extant paradoxes? What are the main persistent aspects of this history? Moreover, can the paradoxes - characterising every aspect of the (hi)story of Wesbank - exclusively be imputed to the persistence of history? If not, which other factors are decisive and to what extent?

1.2. Selective history of Apartheid

Since the thread running through the analysis of our fieldwork data, can partly be summarised as 'the persistence of history', a certain knowledge of that specific history is necessary for a correct understanding of this dissertation. Two main aspects of the history of Apartheid in South-Africa still influence the lives and perspectives of the inhabitants of Wesbank in a crucial way, i.e. the racial and spatial segregation, enacted by the Apartheid government in the Population Registration Act of 1950 and the Group Areas Act of 1950 respectively.[1] The specific terminology to address the different sections of the population was created by the segregation policy of Apartheid and persists in the appellations of coloureds and blacks, terms that are commonly used, even in official documents. Therefore, we also use this specific vocabulary in this dissertation, without justifying with it this in se racial terminology. This selective history merely encloses a limited explanation of the enacted racial and spatial segregation and a concise history in which we try to trace the particularities of the often disputed coloured identity. For a more comprehensive reading on the social, economic and political history of South-Africa we refer to Thompson's *A history of Apartheid* (1995), Clark and Worger's *South Africa: the rise and fall of Apartheid* (2004) and Davenport's *South Africa. A modern history* (1978).

Literally, Apartheid is Afrikaans for 'apartness' or 'separateness', a term that refers - in the specific context of South-Africa - to a system of racial segregation that operated from 1948 to the early 1990's. According to Pieterse, Apartheid is 'a matter of ethnicity from above'.[2] Many theorists claim that Apartheid was merely a continuation of the mentality of the British colonisers who imposed segregation in order to minimise inter-group conflicts, well-known as the 'divide-and-rule strategy'. This residential and social segregation - intensified after 1913 by, amongst others, the Land Act - started to play a significant role in the formation of collective identities since 1948.[3] In spite of a certain degree of segregation before 1948, it was the Afrikaner government - coming in power in 1948 - that systematically implemented Apartheid by *law* which allowed the white minority to dominate a country in which they formed a minority and to maintain their distinct identity without the mixing of races. According to Lipton, four principles formed the cornerstone of Apartheid: (1) the hierarchical ordering of economic, political and social structures on the basis of race, identified by physical characteristics such as skin colour and hair texture; (2) exclusion of black[4] people from many

[1] Since we focus on place and identity we highlight these two acts as we think these particular acts are crucial and enclose the history that persists in the lives of our interviewees.
[2] ZEGEYE, "Imposed ethnicity", 3.
[3] Ibidem, 9.
[4] The term 'black' in this is used to indicate all people of colour, all people who were not white.

of the civil, political and economic rights enjoyed by white people, such as the right to vote, to move freely, to be full citizens of South-Africa, to own property and to work anywhere in South-Africa; (3) confining black people to inferior housing, schools, universities, hospitals, and transport and prohibiting sexual relations and inter-marriage across the colour bar. This discrimination insinuated that black cultures were inferior to those of white people; (4) institutionalising this hierarchical, discriminatory and segregated system in law, enabling the government to enforce it through various measures.[5]

The Population Registration Act, implemented in 1950, envisaged the classification of all inhabitants of South-Africa in accordance with their racial characteristics. White, coloured and black or native (later *Bantu*)[6] people were defined by this law. Asian or Indian (South Asians from the former British India) was added later as a separate classification as those people were seen as having 'no historical rights to the country'. A white person was defined as someone who 'in appearance obviously is a white person and who is not generally accepted as a coloured person and is not in appearance obviously not a white person'. A black person is any person who 'is, or is generally seen as a member of any aboriginal race or tribe'. The coloured group, containing any person who 'is not a white person or a black', was subdivided in terms of a proclamation of 1959 into Cape Coloured, Cape Malay, Griqua, Indian, Chinese, 'other Asiatic' and 'other Coloured'.[7]

The Apartheid government of Malan (Prime Minister of South-Africa, 1948-1954) set up an Office for Race Classification to overview the classification process. Decisive factors such as outer appearance, general acceptance and social standing were used as classification criteria. Notwithstanding the fact that this classification presented 'no problem' in respect of about 99 percent of the population, numerous 'border line' cases who did not fit clearly in any category, occurred. These people were classified after an official investigation. Still, objection to the classification in a certain race group was possible, which could result in reclassification if enough evidence was submitted. For example, people who wanted to retain their white status, were required to present proof of their European ancestry. Those who could not, were scrutinised by an army of officials appointed by the government, who attempted to classify human beings in terms of race by looking at fingernails, hair, the shape of nose, other family members and who accepted the word of anonymous informers which resulted in several cases of treason.[8] Whereas the registration was tightened up by several amendments to prevent more coloureds[9] to obtain a white status, there were still coloureds who tried

[5] LIPTON in ZEGEYE, "Imposed Ethnicity", 4.
[6] The terms were legally supposed to be capitalised.
[7] VENTER, *Coloured,* 120.
[8] Whites complained about neighbours they disliked, while coloureds complained about people whom they felt should be classified African or Indian but not coloured. (VENTER, *Coloured,* 118)
[9] **c**oloureds: small c refers to all people of colour, excluding Africans.

reclassification within the coloured group and Africans who tried for coloured, in order to acquire more rights and a better treatment. Different members of a family could find themselves in different race groups, which also partly explains the large amount of objections to a certain classification. The importance of this process of racial classification lies in the fact that vitals such as voting rights, social acceptance, pension rights, place of residence, children's education, economic status were determined by the group an individual belonged to.[10] Non-white South-Africans were perceived as second-class citizens and the lack of opportunities for the races to mix in a social setting entrenched social distance between people. In tandem with this law, other laws and regulations came into being, aiming at a fully racially segregated society. Since the enactment of the Immorality Amendment Act of 1957 for example, a relationship with a member of a different race was designated as crime. The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act of 1953 prohibited people of different races from using the same public amenities such as drinking fountains, ambulances, bridges, graveyards, parks, public toilets, maternity clinics, theatres and public transport.

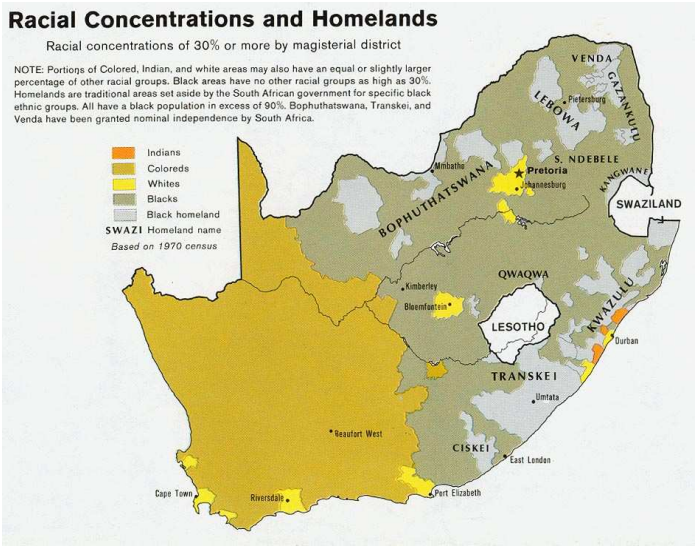
Source: www.suedafrica.net/tseiten/Apartheid.html
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apartheid
fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apartheid

The heart of the attempt of the Apartheid system to geographically separate the racial groups, took shape in the homeland policy and in the Group Areas Act of 1950 - of which the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act can be seen as an extension. The official aim was for each group to live in a separate area, where it could develop its own institutions and way of life. Residentially mixed areas would be eliminated and people would be settled in their 'correct' group area. These acts imposed control throughout South-Africa over interracial property transaction and interracial changes in occupation. When a group area was proclaimed for occupation by a particular group, a responsible minister named a date by which 'disqualified' people had to move out.[11] During the 1960's, 1970's and early 1980's a policy of resettlement was implemented by the Apartheid government, to force people to

[10] VENTER, *Coloured,* 118-124.
[11] VENTER, *Coloured*, 7.

move to their 'designated' areas. Some people argue that over three and a half million blacks were resettled during this period. Next to these numerous people from African descent who were removed to homelands, nearly 600 000 coloured, Chinese and Indian people and a 40 000 white people became victim of forced removals. The majority of coloured people were relocated to new townships in the Cape Flats.[12]

Some eighty-seven percent of the land was reserved for whites, coloureds and Indians. About thirteen percent of the land was divided into ten 'homelands' or 'Bantustans' for blacks,[13] who represented sixty percent of the total population. The creation of homelands -enacted by the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 - was a central element in the strategy of Verwoerd (Prime Minister of South-Africa, 1958-1966) to reshape South-African society so that the whites would become the demographic majority. Blacks were to be made involuntary citizens, losing their original South-African citizenship and voting rights. Although this was never recognised by the international community, some of the homelands gained their 'independence' (Transkei, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana en Venda). Verwoerd argued that these 'Bantustans' were the original homes of the native people of South-Africa, which weakened the idea that South-Africa was a multi-racial society. On the contrary, South-Africa consisted of many 'nations', each of which should have the right to control its destiny and preserve its identity.[14]



Source: http://images.nationmaster.com/images/motw/africa/south_africa_racial_1979.jpg

[12] "Group Areas Act" and "Homeland policy", *Wikipedia,* 24/02/2006 and http://africanhistory.about.com/library

[13] Bophuthatswana (Tswana), Transkei (Xhosa), Ciskei (Xhosa), Venda (Venda), Gazankulu (Tsonga), KaNgwane (Swazi), KwaNdebele (Ndebele), KwaZulu (Zulu), Lebowa (Northern Sotho), KwaKwa (Southern Sotho).

[14] LIPTON in ZEGEYE, "Imposed Ethnicity", 6 and "Homeland policy", *Wikipedia,* 24/02/2006.

The government made clear that the ultimate aim of the process[15] was the total removal of the black population from South-Africa, as stated in 1978 by Connie Mulder, Minister of Plural Relations and Development: *If our policy is taken to its logical conclusion as far as the black people are concerned, there will be not one black man with South African citizenship ... Every black man in South Africa will eventually be accommodated in some independent new state in this honourable way and there will no longer be an obligation on this Parliament to accommodate these people politically.* But this goal was not achieved, as 'only' fifty-five percent of South-Africa's black population lived in homelands. The other forty-five percent lived in the 'proper' South-Africa, many in vast shantytowns and slums on the outskirts of South-African cities. This was, among other reasons, because the economy of white South Africa depended on access to a black labour force.[16]

To support this residential segregation, the existing pass laws were further strengthened. Blacks and coloureds were compelled to carry identity documents which became a sort of passport by which migration to so-called 'white' South-Africa could be allowed. Above all the blacks suffered severely from these pass laws. Only blacks who had an approved job could be issued with a pass. Having no valid pass made a person subject to immediate arrest and summary trial, often followed by 'deportation' to the person's homeland. This pass had to replace all earlier authorisations and contained personal information such as identity, name, address and signature of the employer, possible convictions and fingerprints.[17]

The impact of this racial and spatial segregation is obvious, considering the fact that social, economic and political rights of people of colour were severely curtailed. Education, medical care and other public services were sometimes claimed to be separate but equal, although those available to non-white people were inferior in practice. In general, the black population was at the bottom of the social ladder, the coloured (and Indian) group stood some rungs higher. Whereas during most of the era of legally formalised Apartheid - from about 1950 until 1983 - voting rights were essentially denied to coloureds in the same way as they were denied to blacks, in 1983 the Constitution was reformed to allow the coloured and Asian minorities participating in separate Houses in a tricameral Parliament. The theory behind this transformation was that the coloured minority could be granted voting rights, while the black majority had to become citizens of independent 'Bantustans'. Secondly coloured people

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[15] Local tribal leaders were co-opted to run the homelands, allocated by the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 to the different black ethnic groups. Over time a ruling black élite emerged with a personal and financial interest in the preservation of the homelands. The Bantu Self-Government Act of 1959, which set out a plan for separate development, enabled the homelands to establish themselves as self-governing, quasi independent states. The process of removing the few rights that blacks still had in South-Africa was completed by the Black Homeland Citizenship Act of 1970, which forcibly made blacks citizens of Bantustans, even if they had never set foot in their nominal "homeland", and cancelled their South African citizenship.

[16] "Bantustans", W*ikipedia,* 28/02/2006.

[17] DEBROEY, *Zuid-Afrika onder de vloek van Apartheid,* 229-230.

received an education that was inferior to that of the white minority, but better than that provided to the black population.[18] Professor Vosloo, who outlined the policy of the National Party, makes a distinction between 'separate development' where blacks are concerned and 'parallel development' for the coloureds. In this he expounds and summarises the official philosophy and policy of the Apartheid government regarding racial and spatial segregation: "*In essence the chief exponents of the policy of Apartheid aimed at a gradual and systematic disentanglement of the various non-white groups from the social, economic and political structures of the whites, enabling each group to exercise political rights and to create opportunities for progressive fulfilment in accordance with its own traditions and values within its own areas, and where practicable to develop into independent states. For the various African groups this policy gradually acquired the meaning of '**separate development'** i.e. development within the context of their traditional homelands with complete political - if not economic - independence as the ultimate objective. Africans living outside the homelands are to be identified with the national units where their forebears originated and are within the context of 'white' South Africa regarded as 'temporary sojourners' to whom property ownership and political rights are denied. For the Coloureds, the policy of Apartheid gradually acquired the meaning of '**parallel development'**, i.e. a pattern of development which is basically community-directed but without clear indication as to the ultimate political future of the coloureds within the borders of what is commonly conceived of as 'white South-Africa'*.[19]

This controversial position of coloureds is still common and coheres with the unclear identity of the coloured group. As noticeable in the formulation of the Population Registration Act and following proclamations and in the occurrence of several 'border-line' cases, so-called Coloureds - representing 8.9% of the South-African population and mostly living in the Western Cape - are member of a heterogeneous group which is difficult to define. Sharkey Isaacs, a coloured newspaper reporter describes his identity as follows: '*Brown is the colour of my skin. In South-Africa that makes me belong to the race group classified as Coloured. There are two million people like me. Some of them are very fair-skinned and even have blond hair, others are dark. We come in all shades of colour and we are the nowhere people at the Southern tip of Africa. Born and raised in South-Africa we know no country and owe no allegiance to no other country*'.[20] According to Martin, this ambiguity of coloured identity is captured in the way some coloureds describe themselves as 'in-betweeners': 'sandwiched between a majority of blacks and whites who have or who wielded power, they consider their present position in South-Africa as non-influential' which results in a certain degree of political fatalism. This feeling of helplessness is first of all aggravated by Apartheid

[18] "Apartheid", "Bantustans", *Wikipedia,* 28/02/2006.
[19] VENTER, *Coloured,* 513.
[20] Ibidem, 6.

experiences of coloureds in the Cape, for example the expulsions from District 6 and the forced relocations into new townships in the Cape Flats.[21] Secondly many coloureds feel neglected in post-Apartheid South-Africa since measures like the affirmative action, introduced by the new and predominantly black government, seem to pass them. Whereas coloureds could claim a status that was superior to that of the blacks, but inferior to the whites, they now again feel like they are somehow secluded and frequently describe their position as 'somewhere in between', although they also have contributed to the struggle.

A third and crucial explanation for the difficulties to define coloured identity, lies in a long and complex history of coloureds as a 'melting pot' of different 'cultures'. Apart from Hottentot and white blood, the coloured received infusions of Malay, Indian, bastard-Hottentot, Madagascan, East-African, Mozambican, Indonesian, Philippino-Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, 'prize-negro',[22] West African *krumen,*[23] Jewish and a host of every possible European influence.[24]

The history of coloured people goes back to the years before the arrival of Jan Van Riebeeck in 1652. There is evidence of sexual contact between early travellers who passed around the Cape and local tribe's people, commonly known as the Khoisan which is a collective noun for different 'tribes' of *brown* people: the Khoikhoi or Hottentots were shepherds, the San or Bushmen were wandering hunter-collectors. These Khoisan groups showed different reactions on the whites. Some made an attempt to preserve their tribal identity and fled, for example the Namas. Others like the Griquas, the Basters and the Orlams did the same a few decades later and established their own communities somewhere else. Furthermore there were many Hottentots who became absorbed by the whites and who came to form a landless proletariat. Within a few generations 'the individual we know as the coloured of today began to emerge'.[25] Through further miscegenation, many of these early bastard people were assimilated into the European population of the settlement. Slaves played a major role in this early settlement *and* in the growth of the coloured community through racial intermixing. As contact between slaves was often difficult and subsequently prevented the forming of a slave community, these slaves sought individual strategies to escape. Some of them fled their masters and sought refuge amongst the Khoisan or the Bantu speaking people. Others bought their freedom.[26] The emancipation of these people created a new class of coloured

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[21] MARTIN, "What's in the name 'Coloured'?", 260.

[22] They were free and thus considered as having a higher status than slaves, yet they had in practise lost their freedom when captured on their native soil and many were kept 'enslaved' for long periods of time. (SAUNDERS in WORDEN, *Breaking the chains*, 107.)

[23] Krumen (Kroomen, Krus) are people of the west coast of Africa, dwelling in villages scattered along the coast of Liberia from below Monrovia nearly to Cape Palmas. Their native language is the Kru language.

[24] VENTER, *Coloured*, 14.

[25] Ibidem, 14.

[26] MARTIN, "What's in a name 'Coloured'?", 251.

individuals in the Cape. From the beginning they were set apart from pure white and pure black people. By the time Great Britain decided to force the issue of slave emancipation, there had already been two centuries of racial intermixing. All these people took their place in South-African history under the name of the Korannas, the Griquas[27] and the Oorlam basters, and what British observers termed the 'colonial hottentot'. A century later, the latter group was eventually to be classed as the Cape Coloured group[28] and included the majority of people with an admixture of slave blood. By 1838, the population at the Cape Colony consisted of white colonists, Khoisan aborigines and a group of heterogeneous people with one common feature: they were of mixed parentage. The latter mostly lived in rural areas but this changed by the implementing of several emancipation laws. Numerous people migrated towards cities, especially to Cape Town, which became a real 'melting pot' of cultures.[29]

The idea of 'coloured' people developed partly to describe the complex position of those who were neither white nor members of groups which spoke Bantu languages. In general the - what Apartheid stamped as - coloured community forged thus from heterogeneous elements (or - as Zegeye puts it - understood itself to be 'coloured people' by historical coincidence). Coloureds or *Bruinmense* or *Kleurlinge* or *Bruine Afrikaners* are thus descendants of European pioneers and Khoisan women, settlers and slaves (from Malaysia, Madagascar, India, East-Africa, West-Africa) and former 'free black people'.[30] Some people of exclusively Khoisan descent who maintain a European-rooted culture and identity might also identify and be considered as coloureds.[31] The majority of people who came to be described as coloured, shared three features that allowed some to describe them as an ethnic group in the anthropological sense: they were characterised by Khoikhoi family lineage and racial features,[32] they were traditionally associated with the Afrikaans language and the Dutch Reformed Church and at last they had a historically complicated and ambivalent relationship with the related ethnic group of Afrikaners. This description did not apply for all coloureds as,

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[27] During the nineteenth century the people of Griqualand were known under the Afrikaans term *Bastaards.*

[28] The Oxford Dictionary of South African English reveals that the word "Coloured" has been used since the 1840s to refer specifically to South Africans of mixed race, while the term Cape Coloureds came into use around the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century.

[29] MARTIN, "What's in a name 'Coloured'?", 252.

[30] The term 'free black people' refers to political prisoners that were deported from the East Indies or African slaves that bought their freedom from Cape colonial masters.

[31] ZEGEYE, "Imposed Ethnicity", 8.

[32] The ethnic category of coloured partly reflects the destruction of distinct Khoisan political structures and the decline of spoken Khoikoi language. Particularly during the eighteenth century, Khoikoi people were faced with the choice of either becoming Xhosa –giving up their cattle but assuring that their children would grow up as free members of the Xhosa society, or living within the dominion of white settlers, but keeping their cattle. A third option involved going into the inland areas. Many Xhosa people in consequence share Khoikhoi ancestry, but are designated by the white power structure as Xhosa. In short, the Afrikaans speaking blacks who lived on white farms and in cities were descendants of the Khoikhoi, the African and Asian slaves, and the white settlers and they spoke Afrikaans.

for instance, the Cape Malay were partly of Asian descent and were often Muslims.[33] In short, the term 'coloured' during (and after) Apartheid referred to all people who could neither be considered white, nor indigenous Africans; they were neither European, nor *Abantu*, 'native African'.[34]

Although the term 'coloured' is still widely used, even by some organisations which agitated against Apartheid, many coloureds do not much like this term and try to find alternative expressions like 'so-called coloureds', 'brown people' or 'brown South-Africans'. Some coloured people refer to themselves as 'black' and do not identify with 'coloured'. Others consider themselves as coloured but reject the term 'mixed race' as it implies that they are somehow the exception to a general rule of 'racial purity'. In fact, the coloured group represents the multiracialism of South-Africa: they have all shades of skin colours, some speak Afrikaans, some speak English, others are bilingual, some are Christian and some are Muslim. Moreover they are characterised by various types of phenotypical features combining Asian, African and European traits. Next to that they represent all classes of society: some live in extremely poor conditions, others belong to the middle class and some are part of the group of intellectuals and academics.[35] According to Martin, the only criterion distinguishing coloureds from other South-Africans can be seen as a result of the Group Areas Act through which the majority still lives in particular neighbourhoods. 'They partly represent the designs of a racist state and are partly product of self-invented singularity'.[36] As they were oppressed by the Apartheid regime and now again feel like they are considered with scorn by the dominant black group, they interiorised this stigma to a certain extent which partly explains and partly reproduces their controversial position.

2. Methodology

In this chapter we like to reveal the way in which we have gained access to our actual fieldwork site Wesbank and discuss the ways in which we have obtained our information. As the findings in this dissertation are predominantly based on data acquired during in-site research, it is important to lay bare the way in which we have approached the community and the manner in which we have built up and conducted our fieldwork. Next to the qualitative and quantitative data that we gathered *in situ*, we also obtained official information and data from planners, developers, NGO's and civic servants.

2.1. Gaining access to the field

[33] "Coloured", *Wikipedia,* 30/03/2006.
[34] ZEGEYE, "Imposed Ethnicity", 8.
[35] MARTIN, "What's in the name 'Coloured'?", 249.
[36] Ibidem, 249.

Our research was conducted within the framework of the 5 to 10 year joint programme of the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in partnership with the Flemish Inter-University Council. This 'Dynamics of Building a Better Society'-programme was officially launched on 4 and 5 March 2004,[37] so when we arrived in Cape Town in July 2005[38] a lot of preparatory work was already done. As the UWC had already carried out various (research) projects in Wesbank in order to uplift the community, most of the residents had a remarkably open attitude towards new researchers coming in. During our first visit in the community, two weeks after our arrival in Cape Town, we were accompanied by a staff member of the University who introduced us to the directors of two of the four schools in Wesbank. As the objectives of our research required an in-site fieldwork she also introduced us to a Wesbank inhabitant whom she knew personally. This female resident Lisa[39] had already been living in Wesbank for four years and due to her commitment in the community she seemed to be a perfect tour-guide during our future fieldwork. After a short acquaintance and explanation of the objectives of our presence in Wesbank by the staff member of the University, Lisa was highly enthusiastic to take us on our first guided tour throughout the community. That same day we already made contact with many people, of whom some of them eventually have become important key figures in our further research. Furthermore, Lisa took us to Hoofweg Primary where we met the whole-hearted director of the school and some of its teachers.

The tone was set. Lisa appeared to be very motivated and eager to introduce us in the community and the next days went off as well as the first day. However, since Lisa is the mother of three children and one adoption child, she could not take the liberty to guide us around in the community every day. That is how we were introduced to four youngsters who since then scarified all their free time to be able to accompany us during our fieldwork, as it was impossible and too dangerous for us to walk independently in the community.

We soon realised that a daily presence[40] in the community would be in our advantage, as it was the only way to really get to know the community and let the community to know us. Before we actually started to interview residents of Wesbank and to gather information, we have spent long days walking in the community, talking to passengers and entering homes. We have explained the reason of our presence in the community to everybody who wanted to know and soon our little notebook was chuck-full of names, addresses and telephone numbers of people we met and who were eager to share their life story and experiences with us. We also tried to be present on as much as possible community activities. We attended

[37] http://www.uwc.ac.za/DBBS/

[38] We arrived in Cape Town on the 12th of July 2005 and we left on the 7th of October 2005.

[39] Lisa is a fictitious name.

[40] Most of the days we arrived around 9 a.m. in the community. Then, our first daily occupation was invariably the search for one of our companions, as it was difficult to make appointments with them on long-term. Most of the days, we finished our work around 4 p.m..

several church meetings which took place in a temporary pitched tent, we accompanied one of the primary schools on a day trip and we were present at the annual festive evening of one of the crèches. Our daily presence in the community seemed to bear its fruits. At the end of our two months enduring fieldwork many residents saluted us when we were passing by and it often happened that they approached us for a short chat or to invite us for a cup of coffee. These weeks of walking around in the community and having informal chats with the residents of Wesbank, have been a great help in our further research. Accompanied by people who were well-known in the community, it was easy to win the confidence of other residents. This observation period was also necessary to be able to form a notion of the community and its residents. Informal chats with passengers often ended up in long conversations about one's life history, dreams and hopes for the future and complaints about the community or the government. These chats quickly revealed recurrent and common issues and worries and gave us an image of which topics and issues were regarded as important by the residents. By writing everything down in our fieldwork diary, we already obtained a rough outline of the community and its residents. Without doubt, these informal talks pushed our future interview-questions in a certain direction.

Meanwhile we also spend some time at UWC to broaden our knowledge about South Africa in general and Cape Town and the Western Cape in particular. We visited the university library, had meetings with staff members of different faculties and attended lectures with a view to gather as much background information as possible. At UWC we also did all the necessary preparatory work for our actual fieldwork. We made up some question guidelines for our future interviews, we set up our questionnaires, and attended meetings that made us aware of ethical matters that go with fieldwork. We set up a consent form[41] in which we shortly explained the aim of our research, followed by four statements:

- I hereby voluntary agree to participate in the research project, which has been explained to me properly so that I feel that I understand it.
- I understand that I may stop my participation at any time without any negative consequence.
- I understand that my name will be kept strictly confidential and that all the information and opinions I give will be kept anonymous.
- I understand that at any time I have the right to read notes and transcriptions and hear the recorded information.

Each interviewee had to sign this consent form before the start of the actual interview, in order to avoid misunderstandings and mistrust.

2.2. The further research and data collection

[41] For an example of a consent form, see appendix 1.

After some weeks of observation and getting acquainted with the community and its residents and after all the necessary official approvals were set up, we could eventually start with our in-depth interviews and further data collection. On the one hand, we tried to get a view on 'the story of the people'. Where do the residents of Wesbank come from? What had an influence on their life histories? How did they arrive in Wesbank? What are their opinions and general feelings about the community and about South Africa?
On the other hand we also obtained official documentation and information about Wesbank and interviewed officials to hear their side of the story.

2.2.1. Story of the people

2.2.1.1 Interviews

We have conducted 16 in-depth interviews with various residents of Wesbank. In total, there were 21 residents and one community doctor involved. Some people unexpectedly joined the interview as they accidentally passed by in the room or house where we were interviewing. Most of the interviews have been conducted in the private dwellings of the people we interviewed, as we found it important that the person would feel at ease. Due to the lack of public facilities, this private setting was moreover the most obvious location. For those interviewees who could not invite us in their own dwelling, we found other solutions. Two of the interviews have been conducted in the consultation room of a community doctor during his absence, one was conducted in the big hall of one of the primary schools and for still another we walked to an open field outside Wesbank. The average duration of one interview was approximately one hour and a half. Clearly defined and laid down questions seemed to be useless and unnecessary, as each interviewee automatically pushed the interview in his/her own direction.[42] Our opening question in most of the interviews was 'where do you come from?', which directly resulted in long and extensive answers that lent themselves to ask new questions. Some interviewees did not even wait until we asked our first question and started to broach topics of own choice. We were of the opinion that these impulsive and voluntary contributions to the questions would only be possible within a flexible and open interview-atmosphere. That is why we never have interviewed a resident at the same day of acquaintance, but we tried to visit the interviewee several times before actually interviewing him or her.

[42] We did not have a laid down and clear questionnaire, but we did set up some questions that were mainly used as directives. See appendix 2.

As we were of the opinion that the people would feel more at ease if they could be interviewed in their mother-tongue, the interviewees could choose their language of preference. Fourteen of the seventeen interviews have been conducted in English, one in a mixture of Afrikaans and English and two mainly in Afrikaans. None of the African interviewees insisted on an interview in Xhosa, as they felt that their knowledge of English was good enough to express themselves. In order to obtain a representative image of the population in Wesbank - which consists out of more coloured than black and white people - fifteen of our interviewees were coloured people, next to seven black interviewees (both foreigners and native South Africans). One of the few white inhabitants of Wesbank was prepared to be interviewed, but several made appointments have unfortunately been obstructed due to his busy work schedule.
As every interviewee's vision and opinion about place and identity, the broader South African and international context is determined by his/her personal experiences and living circumstances from the past and the present, as well as by personal expectations for the future, it is maybe important to give a short profile of every interviewee.[43] As race issues were so prominent during the interviews, it is also important to know whether an interviewee is coloured or black, as they often identified themselves - implicit or explicit - with their particular race group.

Claudia is a coloured women in her late thirties, born in the Northern Cape. She has children but it was not clear how much. We also did not ask for her marital status, but during her interview she never mentioned her husband. Growing up and spending almost her whole life in a coloured area, Wesbank was the first place where she got into contact with black people, with who she gets along well in Wesbank. Claudia is ANC-supportive, and she is also one of the most prominent ANC-activists in Wesbank. Moreover, she joins a community organisation and she is working at one of the schools as a cleaning lady.
(Traject: Northern Cape, Kraaifontein, Mitchell's Plain, and Wesbank)

Liam and his friend are two black Zimbabwean youngsters of 20 years old, born in Harare. Liam came by bus to Cape Town in 2003, to join his mother and father who were already living in Khayelitsha. He stayed for three months in Khayelitsha before the whole family moved to Wesbank. Waiting for his South African identity card, he is not allowed to enter college or university. Meanwhile, he's working as a painter and an odd-job man, staying at his parental dwelling. Liam's friend only arrived a week before we interviewed him, but he was planning to stay in Wesbank until the situation in Zimbabwe would be neutralised.
(Traject: Harare, Khayelitsha, and Wesbank)

[43] All the names mentioned in this dissertation are fictitious.

Myriam is a single coloured woman who was born in the Eastern Cape. We assume she is in her forties. After travelling her whole life from one place to another and following family members to Transkei and Cape Town, she ended up living in Wesbank in 1999. She is a former member of a community organisation but she stepped out, and is trying to better her own and other's living conditions nowadays by doing things on a small scale. Due to her multilingualism (Afrikaans, English, Xhosa and Zulu), and due to her family composition (consisting out of people from all different backgrounds, races and countries of origin) she can be seen as a vivid example of a person who tries to 'live' the rainbow nation.
(Traject: Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, Port Elizabeth, Transkei, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town, Wesbank)

Harry is a coloured pastor residing in Wesbank since 1999. After working for 16 years on the sea as a mariner, he had an accident by which he was totally paralysed. By his own account it was God who healed his legs and now he seems to be a healthy man, committed in the community through his organisation for the destitute and his church work. Next to that he is working for the World Missionary of Churches and he accompanies missionaries coming from all over the world. Harry is a passionate member of the 'Khoisan United Front', an organisation that promotes the Khoisan identity and ancestry among the coloured people living in the Western Cape.
(Traject: Robertson, Grassy Park, '*hele wereld getravel op see'*, Elsiesriver, Kleinvlei, Eersterivier, Wesbank)

Jacob and Daniel are two Congolese youngsters who left their native country behind due to war and danger in the Kivu-region where they were born. The time they left Congo they just finished secondary school. The rest of the family still lives in Congo and the two young men hope to join them again from the moment there is peace in their country. After travelling the whole continent, they arrived in Wesbank in 2003, Daniel a bit earlier than Jacob. They are working now in an container that they have turned into a barbershop. They applied for a scholarship in the hope to carry on their studies, but until now they are still waiting for a positive answer. Meanwhile they are trying to set up some businesses and are dreaming of a life outside Wesbank.
(Traject: Congo/South-Kivu, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Wesbank)

Mercia is a coloured, retired woman who was born in Stellenbosch on a farm. Mercia is a nurse and practiced this job almost her whole life. After migrating from one squatter camp to

another and after staying with her sister for a while, she ended up in Wesbank in 1999. Mercia is the mother of three children, of whom one son is living with her. After the death of her first husband, she met another man and he is still living with her now, after a harsh relationship full of deceit and adultery. Mercia has a little house shop where she sells popcorn, sweets and cool drinks. As a Christian woman, she also works in the church and helps with the church's charity work.
(Traject: Stellenbosch; '*from home to hokkie from home to hokkie',* Eastern River, Kuilsriver, Wesbank)

Paul is the husband of Mercia and is working as a security guard. Together with Mercia, he started up the house shop and he has been one of the founders of the Wesbank Neighbourhood Watch, working closely together with the Kuilsriver police station.

Ramona is a Rasta woman of 34 years old. She migrated to Wesbank in 1999 together with her husband who died a couple of years later. She has a little son and three other women are staying with her in a bungalow that she has built in her backyard. Being the daughter of a white mother and an Indian father, she got influenced by the Apartheid as the whole family moved out of the country until the abolition of the system. She studied to be a hairdresser and in a little bungalow in her backyard she has her own hairdresser's salon. Next to that she is also selling school materials and jerseys in the community and she is one of the few owners of a car in Wesbank.
(Traject: Woodstock, Durban, Namibia (Windhoek), Wesbank)

Brenda is a young coloured mother of one son. She was born in a place close to Hermanus and was raised by her grandparents, as her parents divorced shortly after her birth. Brenda never finished school, because she preferred to work to earn money. In February 2003 she moved to Wesbank because her auntie was looking for somebody to look after her baby while she was out for work. Brenda managed to find a house to rent, where she lives alone with her son, as her husband is in prison for unknown reasons. Being unemployed at the moment we interviewed her, her only dream for the future was to find a job.
(Traject: Hermanus, Wesbank)

Julia and Sylvia are two middle-aged women, living in the same street as Brenda. As they accidentally passed by during our interview with Brenda, they also participated in it.
(Trajects: Knysna, Eastern River, Kleinvlei, Wesbank and Stellenbosch, Mainbroeck, Wesbank)

Because *Bart* has a very delicate life history, he asked us to be very careful with retaining his anonymity. Because of that, it is difficult to describe his life history. He arrived in Wesbank in 2000 or 2001 and is since then very committed in the community by joining community organisations and various community projects.

Laura is a coloured mother of two daughters. One of her daughters gave birth to a boy before she reached the age of eighteen. Before migrating to Wesbank, she stayed in a bungalow in the backyard of her sister in Eersterivier. Laura never finished school and that is why she went all out to let her oldest daughter finish secondary school. Because her husband is not '*baie supportive'* in the housekeeping, she decided to become less dependent and started to bake bread every day to sell it in the community.
(Traject: Eersterivier, Wesbank)

Peter is a black person and father of five children. During his interview he did not mention his wife, so his marital status is unclear. Before migrating to Wesbank in 1999, Peter was living in a shack that he built by himself. The shack had five rooms and that is one of the reasons why he regards Wesbank as a 'regression' in his life. Peter is a passionate supporter of ANC in the community and the time of the interview he was very restless due to the running campaign to motivate the residents of Wesbank to go and register for the local elections.
(Traject: ..., Kalkfontein, Wesbank)

Richard is a coloured young man of 24 years old. He was born in the Northern Cape but later on he migrated to Robertson, where his father dropped him, his sisters and one of his two brothers at the house of family members. They got involved in gangsterism, until his mother came, picked them up and brought them to Wesbank in 2001. In Wesbank he put an end to his gangser life, became a converted Christian and an active and passionate member of various community organisations. Next to this commitment he is starting up own businesses.
(Traject: Northern Cape, Cape Town, Robertson, Brederivier, Wesbank)

Steven is a black man in his sixties. Steven was born in Transkei but moved to the Western Cape in 1969 with his wife and children. Due to the Apartheid legislation and the implementation of the Group Areas Act, he migrated his whole life from one place to another, living in squatter camps that got demolished one by one. He migrated from Kuilsriver to Wesbank in 1999 and since then he became known in the community as a promoter of 'black identity'. However, during the interview, he stressed the surplus-value of a community like Wesbank, due to the living together of very diverse people.

(Traject: Transkei, Johannesburg, Kimberley, Langa, Athlone, squattercamp at the University of the Western Cape, Crossroads, Khayelitsha, Kuilsriver, Kalkfontein, Wesbank)

Michael is a coloured, middle-aged man and father of five children. He was born in Paarl in the Western Cape as a son of a coloured mother and a Xhosa-speaking father. He migrated to Cape Town together with his mom when he was still young. Working for a security company, he was able to live in an middle-class community Ravensmead until the rent of the house he was living in became too expensive. He feels that he was forced to come and live in Wesbank and until now he does not have a house of his own, as he is renting one. He started up a community organisation that strives for the rights of the tenants by lobbying the local government.
(Traject: Paarl, Ravensmead, Wesbank)

Basil is a retired black person, who owns a shebeen in Wesbank because his contribution towards pension was not sufficient to support his family. After a life highly influenced by Apartheid legislation and forced removals, Basil ended up in Wesbank in 2000 with his third wife and his small son of six years old. Next to this son, he has five other children. Although Xhosa-speaking, Basil speaks fluently Afrikaans.
(Traject: Retreat, District 6, Gugulethu, Eersterivier, Wesbank)

Roger is a coloured man in his forties. He was born in Oudtshoorn and grew up with his parents, until he felt out with them over the fact that he became Rasta. He got some jobs in Cape Town and became politically active. Highly drug addicted, he migrated to Wesbank in 1999 to join his brother. There, he stopped to drug himself and became a very committed member in various community organisations.
(Traject: Oudtshoorn, Mitchell's Plain, Wesbank)

Parker is one of the few community doctors in Wesbank. He is not living in Wesbank, but spends most of his days in his consultation room in the community.

2.2.1.2. Questionnaires

Next to the interviews, we also handed out questionnaires in four classes of Hoofweg Primary school. Two of the classes were Afrikaans, the other were English. Thanks to the

assistance of one of the schoolteachers, we had the opportunity to introduce ourselves and to explain the purpose of the questionnaires in each of those four classes. The questionnaire[44] was drawn up in Xhosa, Afrikaans and English and had to be filled in by one of the parents. 62 filled in questionnaires returned and the answers gave us the opportunity to obtain a more representative image of the population of Wesbank, its average profile ('age?', 'sex?', 'marital status?', 'religion?', 'mother tongue?'), its life histories ('place of birth?', 'places where you lived before you came to Wesbank?) and its opinions about Wesbank ('what do you (dis)like about Wesbank?). Moreover, the filled in questionnaires gave us an image of the literacy of the residents of Wesbank. It was for instance striking how many mistakes emerged in the writing of English.

2.2.1.2 Door-to-door-questioning

The last weeks of our research in Wesbank, we started with a door-to-door questioning to get a more general view on the itinerary and migration history of the people. In block A, B, and E we approached approximately 20 residents. Due to time shortage, we were only able to approach six people in D-block. As we did not have a particular target group in mind, we just addressed passengers and residents who were within reach. In total, we inquired to 69 residents of Wesbank after a reconstruction of their itineraries and after their year of arrival in Wesbank.[45]

2.2.1.3 Other

Next to the interviews, the questionnaires, and the door-to-door-questioning we moreover obtained data and information through voluntary contributions of the residents. We attained old newspaper articles about Wesbank, minutes of meetings, pictures of the area of 1999, planning documents, pamphlets, floor maps, letters and community newspapers, statistics, reports of NGO's, et cetera. It often happened that we got these documents without asking, as many residents were well-informed about the purpose of our presence.

We have attended one community meeting that took place in the big hall of Primary No 1 on the 16th of August. This meeting was organised by the Unicity of Cape Town under the device : 'You spoke, we listened. The City answers your questions'. First, various officials addressed the word about different topics, such as the 2010 soccer World Cup, the upgrading of informal settlements, public/community participation, and the Integrated Human Settlement

[44] For an example of a questionnaire, see appendix 3.
[45] For the processes data, see appendix 4.

Plan. Afterwards, the residents themselves could get in a word. This part of the meeting was very interesting for us, as residents felt free to bring all their complaints and grievances on the carpet. Moreover, all those present received a feedback form on which they were free to write down lamentations and wishes. We have tried to get hold of these filled in feedback forms, but that turned out to be impossible.

2.2.2. The official story and story of the officials.

Next to the fieldwork *in situ,* we also found it important to explore the other side of the story: the story of the officials and the official story on municipal, provincial and NGO level. In what follows, we will sum up all the different steps we took to obtain this official information.

At the community meeting in Wesbank we got introduced to Gawa Samuels, Deputy Mayor of Cape Town and former civic servant at the Housing Board of the Municipality of Oostenberg. On the 14th of September 2005 we had a meeting at her office in the city hall in Cape Town, where we conducted an interview of one hour and a half.

The 16th of September, we had an informal meeting with Wilma Brady, councillor of the Ward under which Wesbank is registered, in her office in Delft. She did not keep her promise to contact us to set a date for an in-depth interview, so there are no recorded data available.

Another interview that we did record was with three civic servants (Simon, Dick and George[46]) working at the Housing Board of the Oostenberg Municipality. As the building and development of Wesbank happened under their surveillance, this interview has been very enriching in broadening our knowledge about the history and the evolution of the place as well as about the present attitude and vision of officials towards the area. In the Housing Board of the Municipality of Oostenberg we also obtained official application forms and a zoning map of Wesbank.

We visited Ashley Losch of the Foundation For Contemporary Research (FCR). In 2003 Oostenberg Municipality called in the help of this NGO in order to formalize the community organisations in Wesbank. In a period of six months, this NGO has conducted a lot of research in the area and has published several documents on Wesbank, next to innumerable unofficial and unpublished reports. Losch loaded us with information and data, such as minutes of meetings and workshops, lists of community leaders, FCR reports, papers, essays, and newspaper articles.

We visited several departments of the civic centre in Cape Town, where we obtained zoning maps, a recent air picture of Wesbank and a historical topographic map of the area. They referred us to the geographic Keller centre where we obtained air pictures of Wesbank from the years 1900, 1945, 1988, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2003, and 2004.

[46] These three names are fictitious.

We made an appointment with Pierre Hugo of BKS, the company that had been responsible for the total planning and designing of Wesbank. He seemed not very eager to receive us, and it was only after a lot of effort and argumentation that he wanted to give us the available information. We obtained an amended Report of Oostenberg of March/April 1998, a Wesbank Environmental Management Plan of January 1999, floor plans of the different house types, construction plans, a report called 'Wesbank: bekostigbare behuisingsontwikkeling', and a dissertation of two Danish students, in which they used Wesbank as a case-study.[47] At last, we have spent a day in the city library in order to look up some newspaper articles about Wesbank in the digital archives.

3. Remarks

3.1. Afrikaans

As our familiarity with Afrikaans is merely limited to the acquired knowledge during our stay in Cape Town, the interviews that have been conducted in Afrikaans have been transcribed purely phonologically. We realise that the quotations in Afrikaans used in this dissertation can not be regarded as 'formal' Afrikaans, since without doubt many Dutch words and grammatical constructions have crept into the transcription.

3.2. Interviewees

We have conducted 16 in-depth interviews with totalling 21 people involved. In this dissertation we use quotations from all these different people, but in particular chapters some interviewees are quoted more than others. Unintentionally and due to their own voluntary contributions, the interviews with Myriam, Roger and Richard have been sent in a particular direction. Since the leading thread running through the interview with Myriam was her plea for the need of education and moral regeneration among the residents of Wesbank and her complaints about the community organisations, we quoted her multifariously in chapter 2.2 of part II. As Roger was extremely informed about the planning, development and politics of Wesbank, many of his quotations have been used to illustrate chapter 3 of part I. During his interview, Richard mainly instanced the foundation and evolution of the various community organisations in Wesbank. Moreover, he was a connoisseur of the working of interaction between the community and officials in particular and of the political side of the story in general. Quotations out of his interview are mainly used in chapter 3 of part I and chapter 2

[47] SORENSEN M. and HOE-SVENDSEN N. *Planning and Performance - of housing projects in South Africa,* Denmark, 2001.

of part II. Simon, working at the Housing Board of the Oostenberg Municipality, has been mainly cited in chapter 3 of part I, as he was well informed about the planning and development of the area.

3.3. Arbitrarity of the subdivisions

The exposition of our data is subdivided in part I (place to place) and part II (identity: face to face). We like to lay stress on the fact that this subdivision is made arbitrarily, as issues of place and identity often interact and frequently intertwine. However, this arbitrary subdivision was needed in order to lay bear all the gathered data on a structured way and to bring place and identity together in chapter III. Moreover, next to the subdivision of the parts place and identity, the subdivisions in the different chapters are also often arbitrarily, as different aspects of community life and community feeling intertwine and are mostly impossible to classify in isolated compartments. In sum, all the made subdivisions have to be seen as an endeavour to create structure in this dissertation.

3.4. Sensitiveness of some issues

Due to the sensitiveness and delicateness of some enhanced issues, especially those in connection with politics and the attitude of politicians, we still like to underline that we do not want to judge about who is to *blame* for certain issues, who had certain responsibilities and which. Especially as to chapter 6 of part I, we like to emphasise that as far as judgements and opinions about the Oostenberg Municipality (and its officials) or the Provincial Government (and its officials) are instanced, these quotations are merely reconstructions out of the interviews with the residents of Wesbank and are not at our hand.

3.5. Quotations

The big amount of interview quotations cited especially in the first two parts of this thesis may hamper the reading and may be regarded as an overloading of information. However, as we wanted to reconstruct the oral (hi)story of the residents of Wesbank, we consider this comprehensive selection of quotations as relevant and indispensable.

3.6. Transcriptions

There are different signs used in the transcriptions of the interview, in order transcribe the interviews as representative as possible:

- *: stress on the word(s) that follow(s).
- Capitals: extra stress on the words (almost shouting).
- (*word*): attempt to reconstruct non understandable words or (parts of) sentences.
- (…): non understandable word(s) or (parts of) sentences.
- [ ] : context and non-verbal information in order to understand the quotation(s).
- /./, /../, /…/ : breathing spaces and pauses during the talking.

4. Survey of the dissertation

Part I (**Place to place**) encloses an extensive, mainly descriptive inquiry into different aspects related to the concept 'place'. In the first chapter 'Routes' we first of all try to find out which trajectories were followed by which people to arrive in Wesbank ('Where were you born?' 'How many and which places have you occupied since your birth?'). Moreover, an attempt is made to distinguish a certain pattern in the most recent settlement histories of our interviewees ('Where did you live just before you arrived in Wesbank?'). Thirdly, a selective survey of the 'reasons of moving' is included. ('Why did you migrate from that place to another?'). Finally we aim at finding out the perceptions and opinions of the residents about Wesbank, bearing in mind the complexity of their migrations and the painful realities behind. In the second chapter 'New Beginning?' we demonstrate two aspects of the 'change' that Wesbank supposed to bring for its inhabitants. At first, both the importance of an 'own' house and the seamy side concerning houses are discussed. In this we introduce the concept of 'ordentlikheid' and examine, amongst others, the 'tenant-owner conflict'. Secondly, we reveal the ways in which people use their new circumstances to create opportunities for themselves and the community. The third chapter 'Localisation' first of all contains the factual history of the planning and building of Wesbank: Who was involved in the project? How was the place designed (houses, facilities, localisation in the environment)? Who were the houses built for? Crucial in this are the differences between the official story and the story of officials and residents and the disparities between the design of the place and the reality of today. Secondly, the consequences of and excuses for the 'township design' of Wesbank are highlighted, with an emphasis on the perceptions by residents.

In Part II (**Identity**: **Face to face**) all data related to 'identity', a concept that contains a multiplicity of aspects, are revealed, again mainly descriptively. In the first chapter 'Wesbank as 'reflection' of the rainbow nation', a conceptual and arbitrary distinction is made between the 'socio-cultural' and the 'economic rainbow nation'. At first, the positive aspects of the new ideology of South-Africa as the pre-eminent example of a multi-cultural society, are considered. Secondly, we draw attention to several economic measures and their consequences for inhabitants of Wesbank. In a second chapter, 'Constructing identity', several mechanisms by which a person's identity is 'constructed', are examined. These methods can be considered as ways to deal with the past, the present and the future. After highlighting the matter of scapegoating other racial groups, certain officials, and the political and economic landscape, the positive ways of 'constructing' identity are discussed. In this we refer to community organisations, 'ordentlikheid' in the community, religion, informal economy and language. Each aspect can again be modified by looking at the seamy side.

In part III (**Synthesis: Persistence of history: paradoxes in place and identity**) the aspects concerning place and identity, revealed in Part I and II, meet in a theoretical framework. In a short introduction, our hypothesis, that all paradoxes, the running thread through the former parts, can be explained by the paradoxical working of a political and a societal velocity, is expounded. Further, the meaning of these concepts is extensively elucidated in the specific context of South-Africa and Wesbank. At first, the ideology of 'rainbow nation' and the economic measures of the new government are discussed under the title 'political velocity'. Secondly, the concept of societal velocity, which corresponds with the persistence of history, is filled in both on macro and on micro-level. Regarding the macro-level, the persistent interrelatedness of spatial, racial and class segregation is brought to the light, together with the negative influences of permanent in-migration for the economy. As regards the micro-level, a distinction is made between 'direct micro-persistence', which encloses the 'mental maps' of people that influence their perception of places and people, and the 'indirect micro-persistence', which refers to the specific 'township design' of Wesbank. After this explanation, the paradoxical working of the political and societal velocity is concretised, by putting together the paradoxes, brought to the light in part I and II. Further, a short conclusion forms the start of a theorising part in which we impute the paradoxical result of Wesbank to the differences between perspectives of planners and residents. The aims of politicians and planners, as acting testimonies of the political velocity, to deal with the spatial and racial segregation, resulted in new frictions, class segregation and, in consequence, marginalisation. This marginalisation is explained by the correlation between factual and social localisation, as expounded by Bourdieu. The perspectives of Bourdieu are broadened and adapted by the means of theories about 'emplacement' and 'situatedness'. At last, a consideration follows about the fact that place and identity are entities that can not be

traced out, neither in the past, nor in the present, precisely because of that persistence of history.

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