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Speaking of Freedom? Heritage, memory and public remembering in Kliptown

Naomi Roux

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the field of Heritage Studies

Supervisor: Professor Cynthia Kros

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work and all sources have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed _____ Johannesburg, February 2009

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Abstract

In 2005, the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) officially unveiled a new heritage precinct in Kliptown, Johannesburg, marking the site where the 1955 Congress of the People took place. This heritage development, centred around the Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication (WSSD), has been contentious since its inception. Many Kliptown residents have expressed the feeling that pressing issues of housing and service delivery have been overlooked by the state in the process of developing WSSD and surrounds. Additionally, many residents do not feel that the new precinct is accessible, either physically or psychologically. One possible reason for this is that the heritage presented by the JDA at this site excludes large portions of Kliptown's heritage which are locally important, and which played a significant role in the decision to host the Congress of the People in Kliptown. This report uses interview data and oral histories to uncover some of these silenced narratives of Kliptown's history and heritage, and to examine the significance of these narratives for those living in Kliptown.

Analysing these local narratives, it is apparent that Kliptown's heritage as experienced and understood by residents is much more complex and contested than the simple linear narrative on display in WSSD. The JDA heritage developments focus largely on tangible means of representing the story of the Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter. However, Kliptown residents' narratives about the area's past are, to a large extent, based on aspects of Kliptown's heritage which are intangible, such as traditions of independence and resistance. Much of this heritage has been preserved by means of oral history. I argue that this subtle understanding of heritage is more in keeping with the stipulations of the Heritage Resources Act (1999) than the approach taken by the JDA to commemoration in Kliptown, and suggest that these local memories and means of commemoration urgently need to be taken into account if future heritage projects in Kliptown are to be successful.

List of Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
AME	African Methodist Episcopal
CoP	Congress of the People
CRIAA	Centre for research Information Action in Africa
DCD	Department of Community Development
JCC	Johannesburg City Council
JDA	Johannesburg Development Agency
JIAISC	Johannesburg Insanitary Area Improvement Scheme Commission
KCR	Kliptown Concerned Residents
KOTT	Kliptown Our Town Trust
PUB	Peri-Urban Board
PHC	Public Health Committee
SAHRA	South African Heritage Resources Agency
SKY	Soweto Kliptown Youth
WRAB	West Rand Administration Board
WSSD	Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication

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Chapter One: Theoretical and historical background

1 Preamble: Arriving in Kliptown

The first time I visit Kliptown is in early 2008, on a weekend field trip to Soweto that forms part of my degree coursework. The plan is to make a stop at the recently built Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication (WSSD), built under the auspices of the Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA). WSSD – or, as it is still popularly known, Freedom Square – marks the place where the 1955 Congress of the People took place and where the Freedom Charter was adopted, a central event in the history of the South African liberation movement. In WSSD, we will meet with a local tour guide, who will show us the 'other' side of Kliptown, the side that has not made it onto the Soweto heritage and tourism trail. On the way to WSSD, I am excited about the prospect of seeing the place where the Congress took place; I have read so much about this event and the Freedom Charter but, having only recently moved back to Johannesburg after a long absence, I know almost nothing about the new heritage developments which commemorate it. I am expecting the poignant sense of standing in a space where history was made, where an event took place entirely unlike any other in the history of the South African resistance movement. A space like this, I think, must surely be redolent with the past, populated with defiant ghosts.

We drive up the Klipspruit Valley Road, past a spanking new set of red and white townhouses. At the bottom of the street is a traffic circle bearing a cluster of massive concrete bollards. Later I discover that the local name for this bizarre modernist construction is 'The Seven Pillars of Sin'. In WSSD itself, wide-eyed with expectation, I have to confess to a strange feeling of disappointment: those defiant spirits, today at least, are elsewhere. My overwhelming impression of Walter Sisulu Square is of *grey* – an expanse of grey concrete, lined with grey buildings perched on grey columns. A brick tower stands off-centre to the northern edge of the square. Scraggly thorn trees soak up the mild late-afternoon winter sun. On the southern side, the market has spilled out of its designated strip behind a formidable steel fence, and the brightly coloured clothes and boxes of vegetables are the only signs of life in an otherwise empty and silent space. Inside the tower, the Freedom Charter memorial, we find more concrete and a cross-shaped skylight. "It's like the Voortrekker Monument," one of my fellow students observes with a wry smile.

In WSSD, we meet Ntokozo Dube, who grew up in Kliptown and works for a community organisation called Soweto Kliptown Youth (SKY). He takes us on a short tour through the part of Kliptown where he lives. Tightly-packed shacks compete for space with ramshackle old farmhouses, reminders that this land used to be occupied by white dairy and fruit farmers. Fourteen years after South Africa's first democratic elections, Kliptown still has no electricity or water-borne sewage. If you were renting a room at the five-star Holiday Inn in Walter Sisulu Square, this part of town would be the view from your window, a few short steps across the railway lines. Dube shows us the house where the political activist Charlotte Maxeke lived in the 1930's, and tells us that Gerard Sekoto, the artist, used to stay in a house nearby. Kliptown, he says, was one of the few racially mixed communities in Johannesburg under apartheid. I am surprised; the only historical narrative I have ever heard associated with Kliptown is that of the Freedom Charter and the 1955 Congress. While Dube introduces us to Bob Nameng, a soft-spoken Rastafarian who has spent almost his entire adult life providing Kliptown's children with whatever material and emotional support he can manage, I think: How must it feel to live in one of the most under-serviced sections of the city, a hundred metres away from a monument that celebrates the ideas that "The people shall share in the country's wealth"; "The doors of learning and culture shall be opened"; "There shall be houses, security and comfort"? Who is responsible for this new monument? And what has happened to these other histories of Kliptown that Dube and Nameng tell us about?

2 "Surplus people living in leftover space": the making of Kliptown

This encounter is the first of many which inspire me to find out more about Kliptown and those who live here, and this research report is the result of that exploration. This is not intended as a comprehensive academic history of events in Kliptown; rather, this research has been conceived as an examination of *heritage*, that is, the ways in which we remember and pass down stories about our past. For this reason, the dates and chronology used in this report are generally vague and seldom linear, as this is how people tend to talk about their memories. In order to contextualise the aim of this exploration of Kliptown's heritage, however, some historical background is useful.

In 1903, Alfred Milner – then British High Commissioner for South Africa – appointed a commission to report on the "Johannesburg Insanitary Area Improvement Scheme". The "insanitary area" of the committee's title included Brickfields, Burghersdorp, Fordsburg and Coolie Location – covering a large portion of land to the south and west of the centre of young Johannesburg. One of the stated aims of

the commission was to look into "the provisions, if any, to be made for rehousing persons expelled from the area in the event of expropriation" (Johannesburg Insanitary Area Improvement Scheme Commission [JIAISC] 1903: vi).

The Commission's enquiry was sparked by fears of bubonic plague breaking out as a result of "overcrowded" and "unsanitary" conditions (JIAISC 1903: vii). The report details the "vast amount of evidence" provided by "six medical experts" appointed by the town council regarding conditions in these areas. The commissioners were particularly impressed by the evidence of a Dr. Porter, the Medical Officer of Health for Johannesburg, and his "intimate knowledge of the details of the area" (JIAISC 1903: vii). Dr. Porter's report (quoted in JIAISC 1903: 59) on the area known as Coolie Location, in the vicinity of present-day Newtown, describes Coolie Location as follows:

> It consists of a congeries of narrow courtyards, containing dilapidated and dirty tin huts, without adequate means of lighting and ventilation, huddled on area, and constructed without any regard to sanitary considerations of any kind. In the middle of each slop-sodden and filth-bestrewn yard there is a well, from which the people get their water supply, and, as in other places, they choose this well for washing purposes, the urinals and closets in one of the places being in the immediate vicinity.

These descriptions of "slop-sodden" and "filth-bestrewn" Coolie Location clearly engendered a sense of fear in the minds of the Commissioners: "[Dr Mackenzie] considers its existence and continuance as fraught with danger to Johannesburg, and that it surpasses all insanitary spots he has seen in his previous existence" (JIAISC 1903: viii). The primary concern is not about whether the conditions are suitable for people to live in or not - the real fear expressed here is of the contamination of the rest of the city. Coolie Location and the adjacent areas listed in the report were seen as a contagious lesion on the face of the prosperous city; a marker of pestilence and rot, the ugly underbelly of the booming City of Gold. As Nigel Worden (1994:49) suggests, this "sanitation syndrome" was often used as justification for some of the earliest examples of racial segregation in South Africa.

In the JIAISC report, the need for segregation as a means of containment is also rationalised by descriptions of the Coolie Location 'slum' in terms of disorder and chaos. This disorder is linked in the Commissioner's rhetoric to the spread of disease and contamination:

> There is an absolute want of arrangement, the houses are jammed together and separated by narrow, badly made lanes… [Dr Mackenzie] considers the existence of these portions of the area a source of great danger to the town, and constituting a great risk of an outbreak of infectious disease and an impossibility of coping with such an outbreak… Dr Davies… states that the little

> dotted spots of filth spread over this area make the whole of it insanitary, and that the wells are nothing more than cesspools or likely to become so. The ground itself is soaked with pollutions of all sorts, and the surface covered with places that breed germs which are carried over the district. (JIAISC 1903: viii)

The implication of the report is that people who live in a place where the "ground itself is soaked with pollutions" would themselves be inherently polluted – and in danger of spreading this pollution to the 'clean', prosperous parts of the city:

> These people come up to the town as fruit-vendors, and they mingle freely with the people in the town. They act as waiters in the hotels, and in various ways they are brought into close contact with the people living in the rest of the town… Coolie Location, and the other courtyards in the district like it, are the very greatest and most terrible sources of possible danger…. to the town… One further objection in regard to public health administration is this, that those places are dark dens. You cannot see what is going on inside, and accordingly there is every possibility for the concealment of disease. (JIAISC 1903: 59)

The JIAISC (1903: 65) concluded that the areas in question were "past praying for", and could only be dealt with by "rehousing" the occupants and tearing the neighbourhoods down.

At this time, the area next to the Klipspruit River, which is now occupied by Kliptown, Nancefield, Eldorado Park and surrounds, consisted of scrubby farmland well outside the municipal borders of Johannesburg, occupied mostly by white-owned dairy farms. In the wake of the Commission's report, it was decided to move the inhabitants of the mixed-race Coolie Location either to undisclosed "Native Locations", or to a new "Accommodation Camp" to be built on the banks of the Klipspruit. This was the official beginning of the area now known as Kliptown, proclaimed in 1903, with its earliest inhabitants transported to the supposedly temporary camp in March 1904 (Public Health Committee [PHC] 1904). Council minutes show that there was some concern from official quarters about whether or not it would be possible to build a permanent "Location" in the area, since the newly proclaimed township was outside the city's boundaries and thus did not actually fall under City Council jurisdiction (PHC 1904). By October 1904, however, the Public Health Committee was discussing the establishment of an "Asiatic bazaar" and a permanent water supply to the area. In 1906, a laundry complex was built near the camp as a means of resettling Zulu washermen – *'Amawasha'* – who the white administration wished to remove from the city centre (van Onselen 1982: 303).

As Bremner (2004: 522) has commented, Kliptown has always been conceived of by the state as a community of "surplus people living in leftover space". Removing the people of Coolie Location to Kliptown was, arguably, a convenient means of forgetting that they were there, and of deflecting the

supposed danger of their presence in the city itself. There was some concern that the area was "too far away from town, and that its selection would have a depressing effect on the labour market", but "no suitable ground was available for the required purpose within a more convenient distance" (PHC 1904). Thus, from its inception, Kliptown was officially and physically distant from the administrative centre of Johannesburg, a factor which has served it both well and badly throughout its 105-year existence.

One consequence of its location outside of the city was that, at least in its early years, Kliptown was a freehold area, similar to Sophiatown and Alexandra. This meant that people who were not white – including "exempted Natives" (i.e. black people whose levels of education and income exempted them from carrying passes) were allowed to own land and property[1]. This was one of the conditions under which the Klipspruit Camp was established (JCC 1905). In oral histories and interviews, many people in Kliptown speak of parents or grandparents who owned land in Kliptown in the early years of the century, and comment on the sense of pride and independence engendered by land ownership. Kliptown's freehold roots have, arguably, contributed to the sense of independence and autonomy which is still keenly felt today, over a century later.

Due to the relative freedom people experienced in Kliptown, in comparison with most sections of the urban centre, Kliptown became an attractive place for people from all over Southern Africa and further afield. It quickly grew into a thriving community, cosmopolitan in its mixture of races and nationalities, with a bustling commercial sector. Young couples often started their married lives in Kliptown because property was relatively cheap, and it was home to mixed-race couples who could not live openly in any other part of Johannesburg or its surrounding townships (Kliptown Our Town Trust 2001). This caused some consternation among those in power: in a letter to the Director of Native Labour, dated 8th July 1926, the Native Subcommisioner writes,

> A Native landlord, residing in the heart of the Native Township at Kliptown has leased his property to a European who was married to a Native woman… The Native residents at Kliptown much resent the entry of Europeans into their midst… If the practice is allowed to continue there will not only be the white and coloured races represented but also a black and tan one.

Thanks to its 'peri-urban' status, Kliptown was able to slip under the radar of the apartheid state to a limited extent. Many apartheid-era edicts were simply ignored or flouted. For example, Kliptown's freehold history came to an end in 1957 when, under the Group Areas Act, it was briefly declared a white area, forcing residents to sell their houses and land to the state, and then re-zoned as a Coloured

[1] People classified as "Indian", however, could not own land in Kliptown, although this law was sometimes evaded by purchasing land through nominees or business entities (Ballim 2000).

area. However, many residents of other races stayed on in Kliptown illegally. This was possible because, unlike areas such as Sophiatown and District Six, people were not forcibly evicted and removed by police on a similarly large scale (Duiker 2008a).[2]

It should be noted, though, that forced removals and demolitions did take place in some areas of Kliptown, such as the section known as Dikathole (Duiker 2009); despite a history of resistance and independence, Kliptown could not entirely evade the segregationist machinery of the state. Although many defied the law, some were relocated to areas such as Meadowlands, Ennerdale and Eldorado Park. In many cases, people were not forcibly removed as such but were offered homes in nearby Eldorado Park, complete with services such as electricity and water-borne sewage, effectively encouraging them to move. In addition, from the late 1970's onwards large portions of Kliptown – for example, the area known as Varkejaard – were razed to the ground under the auspices of "slum clearance" (Duiker 2008a).

This has engendered a sense of dislocation and insecurity over tenure still felt today. In many cases, residents whose land had been expropriated by the state paid rent to the council until the mid-1990's. With the change in dispensation, most people stopped paying rent and have not done so since. Up to the present day, many are in a situation where they neither pay rent for their houses, nor have title deeds for them. Under the Restitution of Land Rights Act (1994), people could choose whether they wanted to be compensated financially for expropriated properties, or whether they wanted their homes back. Those who chose compensation were paid out in 2004, but most who requested the return of their properties have still not received their title deeds (Duiker 2008c)[3].

The housing situation in Kliptown remains contentious. Organisations such as Kliptown Concerned Residents (KCR) have engaged in activist interventions including the occupation of vacant land and empty houses. In July 2008, activists disrupted Nelson Mandela's 90th birthday celebrations in WSSD, handing a memorandum demanding a solution to the housing crisis in Kliptown to a representative from the Nelson Mandela Foundation (Tshabalala 2008; Burgis 2008). Additional tensions have arisen from

[2] There are some interesting parallels to be drawn between Kliptown and other racially and culturally diverse spaces under apartheid, among them Sophiatown, District Six and Cato Manor – particularly interesting for the fact that, unlike many other such spaces, Kliptown has to some extent been able to retain some of its cosmopolitan character. Unfortunately, such a comparison is outside the scope of this project due to space constraints, but could form the basis for an informative future study.

[3] This information was offered to me in informal conversation with several Kliptown residents besides Duiker.

the expansion of informal settlements in and around Kliptown since the late 1980's, with older residents often expressing a sense of displacement and resentment towards the 'invaders' (Naidu 2003)[4].

The 1955 Congress of the People (CoP) and the signing of the Freedom Charter is the historical event for which Kliptown is best known. The decision to hold the CoP in Kliptown is generally attributed to Kliptown's position outside the city borders, and the presence of a large open field that could accommodate the delegates (see, for example, Lodge 1983; Suttner and Cronin 1985). Khumalo (2008), however, argues that the history of resistance in Kliptown before 1955 has been largely ignored in writing on the Freedom Charter, and that there were many factors which contributed to the decision to hold the Congress of the People there. He points, for example, to the history of resistance and political organisation extant in the area at least since the 1930's, strongly influenced by African-American political struggles and influential figures such as Charlotte and Marshall Maxeke. Sites such as the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, still an important local landmark today, and Freedom Square itself, were used for meetings and protests long before June 1955. Oral history records mention that in the 1950's Kliptown residents often used to conceal activists, including Nelson Mandela, from the police.

Many writers recalling the events of June 26 1955 (Vadi 1995; Mandela 1994; Suttner and Cronin 1985; Bernstein 1998) have remarked on the process used to draw up the Freedom Charter. Volunteers travelled across South Africa collecting people's demands, and brought them back to the committee led by Rusty Bernstein, which worked through nights collating hundreds of scraps of paper and their scribbled visions (Bernstein 1999). The process was inclusive and directly democratic, rather than a top-down edict issued by political leaders. At the CoP, the Freedom Charter was read and adopted by delegates from a wide range of resistance movements from all areas of South Africa, representing a broad range of people opposed to apartheid.

Although police did not prevent the Congress from taking place, they were present. Political leaders including Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Rusty Bernstein were not legally able to attend gatherings due to banning orders by the state: they watched proceedings from a hiding place in the back yard of Jada's hardware shop, the longest-standing merchant in Kliptown. On the second day of the Congress, police recorded delegates' names and confiscated signs and placards (Suttner and Cronin 1986). Many of the Congress delegates were later arrested and tried in the 1956 Treason Trial.

[4] Also mentioned in several interviews and oral histories.

The adoption of the Freedom Charter in Kliptown was a profound symbolic moment for the South African resistance movement. The Charter functioned as a foundational document of the South African resistance movement after 1955, and is considered the basis of the current South African constitution (Corder 1994). The rights to ownership over the events of June 1955, including the right to the phrase "Congress of the People", have recently been hotly contested in South African politics, demonstrating the significance of the events of 1955 in the construction of a new foundational myth of South African democracy and nationalism (Sapa 2008b, 2008c, 2008d).

The field where the Congress of the People took place, at that time still known as Freedom Square, was provisionally declared a national heritage site in 1998 and Kliptown was earmarked for "development" by the Gauteng provincial government in 1999. Over a third of the R436-million budget for Kliptown's development went towards developing Freedom Square as a site to commemorate the events of 1955. To this end, the JDA launched an architectural competition for the redesign of Freedom Square, which was won by the architecture firm StudioMAS (Bremner 2004b). The square was renamed Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication in June 2002 – a move which raised many people's hackles as it was seen as a hasty decision by the provincial government, made without consultation or regard for the site's history (Kuljian 2007).

Building in WSSD began in 2003, with the intention of completing the developments by the 50th anniversary of the CoP in June 2005. StudioMAS's design included a paved square surrounded by colonnades, with office, retail and banking space around the edges, as well as a community hall and a museum (which was designed and developed by Ochre Media). Roughly in the centre of WSSD is a memorial to the Freedom Charter, housed in a brick tower, where the words of the charter are carved on a concrete wheel. The informal traders who did business in the square were moved to a designated market space on Union Avenue, and many of the historic warehouses adjoining WSSD were dismantled to be rebuilt elsewhere (Kuljian2007; Noble 2009).

Conditions in the rest of Kliptown, however, remain much as they have done for as long as many residents can remember. Bremner (2004: 523) argues that the people from Coolie Location who formed the first community of Kliptown were moved out of the city centre because, as a community defying the state's concepts of categorisation, they were "destabilizing to notions of fixed identity and status, of modernity and civilization". In this sense, perhaps, the Kliptown of today is not much different. The JDA heritage developments are intended to celebrate a story of progress, beginning with the words in the brick tower and ending with the concrete crosses that decorate the surrounding buildings. However, the

reality of life in Kliptown tells a very different story about the failings of the Freedom Charter's vision, particularly insofar as that vision has been implemented in the name of 'progress' and 'development' in Kliptown.

3 Aim and Rationale

This research report aims to examine notions of heritage in Kliptown, particularly as these notions are understood by members of the Kliptown community. The central question informing this research is, "what kind of narratives have been constructed about Kliptown's heritage?" To this end, I will examine 'local' narratives of Kliptown's heritage and significance in conjunction with the 'official' representations of Kliptown's history which are on display in WSSD, and will analyse the ways in which these narratives overlap with and/or contradict each other. In so doing, my intention is to gain an understanding of what Kliptown's heritage means to the area's residents, and what Kliptown signifies to those who live there.

Issues of development are not the central focus of this research, but contentions around development, service delivery and housing will be addressed insofar as they form an important part of residents' connections to Kliptown and its history. Similarly, space constraints have forced me to limit the amount of attention given to the general histories of Johannesburg, Soweto and surrounds, as well as an in-depth exploration of issues around memory politics and memorialisation. It should be noted that the emphasis of this study was not on questions of memorialisation as such – as these have been addressed in other literature on Kliptown – but rather on other types of memory construction in Kliptown, in particular on oral histories and testimony.

The JDA developments in Kliptown raise some vital questions about the nature and purpose of heritage, and about the responsibilities of the democratic state. These questions are particularly pertinent in the current South African context where 'new' heritage is constantly being produced, as apartheid-era history is rewritten and new heritage sites are shaped to fit the nation-building needs of the post-apartheid state. In this regard, the JDA heritage developments in Kliptown form the basis for an informative case study. The new precinct was designed and built with lofty aims of economic development and community upliftment (JDA 2009), but by almost all accounts of those who live next to the monument, this has not materialised. Many people in Kliptown express feelings of having been forgotten by the government, of not being adequately consulted as to what the real needs in Kliptown are, and of the fabric of a treasured community crumbling in the face of official indifference.

The JDA heritage developments in Kliptown commemorate a defining moment in the history of South African democracy. This raises questions regarding the most appropriate means of representing this history; it seems reasonable to expect that a monument to the ideals of democracy should be designed and implemented in a democratic, inclusive way. However, interviews with Kliptown residents suggest that the JDA monument omits many locally important narratives and memories about Kliptown's history. Therefore, part of the rationale for this research is to examine some of these silences, and to consider how these omitted memories might be included in Kliptown's heritage in a way that allows the community to feel a sense of ownership over them. The question of democratising heritage is one which needs to be tackled not only in Kliptown but also elsewhere in South Africa, as we continue to build a foundational mythology of nationhood through our new monuments and memorials.

In many ways, what has happened in Kliptown can be read as a microcosm of issues that urgently need to be grappled with in South Africa as a whole. The failures of heritage and development projects in Kliptown have significance far beyond the Kliptown municipal borders. Part of this broader significance lies in the links between "heritage" and "development". Both Bremner (2004a; 2004b) and Kuljian (2007) comment that one of the aims of the construction and memorialisation efforts in Kliptown was to encourage economic development by drawing in tourists, and by formalising economic activity in WSSD. Heritage is expected to do the work of development – an approach which, by all appearances, has not been very successful for Kliptown so far. Many heritage sites in South Africa are conceived of as potential tourist attractions, and designed and marketed as such (Coombes 2004). There is a need to interrogate the ideology underpinning this approach to heritage, and part of the rationale for this project is the need to debate this issue.

There is plenty of available literature regarding the history of the Freedom Charter and the events of 1955. There has also been much recent academic writing on WSSD, in particular architectural critiques of the developments, as well as some academic engagement with the history of Kliptown besides that of the CoP (Bremner 2004a; Bremner 2004b; Kuljian 2007; Peters 2004; Khumalo 2008). However, there is a gap in the literature regarding subjective connections to Kliptown's history, and the ways in which individual memories may inform ideas about heritage in Kliptown. This study adds to the available literature by promoting discussion of what Kliptown's heritage/s means to those who live there, and by suggesting some possibilities for why the official developments have not been well-received by the local community. It also suggests questions regarding the links between heritage, democracy and development which need to be addressed in future heritage projects in Kliptown, and further afield.

4 Methodology

This project makes use of various methodological approaches, which reveal different facets of Kliptown's heritage and what it means to those who live there.

The primary data for this project is a series of intensive one-on-one interviews conducted with Kliptown residents in 2008 and early 2009. Fifteen interviews were conducted in total, with seven women and eight men, ranging in age from eighteen to eighty-two. I have made the effort to speak to people from various geographical sections of Kliptown, as well as people who may not necessarily be dominant voices in the community. Interview participants were largely selected through word-of-mouth. I first approached Gene Duiker, CEO of a local civic organisation, the Kliptown Our Town Trust (KOTT). Duiker introduced me to other people in the community, some of whom were willing to be interviewed or to point me to other willing participants. It should be noted that this is only a small sample of Kliptown residents and is not representative of the whole community – my aim was to use a small number of intensive interviews to gain rich qualitative data for thematic and narrative analysis, which would not have been possible with a larger sample.

Charmaz (2006: 25) points out that intensive interviewing allows for "an in-depth exploration of a particular topic or experience and, thus, is a useful method for interpretive inquiry… [and] fosters eliciting each participant's interpretation of his or her experience." In-depth interviews have provided insight into a range of subjective views of Kliptown and its heritage in a way that surveys or structured questionnaires would not. Open-ended interviews also provide flexibility, allowing both the interviewer and the interviewee to pursue emergent trains of thought, ideas or insights in a way that structured questionnaires cannot (Babbie 2005; Charmaz 2006).

I found that altering my approach depending on the person I was speaking to yielded more effective interviews. For example, older people responded better to one-on-one interviews, but younger participants tended to become reticent when faced with a researcher and a tape recorder. Therefore, five[5] of the interviews, with young members of SKY, took place in the context of a group photography project. Each participant was given a disposable camera with 27 exposures, and asked to take

[5] Originally six participants were selected. One participant took photographs but did not attend the subsequent workshop, and I did not feel I could use her photographs without also having had her verbal input. I therefore did not use that particular set of images in my final analysis.

photographs based on the theme "What does Kliptown mean to you?" I facilitated a group discussion about some of the challenges the participants face in Kliptown, which aspects of life in Kliptown they consider positive and negative, and what kind of connection they feel to Kliptown. The group decided that they needed a week to take the photographs, at which time the cameras were collected and the images developed. Each participant received a set of prints of their own photographs. Another workshop was held in early January 2009, during which we discussed the photographs that had been taken, and used this as a springboard to talk about the participants' thoughts about Kliptown in general. I found this approach much more successful than individual interviews, as younger participants were more likely to relax and speak freely to each other than in a one-on-one situation with me. The visual and verbal data yielded by this project has been used extensively in the third chapter, which deals with mapping and naming Kliptown.

I have also drawn on a set of oral histories collected by KOTT between 1999 and 2000, prior to the implementation of the JDA developments. Many of these interviews were conducted by Gene Duiker, who is a well-known and trusted figure in the community. As a result, much of the information gathered in these interviews is different to the information that was offered to me as an 'outsider'. These histories have been used throughout this report, particularly in the second chapter which deals with local narrative and nostalgia. In addition, I drew on diverse material such as photographs from the KOTT collection, as well as creative writing, art and performance in the form of the book *Kliptown Stories* by Prince Massingham and Clifford Charles.

Unstructured interviews, workshop discussions and photographs provide subjective, narrative information rather than quantifiable data, and therefore there may be some concern about the factual accuracy or verifiability of data obtained in this way. However, this subjectivity may be considered one of the strengths of open-ended interviewing and oral testimony. This is the case even when interviewees provide oral testimony that is factually dubious, as Portelli (1991; in Perks and Thompson 1998: 36) argues:

> The importance of oral testimony may lie not in its adherence to fact, but rather in its departure from it, as imagination, symbolism and desire emerge. Therefore, there are no 'false' oral sources. Once we have checked their factual credibility with all the established criteria of philological criticism and factual verification which are required by all types of sources anyway, the diversity of oral history consists in the fact that 'wrong' statements are still psychologically 'true' and that this truth may be equally as important as factually reliable accounts.

Oral testimony thus needs to be taken at more than just face value. 'Factual' errors such as reconfigured orders of events, or causal links which are not empirically verifiable, may in fact provide important information about the significance of those events and memories to the interviewee. Thus, I do not believe that the 'unreliability' of interview data has presented an obstacle to my analysis, as my aim has been to gain a sense of people's relationships with the Kliptown developments, and to gather subjective accounts of what constitutes Kliptown's heritage. My intention has not been to uncover objective facts, but rather to gather "authentic accounts of subjective experience" (Silverman 2006: 123).

Besides the inherent subjectivity of narrative data, interviews are inevitably affected by the researcher, and the researcher's relationship with the interviewee. "Scientific neutrality and authority" is not necessarily possible – or desirable – in an interview conducted within the context of social sciences (Charmaz 2006: 15). The way that questions are asked, and the way the researcher responds or appears to respond to those questions, influence the type of answers given. Data may also be affected by the rapport the researcher establishes with participants, which may be influenced by factors including gender, race, age, levels of trust and issues of power (Portelli 1991, in Perks and Thompson 1998; Charmaz 2006; Denzin and Lincoln 1998; Silverman 2006). Thus, the information gained from an interview is heavily dependent on who the researcher is and what he or she signifies to the interviewee (Bozzoli 1991).

To a large extent, the success of this project was reliant on my ability to form relationships and establish rapport with the people I interviewed. Therefore, my own position as researcher has had an effect on the final product. A recurring narrative in interviews and oral histories in Kliptown is that of 'outsiders' and 'Kliptonians'; given this, the narratives offered to me in interviews are no doubt different to those that would have been collected by someone from 'inside' the community. This does not necessarily mean that the picture painted by these narratives is inaccurate or superficial; simply that, had the same research been conducted by someone from the Kliptown community, the results may have differed from those presented here.

In accordance with standard ethical research practice (Silverman 2006; Creswell 2003; Denzin and Lincoln 1998; Babbie 2005), all interview participants were informed verbally and in writing that the data from their interviews would be used as part of a research report in Heritage Studies; that they were entitled to a copy of their interview transcript and tape; that they could withdraw from the project at any time with no repercussions and without offering an explanation; that they were entitled to remain anonymous; that they were entitled to refuse to have their interview recorded; and that a copy of the

final report would be made available to them once written. All participants signed a permission slip indicating that they were willing for their interview data to be used for the purposes of this report. The interview transcripts have not been appended here as their length would have made the final report unwieldy. However, transcripts and recordings are available, and copies of these and the final report will be donated to the Kliptown Open-Air Museum.

5 Literature Review

5.1 Heritage, history, and writing on Africa

Although there are several research areas which could emerge from a study of Kliptown, I will by necessity be limiting my focus in this report. As noted, this is not a history of Kliptown or of the Freedom Charter; my attention will be specifically on Kliptown as a site of *heritage*.

Lowenthal (1998) draws a distinction between history (which, he argues, is engaged in the serious academic pursuit of 'truth') and heritage, which "is not history at all; while it borrows from and enlivens historical study, heritage is not an inquiry into the past but a celebration of it, not an effort to know what actually happened but a profession of faith in a past tailored to present-day purposes" (preface: x). According to Lowenthal (1998: 118), historians are aware that 'truth' is a slippery beast, and that it is probably impossible to arrive at a completely objective understanding of history. Nevertheless, the discipline of history differs from heritage in that the search for unbiased truth is the *ideal* of history and the purpose of its study: "Aware that such an effort is inherently imperfect, [historians] nonetheless cleave to what seems honest" (ibid.).

Heritage, Lowenthal argues, cannot be criticised for its failure to present an unbiased, complex picture of the past, because this is not the purpose of heritage. Where history invites complexity, questioning, constant revision and academic rigour, heritage is the enshrining of selective, sometimes falsified, aspects of history which present a unified, patriotic or politically expedient image of the past. While heritage is parochial, history is universally valued and accessible: "Other kinds of history – tribal, exclusive, patriotic, redemptive, or self-aggrandizing – are, by and large, heritage masquerading as history" (Lowenthal 1998: 120). In other words, any forms of history that do not fit Lowenthal's definition do not count as 'real' history, and are so excluded from his argument. The essential difference between history and heritage, according to Lowenthal (1998: 121), is that "history seeks to convince by

truth and succumbs to falsehood. Heritage exaggerates and omits, candidly invents and frankly forgets, and thrives on ignorance and error".

In this text, Lowenthal suggests that – unlike the study of history – the field of heritage studies is not a particularly worthwhile academic pursuit. My contention is that 1) Lowenthal's definitions are somewhat self-serving – if his primary definitions of what does and does not constitute history are accepted, then there is no further room for disagreement; and 2) while he is correct in arguing that heritage can be, and often is, used in a way that is uncritical of the past it represents, he does not admit the possibility of an alternative approach to heritage. He fails to make a convincing case for *why* heritage inherently deals only in falsehood – why the study of academic history is necessarily the only genuine means of accessing the 'truth' about the past, or why it is impossible that anything defined as heritage could represent the past in a way that is self-reflexive and allows for contestation and debate.

If, following Deacon (2004), we define heritage as that to which we ascribe enough value to pass on, this does not exclude the possibility that heritage sites or objects could represent the past as changeable, fluid, or contradictory. This is why I have opted to look for Kliptown's heritage through the narratives and memories of its residents. While the JDA heritage developments are in many ways guilty of the simplification of the past that Lowenthal mentions, there are also other, less 'official' repositories of heritage and memory in Kliptown which should be acknowledged. In this regard I have drawn on Deacon's (2004) argument for the importance of intangible heritage; that is, heritage which cannot necessarily be touched or seen, but which is preserved in the form of oral history, memories, performances, traditions and the meanings associated with places and objects. Heritage, arguably, has far more possibilities that Lowenthal allows for.

Lowenthal accuses heritage of being overly selective about what it represents; and, indeed, there is an extent to which heritage is always selective (although the same argument could be made about academic history). Some objects, sites or practices are considered worthy of being preserved and handed down, others are not, and a level of value judgment must inevitably go into making this distinction. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2006) argues for a conception of heritage as something which is produced, rather than something which is waiting to be uncovered or found. Certain objects, sites, and narratives have cultural value ascribed to them, while others do not, and this determines what will be

classified as 'heritage' and what will be left out. This cultural value is largely determined by the needs and purposes of the present, and thus heritage is, by definition, manufactured retrospectively.

This, argues Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2006: 161), is apparent in UNESCO's attempts to identify "masterpieces of oral and intangible heritages of humanity", where decisions had to be made about which practices and traditions met 'universal' standards of value. As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2006: 186) points out, "Some cultural expressions are valued more highly, by a universal standard, than others. In a word, humanity does not want to inherit everything, just the best." In the case of Kliptown, it seems that the events of 1955 have been selected as the area's dominant heritage, to the exclusion of much else that is also "unique, unusual, outstanding, exceptional, rare, particularly meaningful, or valuable in some other way" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2006: 186). My argument in this report will be for an expansion of the limits placed on Kliptown's 'official' heritage, based on evidence drawn from the experiences and memories of people in Kliptown.

In Kliptown, as in much of South Africa, heritage is closely linked with development, which raises several questions about the role and purpose of heritage, as well as the ideology underpinning official approaches to development. There are particular challenges to be faced when writing about issues of development and memory in the African city; some of these are identified by Mbembe and Nuttall (2004). They point to a fundamental problem in that studies related to Africa tend to fall within the framework of either anthropology or development studies, both of which are characterised by problematic modes of thinking about people, difference and progress. Kliptown, for example, in a development paradigm is often presented simply as a problem to be solved, or as a place desperately in need of market-driven 'modernisation'. It is important to find ways of writing about Kliptown – or, as Mbembe and Nuttall argue, about any "African metropolis" – that acknowledges different conceptions of the city and the people who occupy it.

One means of escaping dominant readings of Africa, they argue, might be to "defamiliarize commonsense readings of Africa" (Mbembe and Nuttall 2004: 352), and one route to this might be through exploring the city as a new form of archive – a challenge which I have attempted to take up in my reading of Kliptown's stories and memories. This is also a challenge to the "metanarrative of urbanization, modernization, and crisis" within which African cities are often read. Johannesburg, Mbembe and Nuttall (2004: 353) argue, is particularly susceptible to being viewed by writers as nothing

more than the "spatial embodiment of unequal economic relations and coercive and segregationist policies… in need of radical transformation". Within this theoretical framework, my contention in this report is that a major problem with Walter Sisulu Square has been its designers' conception of Kliptown as predominantly an impoverished space, crippled by lack and in need of economic development. Certainly, I would not wish to dismiss the pressing need in Kliptown for housing, sanitation, electricity and community facilities. However, Kliptown also has something very important to teach us about community, memory, and resilience, and is a much richer and more complexly layered space than the narrow development paradigm allows for.

5.2 Kliptown's history: The Freedom Charter and beyond

As mentioned, there is something of a dearth in academic writing on the history of Kliptown, other than histories of the Freedom Charter and the 1955 Congress of the People. Some recent writing, however, has begun to fill this gap. Bremner (2004a; 2004b) has used aspects of Kliptown's history as a starting point for architectural criticisms of the JDA developments. Kuljian (2007) similarly draws on some of the less "official" narratives of Kliptown's past in an examination of the effects the JDA memorialisation has had on the community. Khumalo (2003; 2008) has provided a useful addition to the literature in his discussion of Kliptown's history prior to 1955, and the many factors – most of which are seldom mentioned in histories of the Freedom Charter – which led to Kliptown being chosen as the venue for the CoP.

The CoP and the Freedom Charter's history are already well documented, and the focus of this project is rather to examine aspects of Kliptown's heritage which have been omitted. Thus, I have not engaged with narratives of the Freedom Charter's adoption at much length. However, important background to this event has been drawn from a variety of authors, including Vadi (1995), Suttner and Cronin (1985) and Lodge (1983). In addition, South African autobiographical writing yields some interesting subjective accounts of the Congress and what it meant to those who were there; some informative texts include Bernstein (1999), Mandela (1994), Kathrada (2004) and Clingman (1998). One of the major points to be drawn from these recollections is the radically democratic nature of the Congress of the People, and the inclusive means by which the Freedom Charter was drawn up. As Bernstein (1999: 149) recalls, "It meant campaigning in a radically new way – no longer telling people: 'This is what *we* stand for! Support us! but instead asking them: "What do *you* want? What should we be fighting for?' It required that they

listen to and learn from the people rather than exhort or instruct them." This understanding of the power of inclusive democracy suggests, perhaps, an alternative approach to the memorialisation of this event in a way more appropriate to its significance.

5.3 Memory and narrative

The second chapter of this report focuses on some of the dominant local narratives about Kliptown which emerge in interviews. For this discussion, Coombes' (2004) writing on the nature of personal and collective memory is a useful starting point for considering the relationship between memory and "collective consciousness". She argues (2004: 7) that "all memory is unavoidably both borne out of individual subjective experience and shaped by collective consciousness and shared social processes so that any understanding of the representation of remembrances and of the past more generally must take into account both contexts". This idea of negotiating the fine lines between personal narrative and national heritage is a recurring theme throughout this report and, in one form or another, has informed much of my analysis of Kliptown residents' narratives.

Hamilton (1994) provides an excellent overview of the shifting relationship between ideas of history, memory and national identity. She points out that the mechanisms of memory and identity are much more complicated than many writers have given them credit for. While popular memory and oral history have often been presented as inherently and neatly opposed to 'official' memory, Hamilton (1994: 11) argues that "we cannot assume a simple process of rupture and opposition". Similarly, de Kok (1998) suggests that memories of apartheid still have a profound and deep-seated influence on people's imaginations and narratives today, and that the past influences the present in unexpected and complex ways. Memory may contest official history as much as shape it, and "official" narratives of history also shape the ways in which people remember and speak about the past.

Nuttall (1998) and Minkley and Rassool (1998) present differing perspectives on the relationships between autobiography or oral history and the production of narrative, which I have drawn on in the second chapter. I have also made use of Davison's (1998) ideas about the ways in which 'official' repositories of memory, such as museums, may define which historical narratives are considered worthy of identification as 'heritage' and hence of preservation. Davison's observations have important implications for an analysis of the way memory and heritage in Kliptown are currently being handled by the state. Many of the essays mentioned above relate to the intersection of memory and history in the

context of 'bearing witness', for example in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings, raising pertinent questions about the ways in which memory and oral history have shaped our consciousness of national histories.

Like Hamilton, Fentress and Wickham (1992) point out that the state is inclined to preserve certain memories and narratives over others, often in the service of nation-building or presenting a unified image of the past. Bourguet et al (1990) suggest the alternative possibility of the "plural temporality" of memory, which allows for both contestation and overlap. These notions are particularly pertinent in the post-apartheid context in South Africa, where new ideas about nationhood are under construction and where these ideas often find expression in public buildings, monuments and museums.

In Kliptown, narratives about the past tend to be laced with a strong sense of nostalgia. In this regard I have found the writing of Coombes (2004), Boym (2001) and Battaglia (1995) useful, as well as Hall and Bombardella's (2007) engagement with some of these theories. Boym (2001) and Battaglia (1995) suggest some terms for different forms of nostalgia – for example, "reflective", "restorative" or "practical". While I have not necessarily attempted to fit the nostalgic narratives emerging from interviews into these categories, they have been useful when considering the roots and purposes of nostalgia in the context of Kliptown. Coombes (2004) suggests that nostalgia, particularly in a South African context, plays an important role as a counter-narrative to the language of sanitation and segregation that the apartheid state used as a weapon against communities such as District Six. This argument suggests one possible means of interpreting the type of nostalgia to be found in the narratives of interviewees in Kliptown, a community which residents often speak of as having been denigrated both by the apartheid state and by the post-1994 government.

5.4 Mapping, naming and discourses of power

In the third chapter, I deal with notions of mapping and naming as they relate to Kliptown and are expressed in residents' narratives. This chapter draws on much of the same theoretical material as the chapter on narrative and nostalgia. I have used interviews, oral histories, personal tours of Kliptown and photographs as a means of examining residents' mental mappings of Kliptown; that is, how the physical space of the area is understood by those who live there, which sites in Kliptown are considered locally important, and what the relationship is between Kliptown, Soweto and Johannesburg. These maps represent another type of narrative about Kliptown and its heritage, which I have contrasted with

published mappings of the area to examine how space is represented, what is left out, and how and why these representations differ.

For this analysis, I have drawn on theorists who have examined the map as a form of discourse, including Harley (1988) and Wood (1993). Both these authors contest the idea of the map as an objective representation of space, and argue that even the most purportedly scientific map contains omissions and silences. In any map, choices are made to represent certain sites and not others, or to use particular names for places rather than others. In the same way that some memories have been written out of 'official' history as it is represented in Kliptown, so large parts of Kliptown are missing from maps such as the Map Studios road atlas for Gauteng (2007) and the JDA's promotional map directing visitors to the Kliptown Open-Air Museum. Steibel (2007) and King (2004) both point out that what is *not* represented on the map deserves as much attention as what is shown, as these omissions suggest what is considered worthy of representation and what is not.

5.4 Post-apartheid architecture and commemoration

In the fourth and final chapter, I have examined some of the modes of memorialisation to be found in Kliptown, including those spearheaded by the JDA. Architectural criticisms of the heritage precinct have been offered by writers including Bremner (2004a; 2004b), Kuljian (2007), Khumalo (2008) and Noble (2009). Common criticisms include the lack of effective consultation in the design process, the fact that the developments have actually been detrimental to many of the community's needs, and the fact that the monumental buildings are both physically and psychologically inaccessible.

My analysis of the new heritage space and its problems has drawn on writing related to post-apartheid architecture, including Judin et al (1998), Herwitz (1998), Freschi (2007), Le Roux (1998; 2004), and Robinson (1998). The ending of apartheid has both required and engendered new ways of relating to space and to the city, particularly insofar as memorial or commemorative architecture is concerned. The idea of re-making or re-imagining the post-apartheid city is a common theme (Herwitz 1998; Robinson 1998). The notion of public space has also received much academic attention, as public space under apartheid was so constrained and regulated, and has had to be radically reformulated in the new democratic context.

A problem often encountered in post-colonial architecture is the difficulty of finding ways to express the 'new', or newly liberated, nation's identity without resorting to architectural forms that echo those of the ousted dominant group: "New forms of regard and representation must be invented… In order to reanimate the past, in order to bring out those aspects of the self buried under the weight of splitting, repression or habits of displacement, everything must be remade" (Herwitz 1998: 408). Freschi (2007) has argued that in contemporary South African architecture, this has often been expressed in decorative architectural schemes which allude to a new, unified, "African" national identity. This use of decorative elements is to some extent visible in Walter Sisulu Square, for example in the use of crosses symbolising democracy and the vote and by implication, the founding myth of the new South African nation.

Similarly, Le Roux (1998: 351) argues that the dismantling of apartheid and its restrictions on people's movements and activities requires a new kind of architecture, which takes its context and people's relationships with space as a starting point: "Liberated from a terrain demarcated into areas of prescription, these citizens now have the right to form new relationships with and within space". Le Roux's arguments support the necessity of community consultation in the planning of new heritage or development projects, and of sensitivity to the temporal nature of space – the fact that space is traversed, used and altered by people, in ways which are often contrary to the uses which the state may envisage for it.

Based on this historical and theoretical background, the chapters which follow will use oral histories and interviews provided by Kliptown residents to examine some of the questions of heritage, memory, and narrative suggested by the relevant literature.

Chapter Two: Local memories and sites of nostalgia

1 Local memory and intangible heritage: theoretical background

As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2006) argues, any representation of history is, in some way, selective. In Kliptown, this selectivity is apparent in the fact that the version of history on display in the JDA heritage precinct focuses almost exclusively on the CoP and the Freedom Charter. The museum barely mentions the history of Kliptown, as though the Freedom Charter story – and the museum itself – exist in a vacuum. There is little in WSSD to encourage engagement with other historical sites in Kliptown, and no acknowledgement of alternative narratives about Kliptown's past. For the observant visitor, local narratives are perhaps hinted at by the monument's context, but otherwise largely invisible.

In my interviews with Kliptown residents, as well as the oral histories and other materials collected by KOTT, the extent of these silences begins to emerge. Interviews suggest patterns of local discourse about Kliptown and its heritage which are markedly different from the discourse encountered in Walter Sisulu Square. Kliptown's heritage is often identified by interviewees in terms of entirely intangible elements, such as the place's atmosphere, traditions and local narratives. Some of these narratives are associated with physical places, objects or ruins, while some are accessible only through the memories of individuals. These local memories are entirely absent from the discourse of monumental remembrance and nation-building which is so prominently on view in WSSD.

The South African National Heritage Resources Act (1999) is somewhat vague about the definition of 'living' or 'intangible' heritage, but does at least acknowledge that this type of heritage needs to be identified and protected. The Act's broad definition of 'living' heritage includes cultural tradition, oral history, performance, ritual, popular memory, skills and techniques, indigenous knowledge systems, and "the holistic approach to nature, society and social relationships." Deacon (2004) points out that this recognition that heritage exists in forms other than the material, including "popular memory", is unusual in comparison to international heritage legislation.

Deacon (2004: 1) defines intangible heritage in similar terms, adding "meanings associated with places and objects" to the list. She adds, "Not all intangible heritage is old, rural or indigenous to a particular area or to a specific, ethnically defined community. We need to remember and value diffuse and modern heritage forms like the oral histories of people who suffered under apartheid or other forms of colonialism." She argues that "the category of intangible heritage encourages the recognition of

formerly marginalised forms of heritage. In the heritage field, 'monumentalism'… has traditionally dominated the field. The idea of intangible heritage has provided an opportunity to include new forms of heritage and democratise the process by which value is assigned to heritage" (ibid: 11), and points out that "all heritage of value to communities should be respected… Much intangible heritage is important at a community level, and all of this heritage, not just that with broader appeal, should be appropriately safeguarded" (ibid: 12).

Thus, it would be in keeping with SAHRA policy and Human Sciences Research Council recommendations for heritage interventions to make provision for intangible and locally based heritages, as well as those with 'national' significance. Deacon's argument for democratising the production of heritage has particular application to Kliptown, given its links to apartheid resistance and to the history of South African democracy. In Kliptown, the Freedom Charter memorial architecture has not adequately taken the concept of intangible heritage into account: as a result, many vital aspects of Kliptown's character and local narratives, such as those emphasising community, independence and resistance, are entirely absent from the official heritage precinct. One of the aims of this chapter, then, is to uncover some of the strands of 'local' memory and narrative that exist in Kliptown, and to examine the ways in which these narratives and memories may subvert the idea of a single, linear version of public history.

At the same time, however, it needs to be recognised that the lines between 'personal', 'local', and 'national' memory are to a large extent arbitrary. De Kok (1998: 70) argues that

> despite powerful resistance to it, the apartheid state's discourse may have become so deeply introjected that its constructions and representations still determine the way we define ourselves now in space and time. Removing the physical 'marks' has proved fairly easy. But the consequences of such physical marking are much more difficult to erase, for segregation has become the spatial imprint of our cities and the deep structure of our imaginations and memories.

Personal memory and local narrative are always shaped by context. In South Africa, as de Kok suggests, apartheid was, and in many respects still is, a defining context for the way people imagined themselves, their relationships with others and their relationship with the state. Given this, it would be counterproductive to suggest that memory and narrative function on clearly definable and separate levels, ranging from the personal to the collective: the "deep structure of our imaginations and memories", even at the most private level, inevitably bears traces of a collective past.

How, then, do we decide which historical and personal narratives to turn into heritage, and how should we go about the production of this heritage? Nuttall (1998: 76) argues that

> past conflict may be repressed in the interest of present togetherness. At the same time, the public rehearsal of memory… is always a more jagged and less controlled process than this suggests. It is a palpable, messy activity… It is a complex composite, neither entirely ineffable and individual nor entirely socially determined.

The JDA developments in Kliptown have literally cast an official version of the area's heritage in stone. In this sense they can be read as a repository of 'official' memory, one which has been designed as part of the project of nation-building in a fledgling democracy. Young (1988), writing on Holocaust memorials, has argued that the process of memorialisation is inherently political in that choices must be made about what should be remembered and what should be forgotten. This process is driven by the political needs of the present, and, Young (1988: 174) argues, "in this way, a nation's monuments efface as much history from memory as they inscribe in it". At the same time, as Nuttall (1998) suggests, human memory is "palpable, messy", and therefore inclined to contradict simple heroic narratives of nationalist triumph.

At the same time, the relationship between individual or local memory and official narrative is complex and often reciprocal, which raises some pertinent questions about how best to go about telling the story of a collective past:

> If collective memory is the outcome of agency, in South Africa it may often seem that we need to approach the construction of memory from the other way round: Is it less, here, that private memories shape collective remembrance than vice versa? Does the challenge then become how we can create a collective memory that is multiple, flickering with the many meanings that individual experience can collectively bring to it? (Nuttall 1998:88)

Nuttall's conception of a "multiple" mode of remembering that carries many meanings has particular resonance when examining some of the themes of local memory that emerge in interviews with Kliptown residents. The visual metaphor of the flickering memory suggests remembered narratives which continuously change form, revealing new facets or returning to old ones. Compared to the concrete monumentality of WSSD's grey crosses and towering pillars, this offers a very different view of how collective memory might be understood and experienced.

Minkley and Rassool (1998: 94) suggest that

> There is a growing realization that in even more complex ways than has previously been the rule in new social history, apartheid did not always produce resistance, and that resistance was not

> always occasioned by apartheid… Equally important is the sense in which the periodisations of resistance have begun to alter, but also to fragment the overall nationalist narrative as one no longer containing incremental modes negotiating modernity. The 'ordinary voices' do not fit the dominant narratives and it has become increasingly difficult to read history from left to right, across the page.

It should be noted that Minkley and Rassool are arguing that oral history is particularly susceptible to being forced to fit a dominant historical narrative, and that this was one of the weaknesses of the "social history" movement in South African academia. A full discussion of this debate is not possible here, but the relevant point to be drawn is the acknowledgement that personal memory and oral histories often do not fit into dominant or 'official' narratives. Rather, it is necessary to acknowledge disparate narratives, the 'flickering' quality of personal memory, in order to avoid allowing the "new nation state [to] be the sole author of the official script of public memory" (Robins 1998: 121). The insights into "local" memory in Kliptown provided by interviewees serve as a reminder that, as Davison (1998: 158) argues, "public memory emerges from an intersection of official and vernacular versions of the past."

Many interviewees' memories of Kliptown fall outside of the "official" narrative of Kliptown's history as a stepping-stone on South Africa's path to a constitutional democracy. Fentress and Wickham (1992:127), writing on the concept of "national" memory, argue that "[the articulation of memory on a national level] belongs essentially to political elites, and is relatively rarely contested by other social groups – and very rarely with success." In general, national memories are "linear in their conception of time… very explicitly, all of them lead up to legitimize the present situation. They are mythological charters for the whole national community, of course, and are intended to define that community… Alternative memories are to be regarded as irrelevant, inaccurate, and even illegitimate" (1992: 134). At the same time, however, one needs to be careful of over-simplifying this as a clear-cut opposition. As Hamilton (1994: 1) argues, people tend to incorporate "memory of events which are outside our lived experiences but are deemed to be central to the identity of our society", and in this way "personal" and "collective" narratives inform each other.

This linear reduction of memory identified by Fentress and Wickham (1992) is apparent in the way Kliptown's history has been reduced to one dominant narrative in the JDA commemorations. However, interviews and oral histories reveal the presence in Kliptown of many memories and histories which display "a plural temporality involving a variety of perspectives which are both different and complementary" (Bourguet et al 1990: 12). A thematic analysis of interview data and oral histories suggests certain 'local' narratives about Kliptown's heritage, which are expressed by several

interviewees. A selection of these narratives, which suggest possibilities for an alternative understanding of what constitutes Kliptown's heritage and how it could be preserved, will be discussed below.

2 "Everybody used to come and live in Kliptown": Racial and cultural cosmopolitanism

One element of local memory that emerges across interviews is that of Kliptown as a mixed space, an area characterised by hybrid identity and a fluctuating population drawn from elsewhere. Almost every interview participant, as well as many of those who participated in the KOTT oral history project (2000), mentions this cosmopolitanism as an important element of Kliptown's heritage and a source of local pride. Kliptown is sometimes compared to District Six and Sophiatown, mixed-race areas which were entirely destroyed by the Nationalist government under the 1955 Group Areas Act. As mentioned, however, Kliptown was not destroyed in the same way as these areas, and many flouted the Group Areas laws. As a result, to some extent Kliptown was able to retain its culturally diverse character.

Gene Duiker (2008a), CEO of KOTT and lifelong resident of Kliptown, relates the mixed-race community directly to a unique spirit that existed in the area, largely rooted in opposition to the apartheid state:

> We had this community all these years, mixed, very cosmopolitan. We had Poles, we had Jews, we had Scottish people, we had English people, we had Shangaans, we had Malawians, people from Mozambique, from the north… Somalis, they were here since I opened my eyes, those people were around as well. And we lived in harmony, see? And somehow the government couldn't actually break the spirit that existed in this place.

Adijae Thindwa, originally from Malawi, has lived in Kliptown since 1967. Like Duiker, he cites (2009) the diverse community as something which continues to draw him to Kliptown and still lends the area a unique atmosphere:

> The most thing I liked in Kliptown was the group. Indians, coloureds, Africans, they lived together… That was the most important to a person who lived in Kliptown, because it was mixed, you see. Yes. Even some whites, they were – you see, the other side, there by the post office? That area was whites… Even now, you see, you have Chinese, we have Indians, we have Africans. Which to me, it was the most exciting life.

Kliptown was one of the few places under apartheid where mixed-race couples could settle. In many cases the former homes of mixed couples still function as important local landmarks (Khumalo 2008). Lettie Zacarias (2000), for example, recalls:

> In 1959 there was a German living there – Mr Bergenstock. He was living with a Xhosa woman. It was still the apartheid time then but they lived together… I'm telling you, here in Kliptown you could find all nations and we did understand one another. There was respect… Apartheid was not strictly enforced.

Many current residents, or their parents and in some cases, grandparents, came to Johannesburg in search of work and settled in Kliptown. The origins of the people of Kliptown range from Graaff-Reinet and Phokeng, to Malawi, Botswana, India, Mauritius and the West Indies (Zacarias 2000; Mokoka 2008; Thindwa 2009; Myeni 2009; Chetty 2000). From these diverse narratives of origin it is apparent that Kliptown has always been a place which people came to from elsewhere: as Bremner (2004b: 522) describes it, Kliptown is characterised by "superimposed spatial stories about political affiliations, kinship networks, places of origin, and landscape features. Kliptown is… folded into and through the myriad of geographies its residents occupy and the stories they tell." These "myriad geographies" posed a challenge to the apartheid state and its need for strict categorisation of people's origins; and so, as a place where people could evade some of these imposed boundaries, Kliptown was one of the few spaces where the apartheid ideology of segregation could to some extent be subverted.



Figure 1 (c. 1970). 'Everybody used to come and live in Kliptown'. The area once known as 'Geelkamers' is visible in the background to the right. Photo: courtesy KOTT.



Figure 2 (c. 1970): The Roman Catholic School in Kliptown. Images such as this one and Fig. 1 above reflect some of the diverse origins of people in Kliptown. Photo: courtesy KOTT.

However, not all local narratives about the cosmopolitan nature of Kliptown have a positive slant, particularly insofar as 'new' arrivals in Kliptown are concerned. Martin Chetty (2000), for example, recalls that

> a lot of people came into Kliptown. It became heavily populated with a lot of people from all areas. A lot of them came with their own ideas which had an effect on the normal people who longed to live in peace and quiet… I think that's when a lot of morals were lost. That was in the '50's and '60's.

It is tempting to romanticise Kliptown as a place characterised by idyllic, peaceful co-existence. In many ways, it was a unique community in the apartheid landscape, characterised by movement, flux and hybrid identities. Chetty's words, however, remind us that one cannot ignore tensions and ruptures which may also have existed in the mixed community, or exclude these tensions from narratives of Kliptown's past. Today these tensions tend to be expressed in a discourse of mistrust towards "outsiders" or "newcomers" to Kliptown, which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

3 "To move alone will be selfish": A spirit of community

Many interviewees speak of Kliptown as having a unique sense of community: a tradition of closeness, sharing and mutual support strongly rooted in its history. The late Martin Chetty, whose recollections of Kliptown stretch back to the 1930's, recalls (2000): "Kliptown was a peaceful valley with a lot of Coloured people… Everybody knew one another. We were like one big family… Our community in Kliptown always assisted one another. If somebody was in need people wouldn't shy away." This description of the spirit of community found of Kliptown is echoed in nearly every interview; it has become entrenched in local memory as one of the defining local narratives about Kliptown.

For some, the sense of community in Kliptown is linked to an ineffable sense of spirituality. Ntokozo Dube tells me, while we are walking through the Charter Square informal settlement (2008b): "Yes, people are poor, but they've got love… People of this community, I believe their souls are full." Later in the same interview, he says that the culture of sharing which he observes in Kliptown is not only a community tradition and often an economic necessity, but also a marker of spiritual blessing:

> People who are richer don't have a smile. And in Kliptown, where there is filth, where there are pigs, you know, there's a smile! Kliptown is one big family. There are no boundaries… To me those are very powerful values, to share. It's not so easy to find a rich person who will share anything. But poor people always share the little things they have… This community has been blessed. In a spiritual way, people are very rich

Any discourse of 'community' is likely to be problematic; all communities have their rifts and points of rupture ("*fuites*" or "leaks", to use Mbembe and Nuttall's [2004] term). The purpose of including these extracts is not to romanticise or essentialise Kliptown or its residents. Rather, the local discourses and memories about the Kliptown 'family' suggest one means by which people connect themselves to Kliptown and its space, particularly in a site that has been forgotten by officialdom to the extent that Kliptown has. This is particularly apparent in narratives where residents use metaphors of family and the home to talk about Kliptown and their own position in the community:

> I like to stay in Kliptown and the other thing is I like to work for the community… That is the thing that makes me not to go. Even if I get employed I don't think I will leave Kliptown… The thing is if they can move all of us to well-developed areas I think I can move. To move alone, I don't think will work. To move alone I think will be selfish because I grew up with them, we suffered together you see. (Mofokeng 2000)

These metaphors of family are strongly connected to the past. Many who have moved out of Kliptown still speak of it as a familial home, with connections between people remaining in place despite time and distance. Emily Francis (2000), for example, says: "We were a family. Whenever we meet at funerals we know that we are old Kliptonians." The family thus also functions as something to which one is always able to return, and so Kliptown is spoken of as 'home' even by those who no longer live there.

Similarly, Lettie Zacarias (2000) describes herself as occupying a matriarchal position in the Kliptown 'family': "[My children] want me to go and stay in their house that I built in Agaat Street in Eldorado Park. But I don't want to move there because I am really respected by everybody here in Kliptown. I am like a mother to everybody here in Kliptown." In both these extracts, there seems to be a sense that to leave Kliptown would be tantamount to abandoning a close-knit family. Arguably, this discourse of family, sharing and mutual support emerged partly in response to the continual threats people found themselves under from the apartheid government.



Figure 3: Residents still cite Kliptown's spirit of community as an important part of the area's intangible heritage. This photograph was taken at a sports day at one of the local schools in the late 1960's. Photo: courtesy KOTT.



Figure 4 (c. 1947): Narratives of home and family link the idea of 'community' to the physical space of Kliptown. In this photo, Gene Duiker's siblings and cousins pose in front of the house in Paddavlei where Duiker was born. Photo: courtesy Gene Duiker.

4 "A Town Amongst Towns": Independence and autonomy

The discourse of community in Kliptown is linked to a long tradition of independence and resistance. To its residents, Kliptown has always been a space fundamentally different to other parts of the city and from other townships. Its location outside official municipal borders has created a sense of Kliptown as largely autonomous. This is linked to the fact that under apartheid, it was a place where some of the more intensive repression of the state could be avoided; today, many residents still express a feeling of autonomy and independence from the state.

Gene Duiker (2008a), speaking about life in Kliptown under apartheid, says "It was our space. And we didn't really allow it to be invaded [in the sense of] people from outside, coming to try and force us to change our ways of life. We didn't let that happen." Evelyn Mofokeng's (2000) words echo Duiker's, suggesting that, while Kliptown was not exempt from harassment by the apartheid police, it was sufficiently removed from the urban centre of Johannesburg to allow a greater sense of freedom and independence to emerge than was possible elsewhere in the city: "[My parents came to Paddavlei in the 1960's] because that was the only place you could stay in then. After the harassment from the GG's[6] they decided to move here."

Martin Chetty (2000) describes Kliptown as a "town", symbolically separating it from Johannesburg and Soweto: "I've always said that Kliptown was a town amongst towns. We heard of Cape Town. We heard of Queenstown. We heard of King Williamstown. We heard of Grahamstown. We heard of Sophiatown. Then we heard of Kliptown, which is a town amongst towns." This narrative of Kliptown as a centre in its own right may be partly informed by the fact that Kliptown was an ambiguous space in terms of Johannesburg's urban boundaries under apartheid, and even today remains something of an administrative oddity. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, Kliptown was founded with the intention of removing people who were considered problematic and uncontrollable by the state from the city centre, and so was left largely to its own devices in its early years.

Since at least the 1920's, Kliptown has been a centre of commercial activity (Duiker 2009). This has contributed to its atmosphere of a small self-sufficient town, rather than a dormitory suburb of the city. In many interviews, residents indicate that this ready availability of commercial space (both formal and

[6] "GG's" was a colloquialism for council officials, which was also used more generally to describe the police or anyone connected with apartheid officialdom. The abbreviation comes from the license plates on council vehicles, which stood for "government garage".

informal) has contributed to the sense that Kliptown is a thriving centre in its own right. Emily Francis (2000), for example, says "All people came to Kliptown for shopping. Kliptown was a town of some sort" – echoing Chetty's "town amongst towns" narrative and linking it by implication to its history of commercial activity. Khumalo (2008: 10) observes, "people from across Soweto do their shopping there on weekends in the stores lining Union and Beacon Roads. Kliptown's economic activity makes it one of the most vibrant places in Johannesburg." Kliptown's long history as a commercial area, dating back to the establishment of an "Asiatic Bazaar" in 1905 (Khumalo 2008), is a vital part of its heritage, particularly as understood and experienced by those who live there.

The role of women in Kliptown should not be overlooked in terms of creating an identity for Kliptown as a self-sustaining, independent place. Eva Mokoka has lived in Kliptown since 1954; today, she is a well-known and respected figure in the community, having worked for most of her life in Kliptown as a nurse and midwife. In an interview at her home on Station Road (which used to be the Red Cross clinic where she began working in the 1950's), she tells me the following story (2008):

> I just decided, no man, I must get some women and cook for these children, because their parents don't even come for their food parcels. These children are always hungry and miserable and all that. So I got about five women willing, cooked – I've got a big stove here – they would cook pap, and then soup, after school all the children would come here with their little dishes… Then I spoke to them, I said, don't you think – look how big this yard is, all I do in this yard is get a man to plough, and then we have mielies, pumpkins, beans and all that. So these women, they used to sing, you know, clean up the weeds and all that, and then these others now were interested… Goodness me, the vegetables that came out of there! Then everybody was interested, because every time, they see them carrying pumpkins, potatoes, tomatoes and all, going home to go and feed their children.

Today, the yard where Mokoka and the group of women grew their vegetables is the yard of the SKY centre, run by Mokoka's son Bob Nameng. "Flowers of tomorrow from the seeds of today", reads a colourful mural painted on one of the centre's walls.



Figure 5 (2008): Eva Mokoka's house and yard, next to the SKY centre. Photo: Naomi Roux.



Figure 6 (c.1940's): Red Cross nurses in Kliptown during World War II. Photo: courtesy KOTT.

Under apartheid, Kliptown's tradition of independence was linked to political resistance against an oppressive government. Interestingly, this mistrust of the state has not changed significantly since apartheid's demise. Bob Nameng (2008), speaking to me 21 years after SKY first opened its doors, says:

> Me, I don't believe in the government. I believe I need to help the government, instead of depending. So I've been a young man in my country, government not giving a damn, in 21 years never getting any support from the government… It's my pride and my dignity. And also to say I was there before our own new government, so if I'm not useful to them, ah, it's okay. As long as I can be useful to certain people.

Nameng does not draw any distinction between the treatment he and his organisation received from the state pre- and post-1994. To him, they are contiguous in their lack of support for his work and for Kliptown's community. He continues:

> You know, you go to government institutions, you find big words, big beautiful words like 'Batho Pele', you know, which means "people first". And then you start asking yourself, which 'batho'? Which people? You'll be taken from pillar to post when you want to advise the government to come and address issues, pillar to post just to see this man. You go through so many doors, just to see this man. And when you come to that door – yo! That man doesn't even have two seconds for you. So me, I'm practicing my democracy as an individual.

These extracts raise some interesting questions about the ways in which the advent of South African democracy has – or has not – impacted on people's lived experience, as well as their feelings about the government. Self-reliance, Nameng suggests, is the only real means to secure one's needs; waiting for the state to provide one's necessities can only be counter-productive. This mistrust, and the sense of government as distant and unresponsive, is reiterated by Ntokozo Dube (2008a): "Kliptown belongs to all who live in it. The government is too far from the community." Dube subverts the wording of the Freedom Charter's preamble, which proclaims, "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and… no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people." Many interviewees, in both the KOTT oral histories and more recent interviews, speak of government as "too far from the people", citing failed promises of delivery and absent councillors. The local narrative of Kliptown's autonomy has its roots in the apartheid era, but still strongly informs people's conception of Kliptown and their relationship with the state.

5 "In those kinds of little ways we defied them": sites of resistance

It was not accidental that the Congress of the People was held in Kliptown. Besides its location outside the city borders, which made it easier to arrange a large event where hundreds of delegates from all over the country and from a wide range of resistance organisations could gather, Kliptown has a long history of resistance to apartheid in ways both large and small (Khumalo 2008). This history has not been acknowledged in the memorialisation efforts in Kliptown, including the Open-Air Museum which focuses on the Freedom Charter to the almost complete exclusion of the rest of Kliptown's history. Duiker (2008a) recalls some of the informal networks of resistance that were commonly used in Kliptown under apartheid, in response to a question about what he considers some of the important aspects of Kliptown's heritage:

> And then, the resistance that you saw in these years: you know, resilience… inasmuch as Kliptown's been tenacious and always kind of fighting back. I'll give you an example: we were aware of the Group Areas Act and things like that. But we had many black people living in Kliptown, right? And the cops in the Mofolo South area and Dube… we used to call them the blackjacks. Their sole purpose was to go and hunt down people who didn't have pass books and who weren't 'qualified' to stay in the area… So we devised here in Kliptown a method where when the cops used to come at night, when they dared to come into the area, people that couldn't speak Afrikaans, we would teach them these few words: we'd say, look, when they come knock on your door, don't say *Ubani lokhu?*[7]... rather say *Wie's daar?*[8], and then they'd assume it's coloured people occupying that residence… And you know it worked, it was effective. People would hide their neighbours. We had a system, where people would inform others… As fast as a fire can spread, word would spread that [the cops] are busy somewhere and people would be in wardrobes and under beds and things like that. And so in those kinds of little ways we defied them, said we're not giving in.

Duiker's narrative suggests a history of Kliptown which includes some less public forms of resistance, a description very different from the sense of spectacle and drama often invoked in descriptions of the 1955 Congress.

In some cases, stories of resistance such as the one above are told in a positive light, as indicators of independence and courage; but there are also many narratives of frightening and invasive encounters with apartheid police. Evelyn Mofokeng (2000), for example, recalls the police raiding houses at night to check passes: "We never had a nice life at that time because of those GG people… In the 70's we had the

[7] Zulu: "Who's there?"
[8] Afrikaans: "Who's there?"

problem of having to run away from our houses at night even when it was cold." While acts of resistance were ubiquitous, and often powerful in terms of the sense of agency which they engendered, it should be acknowledged that the machinery of the state was also the cause of immense fear and dislocation.

At the southern end of Kliptown is a semi-detached cottage, one half of which is now occupied by Gene Duiker and his partner Cecelia Griffin. This was the home of the late Stanley Lollan – an anti-apartheid activist who was heavily involved in the Congress of the People and who was later tried in the 1956 Treason Trial. In the 1950's it was often used as a hideout for Nelson Mandela and other activists, as was Eva Mokoka's house (Khumalo 2003). There is no way, however, for someone outside the community to know this without being told about it; this important space of resistance is marked only by residents' memories. In addition, Khumalo (2008) argues that the AME church functioned as an important centre of political activity. Through its founder, Charlotte Maxeke, the church had connections to African-American political and resistance movements and was often used as a site for political meetings. Similarly, the church is not marked in any way that acknowledges its role in Kliptown's history of resistance.

6 "It was so homely": Nostalgic narratives

In many interviews with older Kliptown residents, particularly in the KOTT oral history collection, people express a sense of nostalgia for "old" Kliptown; "a longing for a home that no longer exists" (Boym 2001: xii). These nostalgic narratives take on many different forms and have been used for various purposes, from remembrance to activism. They may be read as a "counter-history" for Kliptown which exists outside of, and in opposition to, official discourses and modes of commemoration.

In her exploration of nostalgia in relation to Eastern European history, Boym (2001) identifies two kinds of nostalgia, the restorative and reflective. These categories are not necessarily applicable to people's memories in Kliptown, but they do provide a useful starting point for considering the way nostalgia functions and how it informs the way people speak about the past.

Restorative nostalgia, by Boym's definition, is nostalgia that prompts an attempt at reconstructing that which has been lost. According to Hall and Bombardella (2007: 255), restorative nostalgia "is invariably cast as a quest for truth and the restoration of monuments to the lost home, often as part of claims for

present rights." Reflective nostalgia differs in that it "thrives on the longing itself" (ibid), focusing on the act of remembrance, without attempting to reconstruct the past or arrive at an absolute truth about past events: it "is not bound by the constraints of 'truth' and 'evidence' but rather seeks to evoke the spirit of the past in the interests of the individual" (ibid: 256).

Coombes (2004: 124), writing on the commemoration of District Six, notes that nostalgia can often be problematic in the sense that it encourages an idealistic view of the past, which can disguise or suppress "political tensions and personal antagonisms" and other ruptures. At the same time, however:

> Looked at another way… [nostalgia] undermines the bureaucratic language of sanitation and public hygiene deployed by the apartheid demolition teams that so ruthlessly and effectively masked the more positive humanitarian aspects of the cheek-by-jowl existence that was the District Six experience of the poorer inhabitants. It seems, then, that a certain kind of nostalgic memorialising may serve important and productive functions given the reconstructive and transformative South African context.

In the post-apartheid context, then, nostalgia may function as an alternative means of speaking about place and history. While one does need to be careful of allowing harsh realities to be subsumed in a purely nostalgic mode of remembrance, Coombes (2004) points out that nostalgia may also function as a form of counter-history. As seen in early council documents, the official language used about Kliptown has always been one that attempted to categorise and contain, a language framing Kliptown as not much more than a site of lack; a dangerously chaotic, unruly place in need of cleaning, tidying and regulation. Today, official discourse about Kliptown tends to fall within the paradigm of development, which by its nature focuses on lack – an approach which, as Mbembe and Nuttall (2004) argue, is all too common in writing about African urbanity. Given this context, residents' narratives and memories about the Kliptown of the past suggest a powerful alternative way of speaking about Kliptown that undermines this kind of official narrative, and returns a sense of agency and possibility to those who live here.

As Battaglia (1995, quoted in Coombes 2004: 125) argues, nostalgia can also be "practical", in that "nostalgic connection may also be imagined toward a past object without necessarily being the enemy of unformulated future relationships. Indeed, nostalgia for a sense of future – for an experience, however imaginary, of possessing the means of controlling the future – may function as a powerful force for social reconnection." Looked at this way, nostalgia is not only a longing for something lost, but also potentially a spur to action and, as has certainly been evident in the case of Kliptown, a starting point for activism. The nostalgic quality of many Kliptown residents' memories is connected with the area's

tradition of independence from the state's power, and this has provided a platform for activism around issues of housing and service delivery.

The relationship between nostalgia and the state in Kliptown is an interesting one. One of the perpetrators of the destruction of 'old' Kliptown is identified in many interviews and oral histories as the apartheid government and its policies of segregation and control. Duiker (2008a) recalls the destruction of large parts of the Kliptown in which he grew up, in the name of 'slum clearance':

> They broke down Kliptown in 1980. Or the bulk of it anyway. People were then given houses as far away as Ennerdale… You know, to me that was like breaking up a community. And I saw that it would cause problems, and it did, it did… with the youngsters now they were uprooted, in a new area, and obviously the fights around turf began, giving rise to the creation of gangs… Gangs springing up all over the show… and then just breaking this fabric of the community.

In this and many other interviews that speak of the destructive effects of the institutionalised violence of apartheid, Kliptown residents point to the rise in levels of crime and violence as a result of this state-sponsored rupture in the fabric of the community. Eva Mokoka (2008) contrasts the "homely" quality of old Kliptown with the current high levels of crime:

> One thing about Kliptown, it was so homely. You know, there weren't these people like, you know, ruffians and all that. It was very homely. You could move in Kliptown in the middle of the night, no problem – because, you know, it's funny because most babies come at night. Now you can not. You can not even stand here at the gate in the middle of the night.

Many complaints about the deterioration of Kliptown are related to the physical space, the houses and streets and living conditions; but the *significance* of this material deterioration is often vested in its effects on the intangible aspects of Kliptown's heritage and character. Bob Nameng (2008) says:

> It's changing, it's changing. You can see now, if you look around at the conditions, we are so congested now… And you know, we're missing quite a lot. Kliptown used to be quite a cultural community… There was quite a lot of exchange happening, you know, understanding, harmony and togetherness… Bartering, you know. So for me, I still long for that because that's not there today… we don't trust and support one another any more. You know, there are boundaries that we've built.

In many interviews, residents speak of present-day Kliptown as "dirty", in contrast to the Kliptown they remember in the past. Martin Chetty (2000), for example, calls Kliptown a "slum area", adding "it is not the Kliptown I knew then." He suggests that Kliptown was a tidier, less chaotic place before the growth

of the informal trading sector: “There were no traders on the pavements. That is why Kliptown is what it is today… Kliptown was beautiful when once upon a time we had our little stores and fruit shops and vegetable shops.” Evelyn Mofokeng (2000) agrees:

> Yes, these street vendors are causing a problem. Kliptown was very clean but now it’s dirty. We used to enjoy playing without any fear of bottles cutting us or diseases… When you think of before, the streets of Kliptown were clean. But now you can go to Kliptown and you won’t even have a place to walk… Look how dirty it is! Kliptown has become like Alexandra.

Considering these extracts in conjunction with other, more positive narratives about Kliptown’s intangible heritage, it is apparent that one should be wary of generalising residents’ feelings about Kliptown. In many cases, people feel strong positive attachments to the place and its history, which does not preclude a sense that something which was once present in the community has been lost. Some changes in the physical environment are criticised, while in other ways it is felt that living conditions have not changed enough. This is, arguably a kind of *anti*-nostalgia which, while longing for the traditions and sense of community of the past, also looks to the future for much-needed change in terms of services and living conditions.

Almost every female interviewee says that women in Kliptown are particularly badly affected by poverty and poor living conditions, and this is connected to the sense that Kliptown is no longer as safe as it was in the remembered past:

> Kliptown is the most neglected place, truly speaking. Sometimes we even asked the former president to come and visit us, but he only visited developed places like Eldorado Park… We even called Eskom in ’98 so we can have electricity because it’s dark and women are being raped. Even yesterday, a lady was raped. People have lost confidence in the police because when we report rapes they tell us they don’t have enough vehicles or it’s too dark. (Mofokeng 2000)

The discourses of younger Kliptown residents are similar to those of their parents and grandparents as far as views of living conditions in current-day Kliptown are concerned. However, younger residents seem not to feel the same nostalgic connections to Kliptown’s past as their parents do, and are more likely to express a desire to leave Kliptown. Angie Mojoro, a high school student, says (2009): “I don’t enjoy living in Kliptown, because Kliptown is not a healthy place for us to live. It is so dirty… so my dream is to live outside of Kliptown.” Agnes Myeni, who was born in Kliptown in 1980, has placed a sign above the door of her shack that reads “Kyalami Glen”. Asked how she feels about living in Kliptown, she says (2009):

> We feel sad, because this is not a place for normal people to live, you know. But there's nothing that we can do… Hopefully, I'll be successful, get a job, buy a house for my mom and family to get out of this place. Because we've been waiting a long time for government, for anything… The thing is about the sanitation, you know, no electricity, you don't have your own space. Like you see, we have different families in one yard. I think if they develop it into a nicer place, maybe into a nice township with your own yard and space, then I wouldn't mind living in Kliptown.

From these and other interviews it is apparent that, to a large extent, the state is blamed for the loss of much of Kliptown's intangible heritage, and this feeling is applicable both to the apartheid state and the current African National Congress (ANC)-led government.

There are also tensions and conflicts within the community which have altered the structure of life in Kliptown. Beginning in the 1980's, there has been an influx of so-called "newcomers" to Kliptown, and many interviewees use the word "invasion" to describe the informal settlements which have mushroomed in Kliptown in the last two or three decades (Duiker 2008a; Chetty 2000; Zacarias 2000). There seems to be a prevalent sense that this "invasion" is responsible for other negative changes in the community, such as a weakened sense of community, a less visible culture of sharing and heightened levels of crime.

Mannetjie Bolo (2000) speaks strongly against the informal settlements in and around Kliptown, arguing that "Right now the squatters are a majority in Kliptown. We are a minority. For us to defeat them, it's going to be a problem." He describes Kliptown as "shrinking" (a concept which will be discussed more fully in the third chapter), and says of the informal settlements:

> Kliptown is becoming smaller now… They are closing us up. They are eating Kliptown… What we've got is the name of Kliptown and the fact that we were born here, but when it comes to decision making you'll find that the people who come into these positions are people from outside, maybe from Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique… They take away from us what we have left in Kliptown.

The idea of newcomers "taking away" or "eating" Kliptown is a complex one, as it refers both to economic competition in an impoverished area and to a sense of losing some of the intangible and unique aspects of Kliptown's character and history. Evelyn Mofokeng (2000), for example, says:

> Most of the people who are coming are guys from places like Maputo. If you look around you'll find that most of the people are these illegal immigrants… The other thing is that these people from Maputo have jobs at the shops here in Kliptown… That's why Kliptown is neglected. Look how it is. You won't say the Charter was adopted here.

The discourse of 'outsiders', who do not understand or appreciate the Kliptown and its heritage, exists concurrently with an equally powerful discourse of peaceful co-existence and of Kliptown as a vibrant, mixed space. While the influx of people from a variety of backgrounds is considered a vital part of Kliptown's heritage, and an aspect of its history which has created much of the intangible heritage of the area which is described by residents, it is also at times considered to be something which threatens the way of life of those who have lived in Kliptown for many years. These seemingly contradictory discourses exist side-by-side in the same space; the relationship between 'Kliptonians' and 'outsiders' is complex and charged.

7 'It was also our hiding place': Social space and symbolic ruins

Many sites in Kliptown which once functioned as important social spaces, generating a sense of community and functioning as gathering spaces for diverse people within Kliptown, have now fallen into ruins. Examples include the Sans Souci cinema and the banks of the Klipspruit River. This ruin is perceived as not only physical, but also symbolic of the denigration of 'old' Kliptown. Bob Nameng (2008), for example, relates the Sans Souci cinema to the co-existence of diverse people in Kliptown:

> It used to bring together people from all the neighbourhood areas. And there, you know, we saw a lot of intercultural exchange… You know, Xhosa, Shangaan, we all mix here and it's just a wonderful place to be. But Sans Souci's no more there. People don't get neutral venues any more where they meet from different directions. We thought the square would do that, but it's boring. It's boring! At night, you see with electricity all over, no one is there, whilst people are here in the darkness.

Although WSSD was intended to function as a social space, this has not materialised, and it has not been able to replace older gathering spaces which are now effectively lost. The Sans Souci cinema was also a hiding place, a site of resistance against police raids. Evelyn Mofokeng (2000) remembers, "[The cops] used to come at night and kick our fathers around. So our fathers used to hide us, even at Sans Souci. It was also our hiding place." The cinema, run by Ahmed Ballim since 1957 (Ballim 2000), fell into disrepair after being vandalised in 1997 and has since been broken down entirely. "I was traumatised by the damage to Sans Souci to the extent that I threw away all the records," recalls Ballim (2000). Today, a few scattered bricks and the remains of the foundations are all that remains of a site that, in local narratives, represents much that is or was unique about Kliptown.



Figure 7 (2008): The Sans Souci ruins. Photo: Naomi Roux

The Klipspruit River is another now-disused site which once played an important role in the social landscape of Kliptown. The river is now polluted and most of the trees have been cut down for fuel, but many remember it as a pleasant picnic and swimming spot. Martin Chetty (2000) recalls coming to Kliptown for picnics in the 1930's, often travelling by horse cart:

> I can say that those were the years and the horses were all spruced up with plumes… I remember as a little boy coming to Kliptown with my father, my mother and my aunts and uncles... There were beautiful trees… People used to go picnic while it was still dark in the summer. That was the excitement about the whole thing… [the situation started deteriorating] when the trees started being chopped down.

Memories of the social importance of the Klipspruit are provided by several interviewees who lived in Kliptown before the 1960's. A slightly less romantic view is provided by Evelyn Mofokeng (2000): "[The river] was our playground. In our playing time we used to swim there because we were kids then, and unaware of the diseases you could get such as diarrhoea. You just swam and you would see the after effect when you had sores or a cough." Again, sites such as the cinema and the riverbank are linked to a plethora of narratives, memories and associations, which do not necessarily add up to a single unified picture.



Figure 8(c. 1940's): The section of the Klipspruit River known locally as 'The Jungle'. Photo: courtesy KOTT.



Figure 9 (c. 1940's). Swimming in the marshland to the south of Kliptown. The ghost-like effect of the lighting gives this photograph a particularly evocative and nostalgic quality. Photo: courtesy KOTT.



Figure 10 (2008): The section of the Klipspruit once known as 'Tarzan'. This is where the few remaining trees alongside the river are to be found. The warning sign refers to flash floods that often occur after heavy rains. Photo: Naomi Roux



Figure 11: Most of the trees along the river have been cut down. According to Gene Duiker (2008b) the river has not been used as a picnic or swimming site since about the 1960's. Photo: Naomi Roux

8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed some of the 'local' narratives about Kliptown and its heritage which emerge from interviews, photographs and oral histories. Some of the dominant narratives which this analysis has focused on include: Kliptown as a mixed, cosmopolitan space; a spirit of community; traditions of independence and autonomy; histories of resistance under apartheid; the idea of nostalgia as counter-narrative; and sites which have local importance but have not been recognised by the JDA heritage project.

It is not always possible to neatly divide memories and narratives into those that are personal, local or national, since these categories are always to some extent arbitrary and relative. It is evident, however, that the official JDA heritage developments in WSSD have a different emphasis to the various facets of Kliptown's heritage that are revealed through the memories of residents, and the ways in which those memories are spoken of. The most significant difference is, arguably, the fact that many of these 'local' and personal narratives refer to aspects of Kliptown's heritage which are intangible, fluid, and based largely on memory and oral history. In contrast, the heritage on display in WSSD displays a linear version of history, and which excludes these 'local' memories of Kliptown as tangential or irrelevant to 'national' heritage.

As will be argued in a later chapter, many people in Kliptown feel excluded from the JDA heritage site, arguing that it does not represent them or meet their needs. The existence of the local narratives and counter-narratives identified here suggest that a major problem with WSSD is the fact that it has failed to take much of Kliptown's intangible heritage into account, and so has effectively written much that is unique and worth preserving about Kliptown out of its own story. The challenge, then, is to find a way to reinsert these 'local' narratives into Kliptown's story which acknowledges their fluid, complex nature. It is particularly ironic that a heritage site which is meant to commemorate the Utopian democratic ideals of the Freedom Charter has been realised in a way which leaves no room for contested, 'tangential' or contradictory narratives.

Chapter Three: Borders, boundaries, names and maps

1 The power of maps

In the preceding chapter, it was argued that there is something of a gulf between Kliptown's heritage as represented in the JDA developments, and as expressed in the narratives of residents. Another angle from which some of the tensions between these different narratives may be examined is through the imagery of mapping; that is, the ways in which Kliptown is represented in 'official' mappings (which include the names of areas in Kliptown, street names and the name of Kliptown itself), as opposed to the 'mental maps' of its residents, which are embedded in a complex social and historical imaginary.

Drawing on the work of Harley (1988), Wood (1993) argues that even the most 'scientific' maps are not objective, as the map is always located within a matrix of social, historical and political realities and narratives. Every map serves an interest; Wood argues that the notion of the map as a "window" or a "neutral" representation effectively "disguise[s] the map as a reproduction of the world, disabling us from recognizing it for a social construction which, with other social constructions, brings that world into being out of the past and into the present" (1993: 22).

This literary view of map-making interprets cartography as form of discourse, intricately linked to the production of knowledge and to structures of power: "The quest for truth [is] not an objective and neutral activity but [is] intimately related to the 'will to power' of the truth seeker. Knowledge [is] thus a form of power, a way of presenting one's own values in the guise of scientific disinterestedness" (Harley 1988: 279). The map represents much more than just a 'neutral' reflection of space, streets, buildings and boundaries; it points to something beyond itself, a representation of the present that is bound up with the context that produced it. Its system of signs and codes reflects power structures, political priorities, and ideas about what is worth representing and what is not. At the same time, Wood (1993) argues, the map also helps to *create* this context, by perpetuating particular ideas about power and representation, and by representing certain aspects of space and not others.

What is shown and named on the map is as powerful and telling as what is left out. Harley (1988: 291) observes that, in early European urban maps, there are many instances where the cartographer "may have unconsciously ignored the alleys and courtyards of the poor in deference to the principal thoroughfares, public buildings and residences of the merchant class in his conscious promotion of civic

pride or vaunting commercial success." In many printed maps of Kliptown, the visible sites tend to be those which function in support of nation-building and the political myth-making which is inherent to the project of creating a unified 'new South African' identity. Those sections of Kliptown characterised by ambiguous, contested, personal and local notions of identity, which may contradict the notions of history and national heritage presented in WSSD, are left unacknowledged. One of the stated aims of the JDA development project was to encourage tourism to Kliptown, and in so doing to encourage economic development; in this sense WSSD could certainly be read as a space intended to "promote civic pride" and "vaunt commercial success" (JDA 2009). The desperately poor, underserviced sections of Kliptown outside of the square are less able to encourage tourism to do the work of development, and are so left uncharted. As Harley (1988: 288) goes on to argue, drawing on Lears (1985), these omissions "[mark] the boundaries of permissible discourse and… discourage 'the clarification of social alternatives', making it 'difficult for the dispossessed to locate the source of their unease, let alone to remedy it'".

Harley (1988: 303) suggests that "maps as an impersonal type of knowledge tend to 'desocialize' the territory they represent. They foster the notion of a socially empty space. The abstract quality of the map… lessens the burden of conscience about people in the landscape". This interpretation of the 'objective' map presents a particularly relevant challenge in a (relatively) newly democratic society. The 1955 Congress of the People, as many biographers and commentators have noted (Bernstein 1999; Mandela 1994; Suttner and Cronin 1985), represented a radically democratic approach to political activism, encouraging direct participation and widely inclusive representation of the viewpoints of ordinary people. The mapping of Kliptown, as the home of the Congress and hence a site which represents the possibilities of participative democracy, could be seen as an opportunity to find new ways of mapping as a form of identity-building, in ways which take into account the contradictory and ambiguous processes of memory and the construction of local heritages.

As a researcher, there is no reliable way for me to know how residents' mental maps of Kliptown are constructed. Equally interesting and informative, however, are the ways in which these mappings are represented to me, as an 'outsider'. For the purposes of this chapter, I will be working largely with three representations of Kliptown's space that were offered to me in the course of this research: Gene Duiker's tour of Kliptown (2008b), Ntokozo Dube's walking tour (2008b), and the results of a photography project that was run with young Kliptown residents connected to SKY (2008/2009).

Much of the time, these verbal and visual maps contest or contradict maps from more official or published sources. The mental maps of Kliptown residents are enfolded with memory; the important

spaces that participants tell me about or show me all carry some kind of social, historical or personal significance. Nonetheless, hardly any of these spaces appear on published maps of Kliptown. This contestation extends to the naming of streets, public spaces, the idiosyncratically named sections of "old" Kliptown and to the name of Kliptown itself, where the official, published names of spaces, streets or areas are contradicted by local or colloquial names.

2 "One name change I wouldn't have a problem with": naming Kliptown

The power of maps to represent the passage of time, as a record of movement and change, is immediately apparent during my first meeting with Gene Duiker (2008a). He begins our conversation by orientating me in Kliptown's physical space, using a series of aerial photographs. These photographs, sharing the characteristics of maps (including the omniscient viewpoint and the suggestion of objectivity), form a time-lapse visual narrative of the changes Kliptown has undergone in the last fifty years. Duiker carefully points out the community centre at 58 Beacon Street where we are sitting, orientates me in terms of the road I took into Kliptown, and the place where my car is parked, outside the police station across the road. He shows me where some of the "old" areas of Kliptown are in relation to each other. Vaalkamers (so named because of the blue-grey colour of the houses) was just to the south of WSSD, where the Pick and Pay supermarket is now; Paddavlei, where Duiker was born, is at the southernmost tip of 'old' Kliptown, now part of Eldorado Park Extension 10. He traces the borders of the Kliptown that he knew when he was growing up: Boundary Road, the river, the Old Potchefstroom Road, the Old Kliptown Road. These borders form a long, thin rectangle, stretching north to south along the edge of the Klipspruit River. Nowadays, he tells me, these borders are not what they used to be:

> There is the area called Paddavlei, there in the far south – that area is now called Extension Nine, Eldorado Park. Now basically half of Kliptown, the southern half – the southern third, has become Eldorado Park. This mid section here, now, only the police station, the law courts, and the area from where we are sitting, everything northwards, up to Union Road: that still remains Klipriviersoog Estate. But where I'm living – here, beyond the police station – that is called Eldorado Park Extension Ten now… Eldorado Park… [has] taken up part of the southern section, and the eastern section. (Duiker 2008a)

For Duiker, Eldorado Park and its numerous extensions have eaten away"at the old Kliptown in which he grew up. This is apparent not only in the redrawing of borders, but also in the loss of colloquial and popular names for Kliptown's streets and sections, a result of municipal rezoning and the demolition of entire sections of Kliptown in the guise of 'slum clearance' in the 1970's and 1980's. Many of the evocatively named sections of Kliptown – Geelkamers, Paddavlei, Vaalkamers, Shit-No-More, Chicken

Farm, Tamatievlei and many others – exist on no map, in no government archive, no publication. Since, in many cases, the homes that used to stand in these sections no longer stand either, these self-proclaimed boundaries and means of orientation effectively exist only in the memories and narratives of those who lived or grew up within them.

In aerial photographs from the 1950's and 60's, there are wide expanses of open farmland. Duiker explains that most of this open space is now taken up by shacks, the last dairy and fruit farmers having left the area in the 1960's. He shows me the area where the informal settlement known as Charter Square is, pointing out the rough location of the SKY centre, Eva Mokoka's house, the Methodist Church, and Charlotte Maxeke' house. Many other research participants mention these and similar locations to me as important sites in Kliptown's heritage and sense of community.

Before driving to Kliptown to meet with Duiker, I compare his verbal directions to the community centre with the map of Kliptown in a standard road map of Johannesburg (Map Studios 2007). While Union Avenue is clear enough, as is WSSD, Duiker's careful and detailed directions do not lead me to Beacon Road, but – according to the map – to a street named Scott Cunningham. He explains to me that this is the case with many of the streets in Kliptown, which were renamed in the 1980's:

> …after these local nincompoops – puppets that they called the Coloured Management Committee that was supposed to… represent us at the Jo'burg Council. They named the streets after them… some of them turned out to crooks, they were actually prosecuted, because they took bribes and they were corrupt. Now I must live in a street named after somebody like that? No *thank* you!" (Duiker 2008a)

Kliptown streets such as Scott Cunningham and Huntley still retain their apartheid-era names on official maps. However, not a single shop along Scott Cunningham Street bears the official name on its signage. All the visible addresses in the street are given as Beacon Road. This stubborn refusal to relinquish the local street names is a small but powerful act of resistance. The very words used to describe and locate Kliptown have become a sign of the independent spirit which many Kliptonians pride themselves on.

The issue of naming also crops up in relation to WSSD itself. Wonderboy Peters, who was part of the research team for Ochre Media which designed the Kliptown Open-Air Museum, quotes an unnamed informant who he met in Kliptown in 2004 while conducting research for the museum: "The informant felt bitter at the naming itself, saying the 'community' was content with the square called Freedom Square, and that the elevation of Sisulu's name could have the effect of erasing many of the rich histories of Kliptown which are not necessarily linked to Sisulu" (Peters 2004: np).

While acknowledging the issues around the naming of the square after Sisulu, particularly in terms of his links to the ANC, Peters also argues that, since the renaming was a *fait accompli* by the time the square was built, the community would do well to find means to make use of the contentious name:

> Sisulu's legacy can be appropriated for good use for this impoverished community… The writer, in our present context of opportunism, careerism and lack of imagination and clarity of vision asks us to revisit the aspects of Sisulu which Nelson Mandela describes as 'the most heroic, the most deeply humane' that we as South Africans should strive to emulate as we face the abject poverty that confronts present-day Kliptown and many parts of South Africa. (Peters 2004: np)

From a purely pragmatic viewpoint, this is probably true. It is unlikely that the name of the square will be changed, and so the next best thing would be for the community to consider ways to make use of the name for local benefit. However, at the same time one cannot ignore the deep-seated bitterness engendered by the naming of WSSD, which many residents feel was done without proper consultation and without regard for the complex histories of Kliptown and of the various organizations involved in the 1955 Congress of the People. It is one thing to argue that the extreme poverty visible in Kliptown should be faced in a way that is "heroic" and "humane", but there is little evidence that this has happened. Gene Duiker, for example, says (2008a):

> I'm glad in a way that we do have the square now, something tangible to commemorate what happened in 1955. And I don't have a problem with the person, the late Walter Sisulu. I could have said that… the buildings around the actual space, call that the Walter Sisulu Hall or whatever. But that is *Freedom Charter Square*… People relate to that name… The people of [the area across the railway line] renamed the area Charter Square, that is adjacent to the actual Freedom Charter Square. That came from the populace themselves.

As Kuljian (2007: 25) points out, a space that is meant to represent "the demands of thousands of people became focused on one person." By naming the square after one individual, other narratives are erased from the space. When asked about the significance of Walter Sisulu Square, Angie Mojoro, a high school student from Kliptown, says (2009), "Walter Sisulu Square, I think it's a historical place that reminds us about Walter Sisulu, the man that was fighting for freedom a long time ago," suggesting that Kuljian's worry that the history of Kliptown and the Freedom Charter will become subsumed into the story of one person is not misplaced.

Like the refusal to use the official names of the streets in Kliptown, it is rare to be directed to "Walter Sisulu Square" by Kliptown residents. It is generally referred to either as simply "the square," or by its original name, Freedom Square. On one of my visits to Kliptown, I stop in at the SKY offices on my way to meet someone in WSSD, and some of the young people at the centre joke with me about "going to

the delegates" and "crossing over to the other side" while they walk with me across the railway lines. It is apparent that the naming of the square is strongly linked to a sense of ownership over the space: to get there, one must "cross over" the railway line, a symbolic as well as physical boundary. The square is not considered an integral part of Kliptown and its daily life by these young people at SKY.

The contestation around naming of places extends to the name of Kliptown itself. On maps, Kliptown appears as Klipriviersoog Estate and Racecourse Township. In my Map Studios road atlas (2007), there is a small section to the north of Walter Sisulu Square labelled Kliptown. However, the 'old' Kliptown which Gene Duiker so carefully sketches for me at our first meeting is largely absent. When asked how one might go about commemorating something of the intangible spirit of the Kliptown he describes, Duiker (2008a) answers without hesitation:

> Just one single act maybe will get people to really recall, re-identify with the place – by naming this area that we knew as Kliptown. Right? Don't call it Extension Nine and Extension Ten and Klipriviersoog and Racecourse and all these funny names that they have on the maps. Give it the colloquial name that *we* gave it, way back. And call this strip of land, which we can easily identify on the map, just rename that Kliptown.

He explains that the renaming of Kliptown is particularly important because acknowledging its colloquial name will be a step towards acknowledging the role that it plays in the identity of those who live, or once lived, there:

> Just because, talk to people who are living in Eldorado Park now. The elderly people. They say, many of them, if Kliptown can have proper houses, they'll be too glad to move back into this area. Right?...If you go to Extension Nine now, many were born there, so they don't have that identity, or affiliation or association with Kliptown. But yes, for most of the grownups… They would like very much to come back. (Duiker 2009)

Cecelia Griffin (2009) reiterates this link between Kliptown's name and its symbolic importance to those who live or once lived here: "Kliptown is verlore, hy's vergeet. Daar bestaan seker nie 'n plek soos Kliptown op die map nie, as jy nog vir my vra."[9] The issue of Kliptown's naming, then, is related to the sense that it has been "forgotten" and to its marginalisation. From Duiker's comments above, it is also apparent that the name of Kliptown is central to its identity, and to its position in the mental maps of many older residents.

[9] Afrikaans: "Kliptown is lost, it has been forgotten. There is probably no such place as Kliptown on the map, if you ask me."

3 "A centre of life to all of us": a place of origin

The idea of Kliptown as 'the centre' or a 'mother town' to Soweto crops up over and over again in interviews with residents, an idea strongly rooted in Kliptown's age and its traditions of independence and resistance. In some interviews, the idea of Kliptown as a symbolic centre is linked to its age, particularly to the fact that it is older than surrounding Soweto. Some residents see the history of Kliptown stretching back even earlier than its official proclamation in 1903. Eva Mokoka (2008) recalls that her parents used to come to Kliptown from Phokeng to visit family, and consequently she angrily dismisses the idea that Kliptown was established in 1903:

> I remember some time ago after this building [WSSD] went up, then they started saying Kliptown is one hundred years old, they want to celebrate… It's a lie. I am 82. Now tell me, and I am the baby in the family. At the time when my parents were here, where was Kliptown? Kliptown was here already…. It's not a hundred. Now I must go and say, yes, it's a hundred years?... The Baptist Church was one hundred years in Kliptown. So I said to those people, tell me, was it the first house in Kliptown, that building the Baptist Church? You can't just build a church in an open veld and there are no people in that area, no man!

This exchange reveals the level of psychological importance placed on the age of Kliptown. Mokoka would not support Kliptown's centenary, seeing this conception of its age as nothing less than a malicious lie. Her bitterness about the centenary celebrations also suggests a lack of trust in "outsiders" arriving to celebrate Kliptown's heritage without having adequately drawn on local knowledge of the area's history and significance.

Ntokozo Dube often takes tourists and visitors on walking tours around Kliptown. In his mental map of Soweto, and Johannesburg as a whole, Kliptown occupies a space squarely at the centre, as the place from which the rest of Soweto originates: "Kliptown is a centre of Soweto. It's a centre of Jo'burg… Kliptown is the mother to Soweto. It's where Soweto was born" (Dube 2008a). Duiker (2008a) agrees; asked what some of the important aspects of Kliptown's heritage are, he says:

> I think the point that this is the oldest township in the whole of Johannesburg… And I think somehow Soweto wants to claim that, because now there's talk about Kliptown/Soweto. Kliptown has been Kliptown and Soweto came later, so how can Kliptown be in Soweto?... To me, the basic thing is, Kliptown was there in 1903. There was no Pimville. There was no Soweto. Look at the map – you'll see how Soweto bit by bit expanded and grew larger. So for me, this point is very important.

For Dube (2008a), the connection of Kliptown to the rest of the country and the world is strongly connected to its links to the Freedom Charter:

> Kliptown, it accommodates people from Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, so much… In the square there are people from Africa who come up here and sell vegetables and art pieces, everything. And to me, ja, it needs to happen here before you can just go out there, because it's the place where the Freedom Charter was adopted. All over the different areas, people have managed to come up here in Kliptown and adopt this Freedom Charter… I do see Kliptown as a centre of life to all of us.

4 Gene Duiker and Ntokozo Dube's tours

Interviews also suggest that there are several local "centres" or important sites in residents' mental maps of Kliptown. Some of these, such as sites connected to the 1955 Congress of the People, may overlap with sites that are acknowledged in official commemorations of Kliptown's heritage; most, however, are unmarked and unmapped.

Two interview participants choose to take me on tours through 'their' Kliptown, and these tours provide interesting examples of 'local' maps of Kliptown. Gene Duiker and I spend an afternoon driving through the Kliptown where Duiker grew up; Ntokozo Dube takes me on a long walk that starts in WSSD, loops through 'old' Kliptown to the south, and then crosses the railway tracks into the Charter Square area where he lives, finishing at the SKY centre on Station Road.

More than one person I speak to in Kliptown refers to Duiker as a 'walking archive', and his Kliptown tour (2008b) amply demonstrates this to be true. Almost every house, old shop, vacant lot or ruin we drive past has a story connected to it. In many cases he is able to give me a complete history of which families have occupied particular houses for the last fifty or sixty years. Many of his recollections of old Kliptown families demonstrate Kliptown's history as a racially and culturally mixed area; he points out houses that are or once were occupied by black, Chinese, Indian, coloured, white and interracial families. He also points out several shops which function as markers of Kliptown's long history as a commercially active space. Some of these commercial landmarks include Asvat's Butchery and a number of Chinese- and Indian-owned shops. Many of the houses in Kliptown, built in the 1930's and 40's, share architectural features with houses in other older parts of Johannesburg, such as Yeoville, Doornfontein and Alexandra, for example stacked pillars, bay windows, pressed ceilings and enclosed verandahs.



Figure 12 (c. 1970): Asvat's Butchery, an important local landmark. Photo: courtesy KOTT.



Figure 13: The pillars on this 1940's home in the section of Kliptown known as Vaalkamers are a distinctive architectural feature. Photo: courtesy KOTT.

Many of the landmarks which Duiker shows me have personal significance to him, connected to his memories of growing up in Kliptown. These personal maps of Kliptown reflect the way in which many layers of history co-exist at the same time. For example, while showing me the railway bridge across the

river, constructed in the early 20th century and is still in use, he looks around at the few willow trees that still trail their branches over this section of the river and tells me about learning to swim in the river as a child:

> This area around here we called Tarzan because we had a lot of trees around here, not only the willow trees but other trees as well… Some places we'd dive and you couldn't reach the bottom of the river. You see the farms were here and obviously the fruit trees as well, and it presented opportunities for us to come and pinch the fruit, the plums and the peaches and apricots. (Duiker 2008b)

He points out the area where his childhood home once stood, behind the brick wall of the Kliptown Police Station: "There's still evidence of my father's hedging."

Duiker points out places that are or once were significant gathering places for people in Kliptown. These include the AME Church, which was established by Charlotte Maxeke in 1938. Charlotte Maxeke was an influential activist for women's rights and was the first black South African woman to obtain a bachelor's degree, from Wilberforce University in the United States. The AME Church in Kliptown played an important role in the anti-apartheid struggle, serving as a space for meetings before the 1955 Congress of the People (Khumalo 2003; 2008).

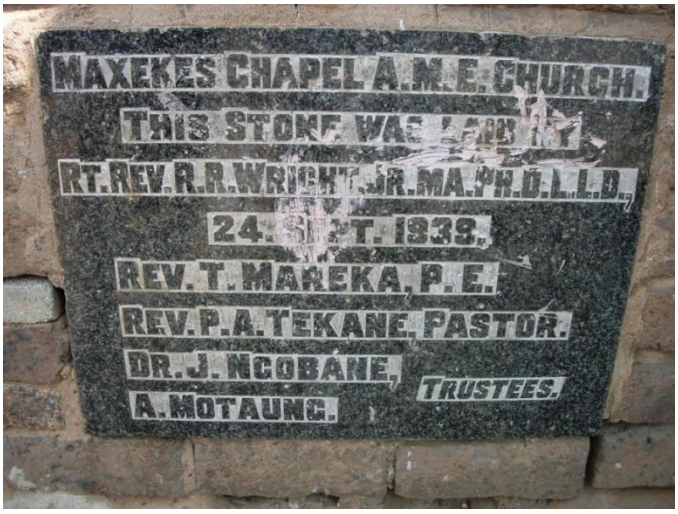


Figure 14 (2008): Memorial plaque outside the AME church, dated 24 September 1938. The church is still in use. Photo: Naomi Roux

There are some significant places, including the AME church and the Sans Souci cinema, where Duiker and Dube's (2008) tours overlap. Both of them point me to the mosque on Beacon Road, built in the 1930's, and also to Gerard Sekoto's house further down the street, where the artist lived in the early

1940's before moving to Cape Town. Both show me some tin shacks standing behind the police station – near the site where Duiker's father's house once stood. These shacks were built by the JDA to accommodate people who were forced to move away from WSSD in order to make room for its redevelopment. Dube points to a hill on the horizon to the south of Kliptown, where rows of shimmering metal roofs are just visible, and explains that most of the people moved from the square were rehoused there. Duiker (2008b) still speaks with anger about these removals: "Moved those people [out of] brick and mortar buildings, hey, and tell them – in the heart of winter! – to come and live in those shacks, I told those people you'll be mad to do that… I mean I wasn't going to allow that to happen".



Figure 15 (2008): Shacks behind the police station, near the site where Duiker's childhood home used to stand. These shacks replaced established homes that were torn down to make way for the redevelopment of WSSD. Photo: Naomi Roux

On his tour, Ntokozo Dube (2008b) divides Kliptown into three distinct areas. We start at the Freedom Charter Monument; Dube recalls that many of the old shops that used to line the square were moved to make way for the redevelopment, permanently altering the face of Kliptown's commercial landscape. He remembers the square being much busier before the JDA developments, and recalls playing soccer in the square while he was growing up. In his childhood memories, it is a chaotic, vibrant social space. This memory is shared by Bob Nameng (2008), who recalls with a chuckle:

> Sundays, everybody, whether you are a granny or a dog, you would all go to the field, jump the railway line before the square - and it would be packed! Sometimes when you come in the

> community here there's no one, few people. You're all there, you know, with our cats and dogs, enjoying football. And then later in the evening when football is done, you see people coming down from the shops, you know, the whole community. So that on its own used to be a therapy, and it used to be something that unified the people. But we miss those things, we don't see them any more.

Dube and I make a brief stop at the Gauteng Tourism Authority office in WSSD, where we pick up a 2005 brochure on the Freedom Charter 50th anniversary celebrations, titled "Kliptown rises from squalor of neglect". This stop marks the border into the second section of Dube's tour, which takes in the southern section of Kliptown, starting in Union Avenue and turning south into Beacon Road before looping back towards WSSD. This section of the tour takes in many of the same sites covered by Duiker (2008b); we walk past the shacks behind the police station and a row of empty, burnt-out shops. Dube (2008b) recalls "Here, it was so nice – we used to come up here and support and buy anything, there was food, drinks, car things, night clubs where people from Soweto and Jozi used to come and interact". Now, the space is covered in graffiti and rubble. In one corner we spot an animal skull, lying between some old plastic bags and broken bricks.



Figure 16 (2008): Burnt-out shops, once part of Kliptown's extensive commercial district. Photo: Naomi Roux

The second part of Dube's tour ends at the Kliptown Open-Air Museum, housed in what used to be Jada's hardware store, where banned activists hid to watch the proceedings of the Congress of the People in June 1955. We spend some time looking through the museum, and then Dube leads us outside

(after a brief stop at what is, apparently, Kliptown's oldest toilet – we are unable to investigate this further as the old bucket toilet is inside a locked wooden shed, surrounded by a cage made of palisade fencing) for the third section of his walk through Kliptown.

Usually, people cross between WSSD and the area known as Charter Square by walking over the railway tracks on foot. This time, however, Dube chooses to walk across the graffiti-covered pedestrian bridge, functioning as a symbolic border between the monument and the ramshackle houses of Charter Square. Halfway across the bridge, he stops and addresses me seriously: "We are now going into this side of Kliptown itself. It's where we are going to take a walk. One thing about this side of the community, there's no electricity, there's no sanitation, there's no clinic. But the people, they've got love."

Throughout Dube's tour, we stop often to speak with people in the street. He introduces me to Adijae Thindwa, originally from Malawi, who has lived in Kliptown since 1967. Thindwa tells me that under apartheid, this section of road functioned as a border between two different Group Areas districts. When I return later to speak to Thindwa again, he reiterates this story (2009):

> In the old days, it was a bit cruel… Because that side [indicates the road opposite his house] was for the coloureds. And then the so-called Africans, which then were called Bantu, were this side. We don't know why they were – because these were our neighbours. How could you come to a place and say, you are one side, you are one side, but these people have been together for many many years. For generations and generations[10].

While we are having this conversation, an old man on the other side of the street glowers at us suspiciously through the fence, refusing to return our greeting.

Dube points out the Battery Centre, a little way to the south from where we are standing: "Here in this community there is no electricity, so for people who want to listen to music, they always take their [car] batteries to the Battery Centre… [a charged battery runs] for plus minus four to five days" (Dube 2008b). The Battery Centre is an interesting symbolic space on this side of the tracks, signifying a sense of independence from the state's inability to provide basic services such as electricity – as Dube says, "People here make a plan". Dube's tour ends back at the SKY offices in Station Road, another important

[10] According to Duiker (2009), this is actually an erroneous interpretation of the fact that, under apartheid, Union Avenue functioned as a border between two administrative districts, one falling under the West Rand Administration Board (WRAB), and the other under the Department of Community Development (DCD). Although Thindwa's interpretation of the significance of this border may be incorrect, it does reveal a subjective sense of Kliptown having been fragmented by arbitrary administrative borders.

social landmark in Kliptown. For many of the young people in the area, SKY is a central place in their mental maps of Kliptown as home.

5 Maps of home: the SKY photography project

As discussed in the previous chapter, many sites in Kliptown which were once important as community and social spaces no longer exist, or can no longer be used as such. In this sense, the "map" of Kliptown is constantly redrawn. Old landmarks take on new meanings, sites become imbued with a sense of nostalgia, and new social spaces emerge as central. SKY, arguably, is one such space. From interviews with young people connected to the organization, it is apparent that SKY is incredibly central to their experience of life in Kliptown, and to their sense of Kliptown as home. One of the walls of the brightly painted SKY office is covered in posters, made by some of the young people who spend time at the centre:



Figure 17 (2008): clockwise from top left: "I belong here"; "This place is my kingdom"; "This is a place of your dream and your life"; and – somewhat more ambiguously – "I am here. And now what?" Photos: Naomi Roux

Bob Nameng (2008) says that he began the organization in 1987 in response to a need in the community for constructive activities for young people outside of school, explaining that he was inspired by "people who used to live in Kliptown, [like] Eva who brought me up, the Mandelas who used to hide here." In terms of the life skills that he hopes to pass on to the children at SKY, he draws on some of the intangible aspects of Kliptown's heritage that have been discussed in the previous chapter – independence, community and a strong sense of agency.

> Yes, we had powerful people of yesterday. We had beautiful flowers of yesterday. But you know, it doesn't mean all the flowers are gone… I'm trying to put seeds so that there can be more flowers of tomorrow for Kliptown, you know. Because with such a very powerful history I still believe these children deserve to gain and benefit, especially from the heritage… I always taught [the children at SKY] not to depend, to do things for themselves… Any child at SKY, believe you me, they lose their parents or whatever, they are still themselves. They are still going to continue living their life… I would always warn people, to never ever say to these kids we are doing this and that *for* them. They are doing this for themselves. For me, this is their pride and dignity. (Nameng 2008)

As mentioned earlier, the safety of women in Kliptown is a particular point of concern. One of the areas on which SKY focuses is the empowerment of young women. Nameng (2008) tells me that, as is the case in many poor communities, women in Kliptown are particularly vulnerable to abuse. Angie Mojoro (2009) tells me that at SKY,

> we find a better life than those who are living in the street, drinking alcohol, smoking dagga. We are avoiding those things… It's nice because when you are at club you forget about many things that are happening here in Kliptown… There are people who are there for me and Bob is always on our side, especially for the girls. He motivates us a lot.

In December 2008, I ran a photography workshop with five high school students affiliated with SKY. Each participant was given a disposable camera with 27 exposures, and asked to take photographs of anything they wanted to, based on the theme "What does Kliptown mean to you?" Emerging from these photographs and subsequent discussion is another kind of personal mapping of Kliptown. Many of the images reflect sites of personal importance to the photographers: home, family, the SKY centre, the ever-present railway lines. Some included images designed to make a point about living conditions in Kliptown, while others included photographs of the small ways people have found to survive; selling cigarettes, carrying bundles of clothes, cutting hair.

Every participant took at least some photographs of the SKY premises. SKY was described to me as a home, as "an umbrella" which brings diverse people together, and as a spiritual space that offers

something which cannot be found elsewhere in Kliptown. For most of the participants the first photographs taken for the project were taken at SKY. It functions as a symbolic centre in the young photographers' mental maps of Kliptown as well as marker for home.



Figure 18 (2008): A view of Station Road, taken from next to Eva Mokoka's house inside the SKY yard. The new red-and-white townhouses are visible in the background, across the railway lines. Photo: Jabulani Nzimande.



Figure 19 (2008): Praying inside one of the SKY buildings. "I took this picture because again it's a sign, people are showing that they believe God is still alive… Maybe you can see some of the people are opening their mouths as if they are hungry." Photo: Jabulani Nzimande.



Figure 20 (2008): "SKY is an umbrella. When it's raining, everybody hides. They won't get wet… It's a place where people from other provinces meet. Because maybe you can see different people here, you know. People from Welkom, Kliptown, Dlamini… it really shows that there is unity" (Nzimande 2009). Photo: Sonnyboy Nyl.

Other landmarks which participants chose to capture on film include the railway lines, the Battery Centre, the river, and a number of general views of Kliptown streets. Few if any photographs were taken in the southern section of Kliptown which Gene Duiker took me through on his tour. The landmarks identified in these photographs are highly localised and personal. Depictions of history, heritage and Kliptown's past are mostly eschewed in favour of depictions of spaces which have the most immediate relevance to the participants' mental maps of home and the way they engage with Kliptown's space.



Figure 21 (2008): "The reason why I've taken this photo is that the railway line is dangerous, you know. And for me to take this is like a warning, because many pedestrians are knocked over on this railway line, starting from town down to Vereeniging, you know. The same railway line." Photo: Sonnyboy Nyl.

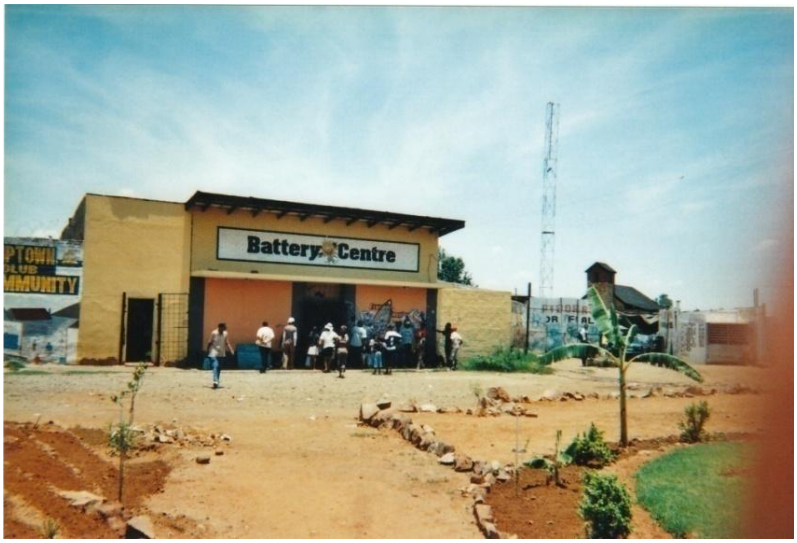


Figure 22 (2008): The Battery Centre is an important landmark in Kliptown, signifying one of the many means by which residents find means to take care of needs which are not met by the state, such as electricity. It also functions as a social and creative space, sharing premises with a community textile printing workshop[11]. Photo: Tumelo Phadi.



Figure 23 (2008): A general view of Kliptown, looking southwards. Almost every photograph in this project was taken in this section of Kliptown, to the west of the railway lines. Photo: Tumelo Phadi.

[11] In early 2009, the Battery Centre and textile printing workshop closed down. At the time of writing, the premises are home to a small art gallery, one example of the constant remaking and reconfiguring of space in this densely populated area.



Figure 24 (2008): Although it is no longer used in the same way as it once was, the river is still an important landmark and boundary in Kliptown. Photo: Vangile Sangweni.

A few of the photographs relate to the informal economic activity that is common in Kliptown. In their explanations of these images, a few of the project participants draw on the narratives of independence expressed in other interviews. The idea that "people make a plan" is repeated, suggesting the immense importance of this aspect of Kliptown's heritage to the area's identity, and of Kliptown's history of commercial activity in mental maps of the area.

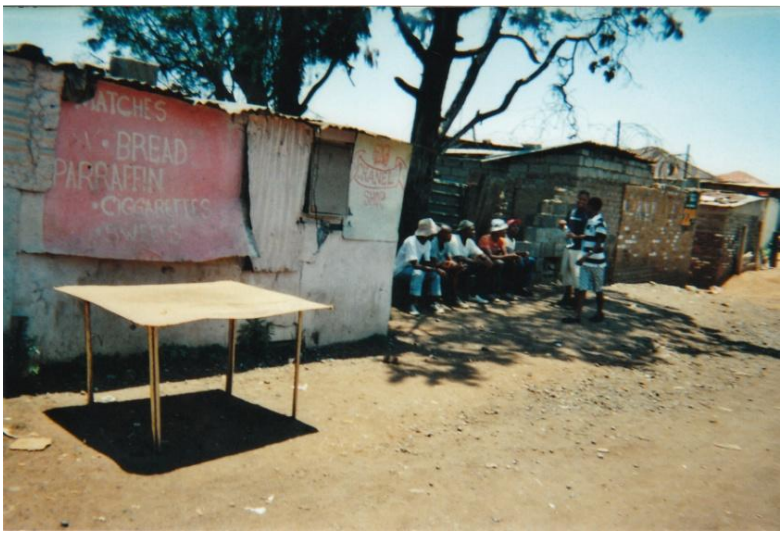


Figure 25 (2008): "People, they will survive with their small stores, where they will sell their bananas, chips, for fifty cents. Others, they always sell our electricity, which is matches, candles and paraffin" (Dube 2008). Photo: Tumelo Phadi.



Figure 26 (2008): "This one is a woman and her child. They are going to make some plan, you know, to find money." Photo: Tumelo Phadi.



Figure 27 (2008): Small informal businesses like this haircutting salon are found all over Kliptown. Photo: Vangile Sangweni.



Figure 28 (2008): "I like this picture because it shows we are not lazy. We know how to work on our own… They were connecting the generator so we can get lights… Ja, we are not lazy, we can think about how to combine two things together so they can make something." Photo: Mohleleki Puseletso Mokhabi



Figure 29 (2008): The JDA developments, which are ongoing at the time of writing, are also seen as a possible source of economic development. This is an image of the underground parking lot which is currently being built in Walter Sisulu Square. "It shows that Kliptown is the place where people get jobs. It's a place where people get employed. So I took this picture because it's a sign for me." Photo: Jabulani Nzimande.

In the workshop, the young photographers are eager to explain to me what living conditions in Kliptown are like and how these affect them. A photograph of the public toilets in Station Road sparks a particularly heated discussion. Many of the photographs taken with the intention of representing living conditions in Kliptown use children as their subjects, juxtaposing them with images of rubbish heaps and muddy streets.



Figure 30 (2008): "This place is dirty, there are a lot of diseases and then those kids play with those things. They don't even know what they're doing." Photo: Mohleleleki Puseletso Mokhabi.



Figure 31 (2008): "The shack is too small, and the family is big – they are more than seven." Photo: Mohleleleki Puseletso Mokhabi.



Figure 32 (2008): A pile of garbage competes with an Independent Electoral Commission banner for the viewer's attention. Photo: Tumelo Phadi.



Figure 33 (2008): "This photo represents the way we live. The place is dirty and the toilets we use are public toilets". Photo: Vangile Sangweni

Out of a total of 115 photographs, only one was taken inside WSSD itself. Generally, when the square appears in photographs it is in the background, or it is entirely blocked by the heavy palisade fence that borders the railway line. The symbolic border of the railway line is a powerful one, marking the division between the part of Kliptown mapped as “home” and the section mapped as “the square”. When the square is photographed from the inside, the focal point is a group of tourists outside the monument. It is not depicted as a social space used by residents of Kliptown itself.



Figure 34: Looking south down Station Road. The Holiday Inn can be seen over the concrete fence to the left. Photo: Tumelo Phadi.



Figure 35 (2008): A similar shot, looking in the opposite direction. The railway line and the fence function as a border between two disparate areas. Like the square, the new townhouses only appear in the background of most of these photographs, never in the centre. Photo: Sonnyboy Nyl.



Figure 36 (2008): The only photograph that was taken of Walter Sisulu Square from the 'inside". A tour group stands near the Freedom Charter Monument, under one of the new thorn trees; a souvenir stall is visible behind them. Photo: Tumelo Phadi.

6 Kliptown on the map

The personal maps of Kliptown that interview participants share with me are complex, layered and multifaceted. Most of the sites mentioned, including those which arguably have importance for 'national' heritage beyond simply being sites of personal significance, do not appear on any official or printed maps of Kliptown which I have encountered. In my Map Studios road atlas of Johannesburg (2007), for example, the area of Kliptown where Eva's clinic and the SKY houses are is designated only by the amorphous diagonal brown lines indicating an 'informal settlement'. The few streets in this area that do appear on the map are nameless, appearing as blank pathways to nowhere. As Kuljian (2007: 39) notes in *What Happened to Kliptown?*, "it's as if all the people – Bob, Gene and Aunt Eva – the houses and the history have vapourized."

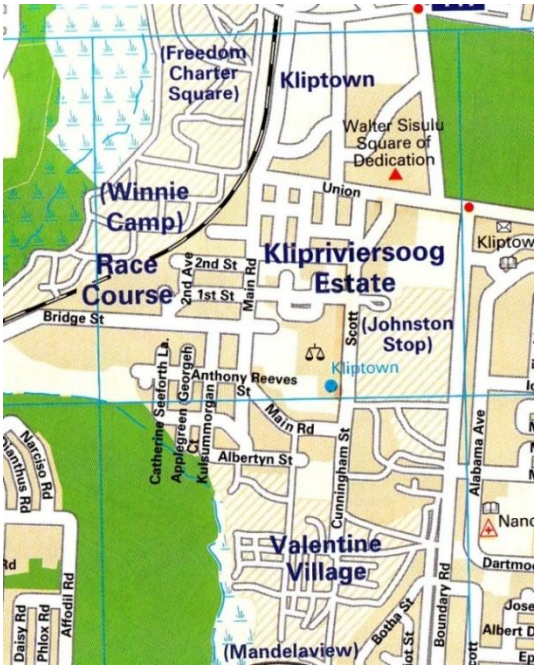


Figure 37: Kliptown as it appears in a 2007 Map Studios road atlas.

The Kliptown Open Air Museum distributes a flyer to visitors entitled *Let Us Speak Together Of Freedom* (2008). On the back, a simple map depicts the road from Johannesburg to WSSD. The only sections of Kliptown that appear on this map are Union Avenue, the 'Tower of Light' at the south-eastern corner ofWSSD, WSSD itself, the museum, and a portion of the road to Dlamini, Pimville and Klipspruit. There

are no directions from within Soweto itself; the map is aimed only at visitors coming from Johannesburg city centre. No other sites in Kliptown are represented.

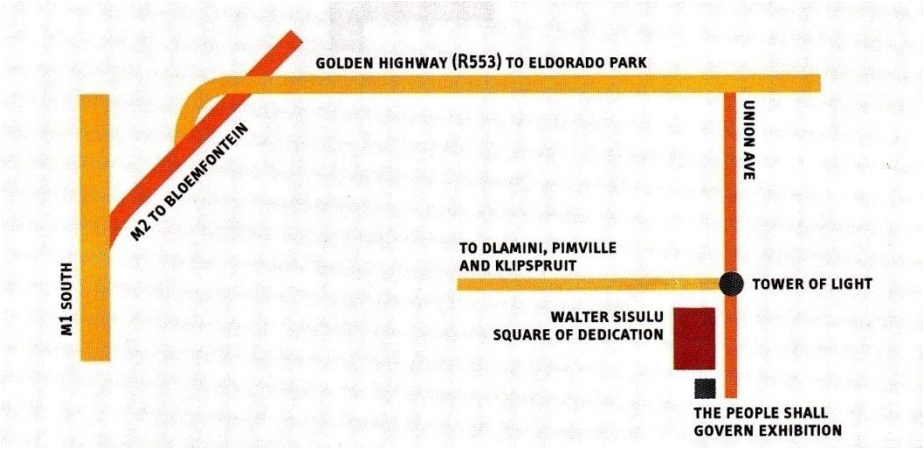


Figure 38: Map to Walter Sisulu Square, from a promotional pamphlet for the museum (Kliptown Open-Air Museum 2008)

It should be acknowledged that the map is intended only as a basic sketch directing visitors to the museum. However, the museum was intended as an 'open-air' experience, taking in various exhibition nodes scattered throughout the community (for example, Gerard Sekoto and Charlotte Maxeke's houses) – a moniker which still appears in the museum's title. The "open-air" concept of the museum did not materialize as envisaged (Peters 2008). It seems something of an oversight that a map to a museum billing itself as 'open-air' does not effectively encourage any engagement with the surrounding community. The local landmarks which interviews suggest are so important to residents' conception of space in Kliptown, and their own positions within that space, have been completely erased from both of the printed maps in question.

Looking at these printed maps and comparing them with residents' mental maps of important sites in Kliptown, it is apparent that each of these maps serves a very different purpose. Stiebel (2007) argues that mapping can be a powerful tool of identity construction, particularly in a country such as South Africa which is still struggling to create new ideas of national identity. She argues (2007: 178) that the achievement of democracy in South Africa "has opened the way for the remaking of all kinds of maps… The drive has been to renegotiate, re-imagine and remap how South Africans see themselves as

emerging from the past, engaging with the present and synthesizing into a common entity which can hopefully be called the South African nation."

These maps of Kliptown, then, are not just objective maps of space. Although maps ostensibly suggest "certainty about where things are" (Stiebel 2007: 180), they are also powerful media in the construction of identity and history. Stiebel (2007:180) argues that

> when it comes to defining who one is and where one belongs, people often use the language of cartography, of charting their course in the world, mapping their path. Physical maps give literal direction and practical information, but their constructed nature leads to questions about the constructing consciousness: according to which guiding principles and selective procedures, and for whom, is any map drawn?... Behind the lines on the map lies a world of unspoken but evident possibilities, silences/ absences, powerful discourses, ambiguities.

In the same vein, King (2004: 142) states that "which features are named or marked tell us what the producers of the map believe to be socially, politically or historically significant; just as what is omitted renders invisible what they assume is of little significance."

These silences, contradictions and ambiguities become apparent when looking at Kliptown residents' mental maps of home in conjunction with printed and official maps of Kliptown. These observations beg the question of how exactly one might use a map, or the idea of mapping, as a means of constructing identity in a supposedly newly democratic context. The printed maps mentioned above, as Kuljian (2007) argues, seem to erase individuals and local history from the map, effectively denying them official existence or acknowledgment.

To a large extent this erasing of local histories and contradictions must be read as a political act. As Harley (quoted in Stiebel 2007: 185) suggests, "a map can carry in its image such symbolism as may be associated with the particular area, geographical feature… or place which it represents. It is often on this symbolic level that political power is most effectively reproduced, communicated and experienced through maps." This is apparent, for example, in the way in which WSSD is clearly marked on printed maps, but areas such as Charter Square, equally rich in history and memory, are effectively erased – or, in the case of the Map Studios (2007) map, literally crossed out by the diagonal lines. These diagonal lines (or, as in the case of the Open-Air Museum map, the complete absence of residential areas) become a marker for impoverishment and marginalization.

One possible model for a more representative and inclusive mapping is suggested by the District Six Museum in Cape Town. While Kliptown and District Six have very different histories, there are also

parallels to be drawn in terms of the need to represent local memories and forgotten or suppressed histories. District Six has been described in terms similar to those used to speak about Kliptown: “a vibrant cosmopolitan community”, “a melting pot of race, class and culture” (Rassool 2006: 286). Under the Group Areas Act, District Six residents were moved to scattered locations on the Cape Flats throughout the 1970’s and early 1980’s after the district was rezoned as a white area. The District Six Museum, an independent community museum, was opened in 1994, as a means for the displaced community to “reassemble and restore the corporeal integrity of District Six through memory” (Rassool 2006: 288).

The museum’s opening exhibition, “Streets: Retracing District Six”, included artefacts, photographs and documents. Central to the exhibition is a floor map of the district. The map is covered with a transparent layer, allowing visitors annotate it by adding remembered homes, shops, and omitted streets, and to leave written comments or memories. As Rassool (2006: 291) writes, through this and other interactive elements, the museum was “filled with argumentation and debate about cultural expression, social history, and political life in the district, about local history and national pasts, and about how best to reflect these.” In this way, silences and omissions could be contested, in a way that acknowledged the multi-faceted nature of District Six’s past. Thus, the map does not *have* to be a tool only of official power and state-sanctioned silences; it is also a possible means of opening debate and discussion about ambiguous and complex local histories, and their relation to ‘national’ heritage, and applying this idea to mappings of Kliptown would be one possible means of reinscribing Kliptown in the represented landscape.



Figure 39: The floor map in the "Streets" exhibition, District Six Museum, Cape Town. Photo from Rassool and Prosalendis (2001: 30).

7 Conclusion

Can we take Frene Ginwala seriously in her statement that "the challenge of this democratic Parliament is to remap the new South Africa to include, and not exclude, to break down the internal boundaries and to free and not restrict" (quoted in Stiebel 2007: 181)? The ways in which Kliptown is represented on published and official maps (including the map printed on the JDA museum flyer) suggests that this challenge has not been met. The omissions on published maps, particularly as far as the representation of those parts of Kliptown designated as 'informal settlement' are concerned, perpetuate the area's economic marginalisation while at the same time refusing to acknowledge locally important sites and narratives.

There are many possibilities for alternative, more democratic means of mapping, suggested by Kliptown residents' own mental maps and conceptions of what and where the important sites in Kliptown are, as well as by community-led mapping projects such as the District Six Museum "Streets" exhibition. As

argued in *Kliptown's Story*, a historical overview by KOTT (2001): "Kliptown is and will ever remain a landmark in our history". Kliptown is a symbolic historical 'landmark' in South African history, but is also laden with layers of local memory which need to be fully acknowledged, with all their complexities and contradictions. The next chapter will examine some of the means through which Kliptown and its landmarks have been commemorated, both by the state and through community initiatives.

Chapter Four: Commemorating Kliptown

No attempt to commemorate Kliptown's history would be without its problems, contestations and difficulties. Arguably, however, the commemorative approach taken by the JDA and the provincial government has been particularly misguided and unsuccessful. In the few years that WSSD has been in existence, it has already been the focus of much academic criticism (see, for example Bremner 2004a, 2004b; Kuljian 2007; Khumalo 2008; Noble 2009). Some of these criticisms will be discussed with particular reference to problematic aspects of the space which have been identified by residents of Kliptown. This chapter will also examine the JDA's efforts at commemoration in relation to locally based, community-led commemorative initiatives, including the Kliptown Our Town exhibition and the book *Kliptown Stories* by Prince Massingham and Clifford Charles, and in so doing consider what alternative approaches exist for commemorating Kliptown's heritage.

1 Government-led commemoration in Kliptown

1.1 Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication

At the time of writing, WSSD's western half (where the CoP took place) is a massive crater in the earth, halfway through the construction of an underground parking lot. The bluegum trees[12] which once lined Union Avenue and the historic warehouses are gone. Homes that were in the way of the developments were demolished and their residents moved to shacks outside the police station, and to new housing on a distant hill to the south (Dube 2008b; Duiker 2008b). Thorn trees have been planted in the eastern half of the square, replacing the old bluegums.

Close to the northern edge of the square stands a conical tower, modelled on the structures at Great Zimbabwe. Inside is a concrete wheel with the ten clauses of the Freedom Charter inscribed on it: "The people shall govern", "There shall be work and security", "There shall be houses, security and comfort". In the middle of the wheel is a burner which is supposed to hold an eternal flame, although the flame is rarely lit (Dube 2008b). In the roof of the monument, a cross has been cut into the brick ceiling. As

[12] According to the JDA's project plan for WSSD (JDA 2005b), the intention was to keep the surviving trees in place, since "these trees formed the landscape background during the 1955 Congress of the People" and "in terms of the legibility of Kliptown these Eucalyptus trees also have a landmark value". The implementation of the project, however, has been very different, something which seems to have been an issue throughout the redevelopment.

Bremner (2004b: 525) wryly comments, “at midday on June 26 each year, observers are able to watch the sun briefly light up [the Freedom Charter memorial’s] surface, before it recedes once more into the shadows of history.”



Figure 40 (2008): View of Walter Sisulu Square taken from the south-eastern corner. Photo: Naomi Roux.



Figure 41 (2008): Concrete crosses symbolising democracy adorn the walls above empty, shuttered shops. Photo: Naomi Roux.



Figure 42 (2008): The Freedom Charter Monument. Photo: Naomi Roux.



Figure 43: "At midday on June 26 each year, observers are able to watch the sun briefly light up [the Freedom Charter memorial's] surface, before it recedes once more into the shadows of history" (Bremner 2004b: 525). Photo: Naomi Roux.

Freschi (2007:35), writing on the new Northern Cape Legislature in Kimberley (which includes a tower strikingly similar to the Freedom Charter Monument) and the Mpumalanga Provincial Government complex in Nelspruit, suggests that

> both these examples – erected under political pressure – represent something of a missed opportunity to reimagine and reinvent the postcolonial public space. Given the self-consciousness of their ostensible South Africanism, they in effect pose fundamental questions, not only about how identities are constructed and manipulated to suit shifting ideologies, but also about which groups are represented to talk about the supposedly national.

According to the JDA (2009), the new heritage developments were intended to "turn Kliptown into a heritage site and a premier tourist destination in the city, while improving the quality of life of the local community, and turning the area into a thriving residential and commercial node". Besides these promises of tourism and economic development, the new monuments in Kliptown have been conceived within a paradigm of post-apartheid nation-building. As a repository of the history of the Freedom Charter, the new monuments are also closely connected to the history of the ANC and the current South African constitution, which is in many ways based on the ideals of the Freedom Charter (Corder 1994). In this sense, Freschi's point rings true for the new heritage complex in Kliptown as well. Despite the JDA's stated lofty intentions, the developments in Kliptown represent a similarly disappointing missed opportunity. In reality, the relationships of residents with the new space has been a fraught and generally negative one; the landscape of the old Freedom Square and of the commercial district has been altered beyond recognition, but the envisaged positive effects have not been felt in Kliptown itself.

Some interviewees say that they appreciate the fact that Kliptown's role in South African history has been acknowledged in some way, but are not happy about the way this has been realised. The majority of those interviewed are highly dismissive of the developments in Walter Sisulu Square, dismissing them as a 'white elephant' with no positive impact on the community. Some point out the stark irony of the utopian promises of the Freedom Charter, enshrined in its brick tomb metres from one of the poorest areas of Soweto, and others say that the JDA developments have actually destroyed much of the vibrancy and usefulness of the square and marketplace as a communal space.

Reactions to the space are not, however, entirely one-sided. Some interviewees enjoy the new heritage site and these opinions should not be overlooked in analysing the space. Adijae Thindwa (2009), for example, calls the monument "beautiful". Speaking about WSSD, he interprets heritage as something to pass on to future generations as a means of remembering their origins: "to me that is something like heritage, time to come, they will come in a later generation to understand where did we come from.

That is good for the coming generation." Thindwa's linking of heritage to ideas of origin suggests that WSSD does have a large amount of symbolic power in terms of defining what aspects of this history are remembered, and what this history stands for. Although I have been critical of the overwhelming presence of 'national' and 'official' narratives in the commemorations in Kliptown, I do not wish to suggest the history of the Freedom Charter and the 1955 Congress is not significant or should not be memorialised. Narratives of origin such as these are important in many people's construction of their own identity, as Thindwa suggests, and worthy of preservation – although this should not be undertaken uncritically or insensitively. As Marschall (2006: 183) points out, "monuments... can also be said to fulfil important psychological needs in that they publicly assert new group values, restore dignity and self-esteem, express identity and recognise leadership and achievement."

Thindwa's positive feelings about the square and the monument are, however, largely based on its promises of future development, rather than on the way it is currently used: "Maybe as time goes on, thirty or forty years, there'll be another world. Yes. Like when you look at Johannesburg, if you look at it in the 1950's, it is not what it is today." This, to some extent, echoes Graeme Reid's[13] assessment of the square's potential (quoted in Kuljian 2007: 49):

> We have to hold onto the vision that people's economic condition is going to improve quite substantially and that a platform for investment has been laid in Kliptown. It will be one of the premiere nodes of Soweto. And Joburg is poly-nodal anyway, so it has the potential to be sort of like a Rosebank.

However, looking around the square, and speaking with members of the community it was intended to "develop", these promises of economic development seem a long way from realisation. Many of the shops lining the concrete expanse are shuttered and empty, the "community hall" is inaccessibly expensive and so is rarely used by organizations from Kliptown itself, and the five-star hotel on stilts looms over one of the poorest and most under-serviced areas in Johannesburg. The envisaged hordes of tourists who were supposed to trail "development" in their wake have, as yet, not materialised.

Angie Mojoro (2009) says that she enjoys visiting the square and in particular the museum. For Mojoro, the square as it stands now is a definite improvement over its past appearance. When asked if she can remember what the area looked like before the square and the monument were built, she says,

[13] Reid was the Chief Executive Officer of the JDA at the time when the Kliptown developments were implemented.

> Yes, I still remember... It was just a place where people played there, where the rubbish is, we lost things there. And then like, there were many things that make the world to be not healthy there… It was just a place where we were passing by… They changed it to a better life.

This is an interesting alternative viewpoint to that which describes the old Freedom Square as a vibrant, enjoyable social space, and does suggest that there is potential for the square to become a useful and community-friendly space if the concerns of the community could be addressed effectively.

These positive views of the developments in the square tend, however, to be the exception rather than the rule. Many interviewees speak of the square and surrounding developments in a way that suggests they function as a synecdoche for the general failures of government. These failures include a severe lag in service delivery, lack in community consultation and a dearth of acknowledgement of any aspects of Kliptown's heritage besides the events of June 1955. Agnes Miyeni (2009), for example, echoes the words of many interviewees when she says,

> For me, it's just a structure standing there, doing nothing for the people. Because, I think if.. I don't know, maybe that's how it is, our government is doing. This structure was built and we thought we were going to get jobs out of it, you know. But most of the time… all the people that I see there, they are youngsters with matric, with no degrees working there. And they are not from Kliptown.

For Miyeni, the square was built with the promise of employment and the economic development of which the JDA was so confident. The reality, though, has been vastly different, creating a strong sense of disappointment and betrayal which is reiterated by many interviewees from various parts of Kliptown. Many speak of the sheer irony of the existence of the Freedom Charter monument in a location where so few of the Charter's ideals have been realized. Bob Nameng (2008) says,

> We gave birth to the Freedom Charter, and then the Freedom Charter which gave birth to today's constitution, which is one of the best constitutions in the world. But looking at Kliptown today, where it is now… Kliptown is still behind. It's neglected. I would say it's isolated; it's been forgotten, there's still no proper infrastructure, the sanitation is bad, there's no school, there's no electricity, I can go on and on and on. And then you start reading the document, the same document that was drafted in 1955. For me it's a whole lot of contradictions. You know, to the life that we lead now.

When I ask Nameng how he feels about the Charter monument, he laughs, indicating the view from the front door of his small two-room house in Station Road:

> It's just opposite my door! Every time I open my door, first thing that I see, is the huge white elephant, the square. For me, I'm not even ashamed or afraid to say that it's a white elephant. You know, for the fact that it doesn't benefit us with anything. Instead it brings more pain to us.

Ntokozo Dube (2008b) agrees:

> There is no electricity, there is no school, there is no proper sanitation, there is no clinic... The people shall govern, but to us in this community it's a contradiction… All the national groups shall have equal rights, and if you look at the community, we don't see the equality here… We feel they've just managed to note it down and forget about us.

Listening to comments such as these, it is difficult to avoid the frustrating sense that a valuable opportunity to implement the Charter's utopian promises, and to make this foundational document of the South African state a material reality, has been missed in Kliptown.

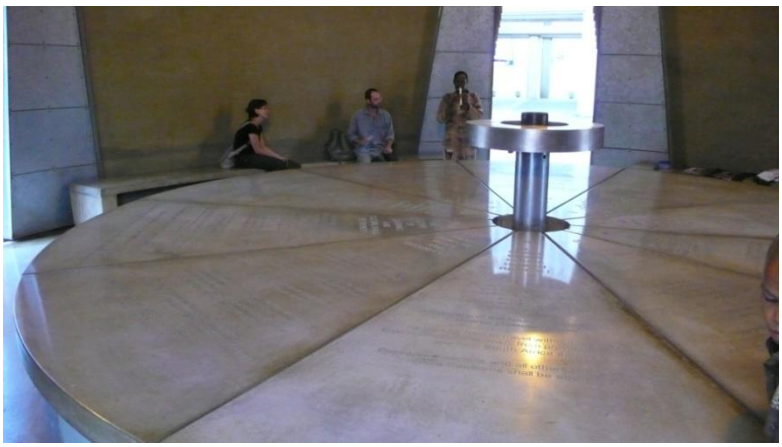


Figure 44 (2009): Inside the Freedom Charter Monument. Photo: Emmanuel Guffond.

1.2 The museum

In the south-western corner of the square is a small museum about the Freedom Charter, located where Jada's hardware shop used to stand. The museum's interior is a visually seductive series of softly-lit rooms. Its narrative begins with a brief introduction to apartheid policies and their effects, explains the process by which the Freedom Charter was drawn up and some of the logistical difficulties in transporting delegates to Kliptown, and ends with an exhibition of wire sculptures representing some of the well-known figures who attended the CoP.

This was, apparently, not quite what was envisaged by the JDA or by Ochre Media, the company responsible for the museum's design. The original plan for the museum was an innovative "open-air" approach, which would include important sites in other parts of Kliptown. The expectation was that a visit to the museum would include a walking tour through Kliptown, encouraging some kind of engagement with the community and with the other histories that the area is so rich in (Peters 2008). 27 boards were installed outside sites across Kliptown, such as the mosque on Beacon Road, Charlotte Maxeke's house, Stanley Lollan's house and Gerard Sekoto's house. However, Gene Duiker (2008b) tells me that to his knowledge, only two of these signs remain. The rest were stolen for scrap soon after being installed. This is, perhaps, one of the clearest indications of the balancing act between heritage and development that is needed in Kliptown; arguably, there is no reason for members of the community to be behind a multi-million rand heritage project when no visible improvements in terms of people's living conditions and educational, social and economic opportunities have taken place.



Figure 45 (2008): 'As-salaam alykum'; one of only two remaining heritage boards in Kliptown, outside the mosque in Beacon Road. The mosque was built in the 1930's and also functioned as a school. Photo: Naomi Roux.

Jane Mongatane (2009), the museum's operations manager, tells me that attendance at the museum is low. Tourists tend not to visit it because it is tucked away in a corner, dwarfed by a massive construction site and the Holiday Inn. Tour guides generally do not bring groups of tourists through the museum. Some local schoolchildren (like Angie Mojoro) visit the museum on a fairly regular basis, but besides this few people who live or work in the vicinity have, according to Mongatane (2009), been inside. "It's

cold," says Ntokozo Dube (2008b). "There is no vibe. You feel it, you know. It's totally cold. It's more like the Holiday Inn."

1.3 The commercial district

As part of the JDA developments, a new and supposedly improved marketplace was set up along the southern edge of the square, with steel lockers for stock, separated from WSSD by a palisade barrier. Old shops and warehouses lining Union Road were torn down to make way for the new marketplace. However, many hawkers complained that the storage space was badly designed, and that the space was not suited to the informal traders' needs: in order to attract business, traders need to be close to where people walk, either on Union Avenue or in the square as people cross the space. In addition, a fee is levied for the use of the stalls, which many traders are unwilling to pay (Kuljian 2007). Thus, the market has begun to slowly – and, technically, illegally – reclaim the space in the square which it once occupied.

When asked about Kliptown's commercial history, Bob Nameng (2008) says simply,

> Freedom Square swallowed business in Kliptown, the old Kliptown. Business is not good like it used to be…That history is gone. Kliptown, Saturday, you wouldn't be able to move. You'd be prepared. But you know, it would be nice, because sometimes you want to be amongst people, you know, you want to be in the crowd of people. So we don't have that.

Ntokozo Dube (2008b) points out that many of the old shops were moved away from Kliptown's traditional commercial district, and agrees that the square is not the same bustling, vibrant space it once was. He tells me that he would like to make a video about Kliptown that includes the shops in the vicinity of Union Avenue, because he believes that soon most of them will be gone, permanently changing the character of this section of Kliptown.

Noble (2009) argues that, besides its historical importance for Kliptown, Union Road was one of the few tangible remnants connected to the 1955 gathering. This should have been a strong reason for preserving the street's buildings and character; and yet, as Noble (2009: 15) points out, the winning design for Walter Sisulu Square's redevelopment "was the only competition entry to have proposed a systematic destruction of Union Street". Noble's interviews with shopkeepers in Kliptown suggest a strong sense of displacement and bitterness as a result of the forced move to the Old Klipspruit Road to the east, although he concedes that most of the shopkeepers were fairly compensated for the move. Nonetheless, in the reorganisation of Kliptown's commercial district, something central to Kliptown's

character and history has been lost, in a manner which runs directly contrary to the 1999 Heritage Resource Act's stipulations about the treatment and conservation of built heritage sites: "Heritage resources have lasting value in their own right and provide evidence of the origins of South African society and as they are finite, non-renewable and irreplaceable they must be carefully managed to ensure their survival" (SAHRA 1999, Section 5[1a]).

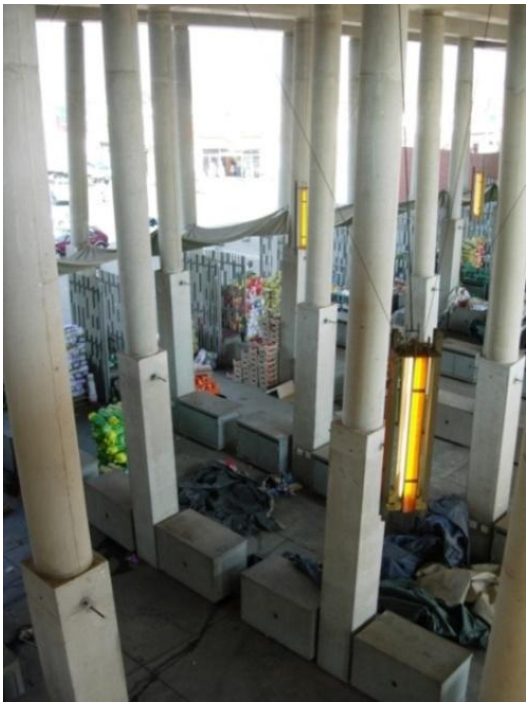


Figure 46 (2008): Many of the designated market spaces stand empty. This picture was taken on a Saturday morning, normally one of the busiest times of the week for traders in the area. Photo: Naomi Roux.

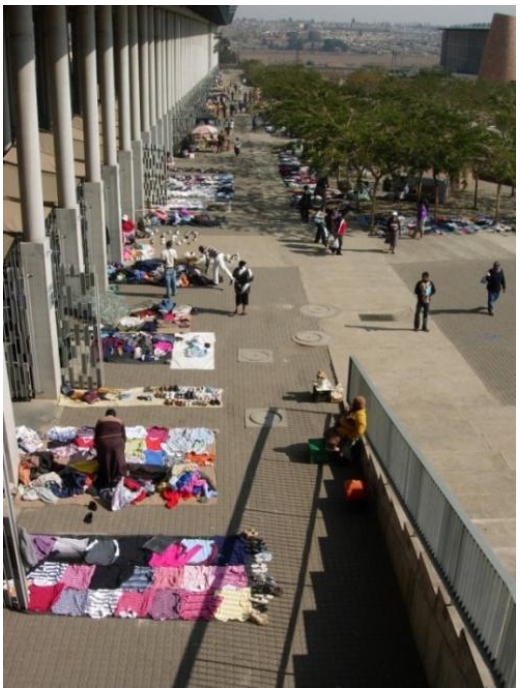


Figure 47 (2008): The marketplace spills into the square and, to the other side of the pillars, onto Union Avenue. Photo: Naomi Roux.

1.4 Issues of ownership and the JDA commemorations

While there are some exceptions, the overwhelming majority of interviewees express feelings that the new heritage developments are not 'for the people of Kliptown', but something built and used by outsiders. Agnes Miyeni (2009), for example, says she does not often go to WSSD: "We don't use it that much. Because we don't know how to use the place, you know. We thought, maybe there'll be a centre for those matriculants who have finished school just to go and study, or maybe like a library, you know?" She explains that the square is not a particularly useful space for the community, "because most of the time there are tourists from other countries coming there to look, and then from there they come and cross the railway line to watch us. See us, how we are doing. Then they leave."

Bob Nameng has struggled to gain access to the community centre in the square, and has also been stopped from using the supposedly public square as a rehearsal space for the young people at SKY who are involved in the foundation's drama and dance programmes. He connects this lack of accessibility directly to the JDA's lack of "respect" for the community – and, as a means of resistance, invokes Kliptown's intangible but powerful heritage of independence:

> We don't have access. I mean it's huge amounts of money if you want to use the hall. And for me, it's also showing disrespect for people in the community, if you come from nowhere and then you come and decide for us. Of course people come and take advantage when they see the community being dilapidated, thinking that even the minds of the people are dilapidated, you know?… But it's okay, because at the end of the day I believe they are also giving us courage to stand on our own, start doing things for ourselves, you know. And stop depending, because it's also a boring culture to always want to receive and people to decide for you what's best for you. (Nameng 2008)

Later in the same interview, I ask him to what extent the square is used as a communal space by people in Kliptown. "It's theirs, it's not ours. It's theirs," is his answer. This is reiterated by Duiker (2008), who explains that Kliptown residents feel animosity towards the square "because people can't really identify with the square… It was something built by them to please them, you know. Not something built by us to please ourselves." From comments such as these, it is apparent that one of the major failings of the JDA commemorative project in Kliptown has been an inability to take the community's strong sense of autonomy into account. According to the JDA (2009), a survey was taken of the community's needs before planning for the area's redevelopment began, but from the results of the developments it appears that few of these recommendations were taken into account. It is probable that many of the disastrous consequences of the project's implementation could have been avoided if more thorough consultation had taken place, and if the consultations that did happen were effectively incorporated into the project.

1.5 The Mandela legacy and the Freedom Charter

An interesting aspect of residents' relationship with WSSD and the connected developments has been the links between Nelson Mandela – or more specifically the legacy of the Mandela administration – and Kliptown. This link is not a new development; in the interviews collected by KOTT before planning for WSSD had begun, Lettie Zacarias (2000) says,

> It's so unfair to us, the people of Kliptown who have been here since long ago to still suffer like this today, and it's a free country. I don't know what I must say about Kliptown. Mandela really forgot about Kliptown… He built for these people who came in yesterday. But we old people of Kliptown still don't have real houses.

In many interviews, people mention the fact that in the 1950's, Nelson Mandela regularly used to hide in Kliptown. The Lollan house, for example, is still popularly known as "the Mandela hideout". As a

result, there seems to be a sense that Mandela – specifically, as opposed to the ANC in general – owes something to Kliptown based on his personal connection with the place.

Activism in Kliptown, particularly as far as housing is concerned, often uses Mandela's links to Kliptown as a platform. For example, at Mandela's 90th birthday celebrations in July 2008, protestors handed a memorandum to a representative from the Nelson Mandela Foundation (Burgis 2008; Tshabalala 2008), and printed A4 posters were pasted to some of the pillars in the square reading "Nelson Mandela – we demand houses for all in Kliptown", although they were dwarfed by the enormous banners draped over the concrete bollards at the eastern end of the square. One way of interpreting these protests is as an act of questioning the legacy of the Mandela administration; a means of stating that the idealistic promises, which so strongly characterised the first democratic administration and which were firmly rooted in the Freedom Charter's vision, have still not been met in Kliptown.



Figure 48 (2008): Banners in celebration of Mandela's 90th birthday, July 2008. Photo: Naomi Roux.



Figure 49 (2008): "Nelson Mandela we demand houses for all in Kliptown". Photo: Naomi Roux.

1.6 Heritage and development in Kliptown

In the Soweto Tourism Office in Walter Sisulu Square, one can pick up a JDA-published booklet entitled "The Freedom Charter 50th Anniversary Celebrations, 1955 – 2005". The front cover depicts blue-clad workers engaged in the construction of one of the buildings along the square's southern edge overlooking Union Road. Superimposed on the image are the subtitles "Kliptown rises from squalor of neglect" and "History in the making". An analysis of this text provides some insight into the concept of development which the JDA had in mind for Kliptown.

The first story is titled "The Freedom Charter – a guiding light for the future" and provides a brief background to the CoP and the Freedom Charter. The only mention of the site itself is as "a football pitch in Kliptown, Soweto" where the congress was held. Over the page, "History in the making" describes the events of the congress in more detail: "The true spirit of Ubuntu was awash… As the first clause of the Freedom Charter says, the People shall Govern [sic], in the knowledge that this would one day become a reality" (ibid: 5). There is also a section titled "Sisulu's legacy honoured", which fails to say much about Sisulu other than that he "had a secret office in Kliptown" and "had to watch most of the proceedings from a nearby rooftop" (ibid).

After a section on memories of people who were present at the CoP, the booklet turns to the JDA plans for Kliptown: "Kliptown rises from squalor of neglect". The stated aims of the JDA project in Kliptown are: "to create a recreational public open space system along the Klipspruit River; stimulate economic growth; job creation and empowerment; and maximize the heritage, tourism and educational significance of the Walter Sisulu Square of Dedication" (ibid: 8). "The progress made thus far," the article continues, "includes 1 846 short term jobs created, 54 sustainable jobs, 139 small business contracts awarded, 70 people trained, 100 small businesses trained and new businesses located in the area. Black economic empowerment spend of 56% was achieved." The article also claims that "An electricity infrastructure upgrade is in progress" (ibid: 9).

The creation of a "green space" along the Klipspruit has not materialised, as is evident from Gene Duiker's tour past the river, and nor has the promised "electricity infrastructure". Other than the acknowledgement of the river as a potential "public open space system", all the other goals of the JDA development are strictly located within the paradigm of economic growth, where successful development is measurable in jobs created and businesses launched. This is not to dismiss the importance of these interventions, or the need for them in Kliptown. However, there are two specifically worrying aspects of this approach which are relevant to this discussion: the lack of acknowledgment of any aspects of Kliptown's existence other than economic lack, and the reliance on tourism to fulfil these needs.

The conception of the African city – in particular Johannesburg – as nothing more than a "site of lack", or a problem to be solved, appears to have strongly informed the JDA's project in Kliptown. Mbembe and Nuttall (2004: 353) argue that

> Ways of seeing and reading contemporary African cities are still dominated by the metanarrative of urbanization, modernization, and crisis. As is well known, the roots of this metanarrative are to be located in the tenets of nineteenth-century urban reformism, when the problems facing cities were conceived of as diseases of the social body… As a consequence, most studies of Johannesburg have read the city as nothing but the spatial embodiment of unequal economic relations and coercive and segregationsist policies. The city's fabric has been described as a structure in need of radical transformation and only rarely as an expression of an aesthetic vision.

It is true that, when the project was conceived, there *were* major issues to be addressed in terms of services and living conditions. At the same time, though, as Bremner (2004b: 528) argues,

> StudioMAS, which won the competition, saw the township as a not-yet-urban, incoherent, dependent periphery. Marked by poverty and lack of resources, its space is impoverished and urban life is experienced as no more than a burden of constraints… Dramatic and exaggerated forms created the image of a possible new city, a new morphology for urban life.

Within this ideological framework there is no space for the many aspects of Kliptown's heritage and social fabric which were, and still are, very much alive and vibrant. Bremner (2004b: 528-9) goes on to argue that the effect of the StudioMAS design has been that "Kliptown's motley, creolized community of outsiders and their meandering narratives have, yet again, been displaced. They have been rendered invisible by an architecture anxious to redeem a space that has been shaped historically by its outsider status, its dislocation, its fluidity."

It is also worrying – as Bremner points out in the same text, as does Kuljian (2007) – that tourism has been left to do so much of the work of development in Kliptown. This is a particularly bitter pill to swallow in a space where a strong component of local narrative is that of independence, autonomy and self-reliance. Effectively, people in Kliptown are being asked to wait for visitors to bring in money in order to create a livelihood, rather than opportunities being created for genuinely sustainable and self-reliant means of empowerment.

2 Commemoration from within the Kliptown community

2.1 The Kliptown Our Town exhibition

When the JDA developments in Kliptown began, an exhibition about Kliptown's history already existed in the community centre in Beacon Road. This exhibition was spearheaded by the Kliptown Our Town Trust, with funding from the French development agency Centre for Research Information Action in Africa (CRIAA). Much of the museum's content was photographic, and included items collected from residents: paraffin lamps, a Chinese hat, an old bucket toilet. Intensive research into Kliptown's past was done for the exhibition, including an extensive collection of oral histories. Gene Duiker (2008) says that one of the reasons that the KOTT decided to set up the exhibition was because, prior to the JDA developments, visitors would come to see Freedom Square but find "just an open space".

The Kliptown Our Town exhibition was designed to fill a perceived need for commemoration of Kliptown's past which was identified by members of the community itself. Besides material related to

the Freedom Charter, it also contained extensive exhibits related to events such as forced removals, the 1952 Albertynsville tornado, and everyday life in Kliptown (Mdlalose 2000). According to Duiker (2008a), the exhibition was envisaged as a temporary project that would remain in place for a few months. However, it received an overwhelmingly positive response, including an invitation to exhibit at the Old Johannesburg Fort as part of the New History Project, and remained in place until April 2008. The exhibition used an interactive approach similar to the District Six Museum in Cape Town, collecting photographs and memorabilia from residents and ex-residents of Kliptown and inviting visitors to "share their views, their experience and knowledge about the life in Kliptown, their aspirations and their needs" (KOTT 2001). A pamphlet produced to market the museum (2000) proclaims, "In the year 2000, Kliptown's renaissance has started. It's Kliptown's time now!"

The exhibition was closed down in early 2008 after the community centre was broken into, its fittings stripped and some of the exhibits vandalised. Today, the building is dark and empty, with gaping holes in the walls where the wires were ripped out. Broken glass and shreds of cardboard and posters litter the floor. The few remaining photographs and objects are stacked in dusty cardboard boxes in Duiker's now seldom-used office in an adjoining building.



Figure 50 (c. 2001): Gene Duiker and Sidney 'Stompie' Antonio. Some of the exhibits from the KOTT exhibition are visible in the background. Photo: courtesy KOTT.

According to Peters (2008), who was involved in the design of the Kliptown Open-Air Museum under the auspices of Ochre Media, the planning for the Open-Air Museum did not effectively draw on the extensive research which had already been done by KOTT. Jane Mongatane (2009) agrees, saying that one of the problems she sees with the Open-Air Museum is that there is no audiovisual or oral history content from Kliptown residents, so people cannot recognise themselves or the place they call home in the museum. Since the destruction of the KOTT exhibition, the Open-Air Museum is the only readily accessible public version of Kliptown's past.

It needs to be noted, however, that the destruction of the KOTT community museum is indicative of a certain level of contestation over Kliptown's heritage and its representation within the Kliptown community itself. It is possible that the stripping of the exhibition space had purely economic motives; however, Duiker's suspicion is that someone in the community "sent those guys to come and actually mess up the place" (2008). He also has his suspicions about the motives for the destruction of Sans Souci cinema; at the time when the ruins were finally razed to the ground, plans were afoot to redevelop the cinema, and to use the remaining wall for outdoor screenings, thus turning the site back into a communal, social space. At present there is no way to really know what happened to these sites, or whether Duiker's suspicions are correct. However, the fact that these suspicions exist at all suggests that any approach to Kliptown's heritage and its commemoration are likely to be contested – even violently or destructively so – and any future heritage projects in Kliptown would need to take cognisance of local contestations over the ownership of history.

2.2 Kliptown Stories

The book *Kliptown Stories* (Massingham and Charles 2008) is a fine example of the power of story-telling and counter-narrative as means of commemoration. *Kliptown Stories* is a collection of short stories, descriptive writing, art and poetry about Kliptown's past. It includes recordings of Massingham performing some of the texts in the book; the combination of performance, written text and artwork, according to the authors, was an approach which opened the possibility of a multitude of different means of storytelling, rather than confining the narrative to one medium (Massingham 2008). According to Charles (2008), the performance aspect of the work, as well as the onomatopoeic quality of Massingham's writing, are akin to the use of improvisation in jazz, signifying an attempt to move away from a static, one-dimensional means of storytelling, artmaking and memorialisation. In addition,

Massingham uses a free-flowing mix of languages, reflecting Kliptown's multicultural character as well as indicating the presence of many voices"and layers of history in these stories. The artwork adds a visual element to the text, creating a complex, multi-faceted poetic exploration of memory and different kinds of narrative.

This is perhaps the most important aspect of *Kliptown Stories*: its deliberate avoidance of conventional narrative modes when talking about Kliptown's past. The Freedom Charter and the Congress of the People are hardly mentioned in the text, besides obliquely in a highly satirical description of the last few days before the unveiling of the new monument in 2005. Rather, Massingham's poems and narratives are often intensely personal. The book opens with the poem "Kliptown" (Massingham and Charles 2008: 16), which deals with Kliptown's many connections to the anti-apartheid struggle: its mixed cultures, the famous names connected with Kliptown and its status as a freehold area. It ends with a sardonic description of the building of the new heritage site:

> You are up for an extreme makeover
> Afro fashion designers
> Imported image consultants
> Fire-proofing hair extensions
> Pedicuring the stench of night soil
> Manicuring the concrete lawns
> Liposucking chicken-feet mafutha
> Silicone-pumped khekhe
> Wrinkle-smoothening Botox
> Into a bo-blink-onder-stink
> Courtesy of duplicitous peddlers
> Hai suka, Manyeo

Using this as the opening piece frames the book within the broader context of Kliptown's history and what this history means to the authors. However, for the most part the narratives which follow are somewhat more personal and rooted in Massingham's own memory. Massingham has been careful to avoid romanticising Kliptown, or – as Charles (2008) phrases it – "creating something that was just 'colourful'".

Many of the narratives interrogate a culture of violence and masculinity, for example *Ambie*, about a "bully par excellence" who "had a penchant for creating havoc throughout the township" (Massingham and Charles 2008: 19). *Hola President Straat* opens with a jaunty, slightly nostalgic reminiscence about

the street and the house in Kliptown where Massingham grew up: “I was born, bred and thickly buttered in Kliptown… Formless sprawling rows of dronk, poky houses allowed black, white, coloured and Indian to live happily cheek-by-jowl… Prezzies, as we called it, always bustled with activity” (ibid: 45). The narrative takes a dark and painful turn, however, when Massingham describes the brutal physical abuse he, his siblings and his mother faced at the hands of his father. These narratives of nostalgia and humour are permitted to co-exist with those of trauma and violence.

Shortly after the launch of the book, Massingham tells me that writing this particular piece was, in many ways, an intensely personal and cathartic experience (Massingham 2008). At the same time, there are echoes of the physical and psychological trauma inflicted by the brutal repressive system of apartheid, invoked by Massingham’s wry and subtle exploration of the mechanisms of trauma and loss. The closing line of the story, the only reference to Massingham’s family’s relocation to Eldorado Park, is a stark reminder of these links between the personal and the political: “The day the lorry came to take our belongings to our new house in Eldos, like Bloke Modisane, something in me died” (Massingham and Charles 2008: 56).

This co-existence of multiple and contradictory narratives is visible throughout the book. *Bra Ike’s Cabin,* for example, opens in a similar vein to *Hola President Straat,* with an upbeat description of the popular shebeen in Beacon Road (ibid: 24):

> Bra Ike’s caters for people varied in disposition, rank, and condition: policemen, court orderlies, lawyers, labourers, lumpen proletariats, pseudo-intellectuals, moegoes and clevas. Ek sê vir jou, Ike’s place is a unique chaff-pozzie…On weekends, Bra Ike’s other half, DJ Pam, has the patrons bump-jiving, monkey-jiving, cheek-to-cheeking, spacing, get-downing, sigiza-ing till Koos comes. A week ago she had patrons stuck like superglue on the dance floor, hypnotized… She nearly brought the house down to ground zero... People cried real tears, and remembered foes, acquaintances and intimates gone up yonder.

Massingham undercuts his humourous observations and colourful description of Bra Ike’s clientele with a section on what he calls “the crib-snatchers” (ibid: 25): “A gaggle of stern-faced, leather-clad majimbos” with “rolled-up building plans under every armpit”. A group of young girls from the nearby Mandela Square squatter camp arrive: “The temperature in the joint soared, and they had all the men staring. Thabang called one, but she gave him a ‘you are not my type’ look. Ja, vele they weren’t; these kids were supposed to be at their grade eight desks.” The young women are there to flirt with the “crib-snatchers”, who Massingham wryly tells us were “JDA-affirmed sub-contractors invading Kliptown, like

the 3000 delegates did on 24-26 June to launch the Freedom Charter" (ibid: 27). "We could only imagine what was going to happen to these two generations when they left the place – maybe without gohlopos. Of every ten people in Kliptown, four are infected with that insidious disease that has earned the sobriquets 'Z3', 'three bob', 'three steps to heaven, an even 'three numbers'… You don't have to be cleva, to know Bra Ike's loses nommers" (ibid: 26).

Massingham walks a fine line between writing in a way that presents Kliptown as a space only of lack and hardship, and writing the difficult or painful elements of life and history in Kliptown out of the narrative altogether. Much of this is achieved through humour, a creative use of multiple languages and sound, and close and sincere observation. In the same paragraph, he invites to consider the AIDS statistics in Kliptown and the kind of conditions that encourage young women to use their bodies for survival, and simultaneously invites us to laugh at the caricatured JDA sub-contractors and their "ComBEE airbags".

In the second chapter, it was suggested that certain local narratives in Kliptown have effectively been written out of the "official" story of Kliptown, or dismissed as irrelevant or tangential to the nation-building mythology around the Freedom Charter. Similarly, the third chapter suggested some of the ways in which published mappings of Kliptown erase entire neighbourhoods as "informal settlements", representing them as ahistorical, asocial spaces. In *Kliptown Stories*, as in the Kliptown Our Town exhibition, these histories and narratives find some room for reinscription in Kliptown's imaginings of itself and the way it is represented. Charles (2008) points out that, in *Kliptown Stories*, "the displacement of that power or that cultural reference is there, so if anything, as we are democratising people's realities, we are also democratising the ways those realities are represented." He suggests that the official celebrations of the Freedom Charter in Kliptown pay lip-service to democracy's ideals, while in reality those ideals have not been grappled with at all in Kliptown – and in fact have often been undermined by the JDA's approach to development and heritage in the area.

In the story *Emvakwe Sporo*, Massingham acknowledges some of the rich history and dynamic social fabric of this dense space across the railway line, which as argued is conceived on maps as an essentially blank or invisible space:

> Vaka Sporo, Mvakwe, or the Ghetto – as Emvakwe Sporo is amorously called by its inhabitants – is the sole survivor of the Draconian slum laws of yesteryear. Other sections of Kliptown just

> weren't Y2K compliant… Only the struggle hero, Mvakwe said "Staan vas! Haikona lo hamba!"… Mvakwe's battered streets, lined with grimy, old tipsy houses, is history staring us nine-nine… no, triple nine in the face. With no ablutions or electricity, this smallanyana section of Kliptown is characterized by high unemployment, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, infant mortality, pollution density and HIV. (Massingham and Charles 2008: 31)

Massingham writes of some of the well-known inhabitants of Emvakwe Sporo – Bob Nameng and Eva Mokoka among them – as well as soccer teams, a jazz club, and local landmarks such as shops and shebeens. In this sense Massingham's writing and Charles' artwork function as means of "democratising" the representation of history and of space, of resisting the JDA's sidelining of stories that do not fit the heroic Freedom Charter narrative. In the afterword to the book (ibid: 125-6), Gene Duiker concludes:

> If we tap into the reservoir of memory, and tell our stories, there will be no need to sift through stark diatribes like the magistrate's one, except perhaps to reflect on how twisted the truth became. We do not live in any of these documents, but we have overcome them! And so our writers, blue or pink, must not *didiza* and put pen to paper before the BEE elitists are allowed to affirm their actions. Rather than have our history and heritage presented to us, it must be born of the people… These are our stories, and we have written them. We must write more.

2.3 Conclusion

Throughout this report, it has been argued that local narratives about Kliptown's history are much more complex than the JDA heritage developments allow for, and that it is necessary to find means of reinscribing Kliptown's intangible heritage into public representations of its history. Some possible ways of achieving this have been suggested through community initiatives in Kliptown such as *Kliptown Stories* and the work of the Kliptown Our Town Trust. Oral history emerges as a powerful tool for commemoration, particularly of heritage which is intangible. Bob Nameng (2008), for example, suggests that:

> the life that we live nowadays, is not the same as the life that our parents lived before, whereby they used to sit around and listen to older people or elders telling stories… But ja, I'm still there you know, as a young person trying to inherit from elders, and I visit them I listen to them so that I can always impart what I get from them to the children. Because we really have to sustain those things.

Nameng also says that he tries to instil “the legacy of sharing” in the children and young people with whom he works, in an attempt to regain some of the spirit of community and mutual support that existed in Kliptown when he was growing up. This conception of passing on intangible heritage in the form of oral history, like *Kliptown Stories* and the KOTT exhibition, suggest that heritage can be created and preserved in a plethora of ways besides the monumental and the spectacular.

Clearly, there are numerous problems with the way Kliptown’s heritage has been handled by the JDA, and criticisms of the developments in Walter Sisulu Square and around have been relatively well-documented. At the same time, many interviews and informal conversations with people in Kliptown reveal that Charles’ (2008) conception of social and economic marginalisation as the worst form of “institutionalised violence” is not far off the mark; the sense of being forgotten and ignored by the state cuts deep, and finding ways to address this simmering and deep-seated anger and disillusionment with the state will be no easy task. The JDA heritage precinct in Kliptown is there to stay for the foreseeable future. The challenge now is to tackle the enormous challenges that remain in Kliptown, in terms of service delivery and infrastructure as well as finding more inclusive, democratised and community-friendly means of approaching and commemorating the area’s heritage - in all its hybrid and contested complexity.

Conclusion

One of the last interviews that I conduct in Kliptown happens somewhat unexpectedly, in the closing weeks of the project. In late January 2009, I spend a Friday morning at Gene Duiker's home, speaking with his wife Cecelia over a strong cup of tea. I start with the usual introductory questions I have used in my other interviews, expecting to take some time to get to the heart of what we are here to talk about. This proves unnecessary, as Cecelia quickly takes charge of the discussion. She has a litany of heartfelt complaints about what life in Kliptown has become in the 42 years that she has lived here, what it means to her to still be there, and how those who have moved out of Kliptown look down on those, like her, who remain.

Cecelia was born in Kliptown, in the section known as Firstgate, in 1954. When she was 21, she moved to the house where she and Gene still live today. Her life has not been an easy one; she has lost several of her close family members, and the trauma of this loss is still evident. ""Al daai harde stampe"[14], she says, "Al daai dra ek op my rug"[15]. She twists a scrap of tissue paper in her hands as she speaks. "Jou hart bloei,"[16] she tells me, and I am not sure if she is talking about her bereavement, or about what it means to her to live in Kliptown. I think it is both.

At one point I ask her how she feels about the new developments up the road from her house, and she waves a dismissive hand. "Vir my is dit 'n wit olifant," she says. "Want ek sien niks wat daar aangaan nie. Mense gebruik dit nie."[17] She is not all that interested in talking about Walter Sisulu Square or the Freedom Charter, though, and instead asks me to come through to the sitting room to see her family photographs. A framed print of her late son has pride of place opposite the sofa. She shows me pictures of his children, her grandchildren; a ten-year-old girl with a wide grin and hair in a starburst of tiny plaits, and a chubby two-year-old boy.

In the months that I have been researching Kliptown's history and talking to people in the area, sifting through old photographs and council documents and oral histories, I have heard the same complaints and the same anger, over and over again. The stories, generally, are the same, whether I am in a formal interview in somebody's office with a Dictaphone in my hand, in the middle of a muddy street on the wrong side of the railway tracks, or in a shebeen quietly eavesdropping on a group of men and their war

[14] Afrikaans: "All of those hard knocks"
[15] Afrikaans: "All of that, I carry on my back"
[16] Afrikaans: "Your heart bleeds"
[17] Afrikaans: "For me, it's a white elephant. Because I don't see anything going on there. People don't use it."

stories. Our houses are falling apart. There is no electricity. There is no library. There is no nearby school. The square is a white elephant, it has brought us nothing that we expected. We were promised houses, electricity, sanitation, none of which has materialised; we are sick and tired of the government and its promises, of absent councillors, of designers and consultants, we will not be voting in the next elections because what on earth is the point?

For the first time, however, in Cecelia's kitchen on this Friday morning, something falls into place for me. Perhaps because she has opened up to me so readily about some of her most private emotions, rather than simply railing in rhetorical anger about the JDA and the government, I feel – although I only realise this later – that I finally see what it does to someone when the state of which you are supposed to be a citizen treats you as if you are invisible. By the time I leave her home, a realisation which up until now has been largely intellectual has settled uncomfortably in my gut: the problems with government and development and housing and heritage which I have encountered in Kliptown are not just academic. They are sources of real and keenly felt trauma, displacement and shame. "Nou hoe moet jy voel, Naomi?"[18] Cecelia asks me, her face strained. I have no idea what to say, but a minute later, she answers her own question for me: "Jy voel verbitter, jy voel nie om te gaan vote nie... Kliptown is verlore, hy is vergeet."[19]

After an hour and a half's intense conversation, she waves a hand at my tape recorder and laughs. "Dis my storie," she says. "Ek praat nou nie weer verder nie. Dis nou rerig 'end of story'."[20] When I leave she gives me a pomegranate and a warm hug.

This conversation presents me with a particularly honest and unvarnished picture of the gulf between what has happened in the JDA heritage precinct, and what is happening in the rest of Kliptown. It is simply not enough to build a massive monumentalised heritage space and wait for flocks of tourists to kickstart the area's economy, particularly when that monument has ridden roughshod over complex and irreplaceable aspects of Kliptown's character and history. Economic development in Kliptown *is* sorely needed, and in contemporary South Africa it is often the case that development, heritage and tourism go hand-in-hand. This is not necessarily a problem in itself. However, the approach to heritage and development that has been adopted in Kliptown has been deeply misguided on many levels. Local heritages have not been taken into account, effectively writing large tracts of Kliptown's history out of

[18] Afrikaans: "Now how must one feel, Naomi?"
[19] Afrikaans: "You feel embittered, you don't feel like going to vote. Kliptown is lost, it's been forgotten."
[20] Afrikaans: "That's the story. I'm finished speaking now. This is now really 'end of story'."

its own official story. It has been conceived of as a space only of lack, with no acknowledgement of the creative and courageous means which people have found to survive, and grow up, and raise their families here, or of the complex histories created by a community which has always occupied a defiant position outside of all kinds of imagined and legislated official borders.

In this research report I have tried to raise some of the questions which will need to be considered in future heritage projects in Kliptown, in the hope that a more sensitive and informed approach could begin to restore a sense of dignity and visibility to a unique but severely marginalised community. One of these questions, and one which has been a central theme of this project, is that of how one might go about walking the line between various kinds of heritage and memory, from the personal to the national. I have suggested that the official rewriting of history so that it fits in with the needs of nation-building and its attendant mythologies – as has happened in Kliptown – is a dangerous and disrespectful approach. This is particularly the case where local conceptions of heritage are disregarded. In Kliptown, for example, people tend to understand the area's heritage in terms that are intangible, such as concepts of community, sharing, and resilience. These kinds of heritage – often preserved informally in the form of oral history – deserve as much value and respect as heritage connected to physical sites and buildings, and the best means of preserving it is not necessarily to cast it in concrete. Rather, there is a need to draw on local traditions of memory, and on community-led initiatives such as the work of the Kliptown Our Town Trust.

Economic development and issues around housing and delivery have not been the focus of this research. However, they are issues which it is impossible to avoid when talking about Kliptown, and any future heritage project in the area will have to take cognisance of them. It is difficult to make a case for pouring resources into heritage projects when, firstly, the community has lost faith in the government's ability to preserve that area's heritage in a way that is accessible, meaningful and over which people in the community feel some measure of ownership; and secondly, in a space where the most urgent needs are for basic services such as adequate housing, electricity, and sanitation. People's rage against the state is strongly rooted in the sense that they have been forgotten to the point of being rendered completely voiceless. I would argue that, before the community can be expected to give support to any further state-sponsored heritage projects in Kliptown, this deep-seated anger and sense of being without recourse will have to be addressed: certainly no easy task, but a necessary and urgent one.

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