

Coloureds – still betwixt and between?¹

Tracing the master-narrative of the marginal Coloured in South Africa, pre- and post-apartheid

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Fazlin, 22, is looking at the latest music video of American singer Rihanna. Fazlin sees Rihanna as Coloured, where others might perceive her as Black. Rihanna is beautiful, with straightened hair, expensive clothes, living in an expensive house and driving an expensive car. In the video, she resolutely throws out her boyfriend, because she found out he was cheating, and sets his designer clothes on fire with a nonchalant attitude. Coloured youth like Fazlin, in the township Manenberg, listen to American R'n'B music and rap, and not South African Kwaito music, as they do on the other side of the railway line in the Black townships of Gugulethu and Nyanga. Fazlin watches 7de laan, a locally produced TV show, but apart from that, it is mostly American TV-shows and talk shows, and Oprah is her favourite: "She was even raped when she was 16 and she was poor, look "mos" where she is now! She is so rich and successful".

This paper builds on 10 months of ethnographic fieldwork in the Coloured township of Manenberg, between 2005-2009², as well as continued contact through social media with key informants.

"During apartheid we weren't White enough – today we're not even Black enough"

According to Collins English Dictionary "Betwixt and between" denotes being "in an intermediate, indecisive, or middle position". In 1909, Arnold van Gennep published his book *Rites de Passage*, in which he outlined what he considered to be the three main stages of any cultural rite of passage ritual: separation, transition, and reincorporation. The important part of the transition stage is *liminality*, where a person is trying to exit one stage of being (status, respect, responsibility) and enter into another, but at the moment stuck between the two, and therefore defined by neither of them. Liminality is a state of tension, where a person is not quite the one nor the other, and must face obstacles or time constraints in order to be able to come out the other side re-defined (Van

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Genep 1909). Victor Turner later used the phrase “Betwixt and Between” to express the liminal state (Turner 1967). In a different context, Turner wrote, that:

“In moving from experience of social life to conceptualization and intellectual history, I follow the path of anthropologists almost everywhere. Although we take theories into the field with us, these become relevant only if and when they illuminate social reality.” (1974).

I follow his lead in this paper, and argue, that this analytical concept taken from ritual theory can be useful in addressing the subjectivities of a generation of young Coloured people in the area of Cape Flats, South Africa, today. In my use of the concept, the liminal, betwixt and between-status is both referring to a structural position in the societal order, and to a ”master narrative” (Bruner 1986), depicting Coloured people in South Africa as in-between and liminal. In this narrative the in-between status is conceived of as unfortunate and problematic, infinitely stereotyping the Coloured community as ”confused” and lacking history and roots. In this paper, I scrutinize what the narrative of the liminal, betwixt and between Coloured person can tell us about the state of the post-apartheid generation in a Coloured township in contemporary South Africa, why the majority of young Coloureds in Manenberg do not engage in politics, and why those who *did* vote in the local government elections the 18th of May 2011 in Western Cape voted mainly for the opposition party, Democratic Alliance, resulting in posts on Facebook from Black friends and acquaintances stating that ”...the Coloured vote sold us out again”, an obvious reference to South Africa’s first democratic elections on 27th of April 1994, when most Coloured votes in the Western Cape were not cast in favor of the African National Congress, but in favor of the former apartheid party, National Party, who had oppressed them and denied them their status and rights as citizens (Norval 1996:191, Adhikari 2005: xii). To be able to discuss whether the Coloureds are *still* betwixt and between, I must first establish that they *were*, at an earlier point in time, betwixt and between. It is difficult to speak of a now and a then without the *then* referring to apartheid and the *now* referring to 1994 onwards, but I will look at the trajectory, and discuss the continuities and transformations across and beyond that important shift in the country in the early 90s, which did not necessarily have dramatic impact on the narrative that I trace here.

Blacks, in the politically correct South African terminology, Black Africans, account for 79% of South Africa’s population and is the overwhelming majority, while Coloured only account for just 9

percent of the population nationwide. Whites account for approximately the same percentage as the Coloured group, with 9.6 percent, and Indians constitute the remainder 2.4 percent. (2001 National Census). The categories which the apartheid government formally divided the country's population into in by the "Population Registration Act" (Act 30 of 1950), were "White", "Black" (or indigenous), "Coloured" and a fourth official category, "Indians", originally a subset of the Coloured category. These categories still frame and form peoples opinions of themselves, their group association and relation to others, and are still in official use.³

The demographic structure of the Western Cape Province, where Cape Town is situated, is markedly different than the rest of South Africa, as Coloureds make up the majority by 53 (ibid.). The Coloured township of Manenberg, today housing approximately 80.000 people, was erected between 1966 and 1970 as part of the apartheid grand plan of separating the "races", each with his own kind. It is situated near Cape Town in the Cape Flats, comprised of Black and Coloured townships, where people of colour were forcefully removed and today counting 2 to 3 million people. The area, dry and windswept, is the opposite of the attractive areas near the centre, the coast and the lush green suburbs, the former "White areas". With its rows of semi-detached houses and two- and three-story "council flats", large identical blocks with "wendyhouses" plastered to the worn down facades, Manenberg does not make a very picturesque or welcoming impression. There was little planning for the development of local business and services, and to this day the area remains largely residential. Here, close to the tip of Africa, not much gives you an impression of being in Africa: no women in the street roasting "smileys" (goats heads), none of the traditional clothing seen in the Black townships of Guglethu and Nyanga across the road, and separated by the railwayline from Manenberg. The streets are filled with people, dressed in Levis, Billabong, Quicksilver – the "street style" which can be found among urban youth in different parts of the world. There are women with straightened hair (something that is done religiously), Muslim men with long beards (the salig), and elderly women hanging clothes to dry in the sun, or just hanging over the fence or at the staircase, watching, commenting, chatting with passers-by, while some men play dice on the sidewalk.

³ According to 'Statistics South Africa', they "...continue to classify people by population group, in order to monitor progress in moving away from the apartheid-based discrimination of the past. However membership of a population group is now based on self-perception and self-classification, not on a legal definition." (www.stats.sa).

Today, Coloureds in Manenberg see the ANC's "affirmative action" in the form of Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), as mainly taking the Black population into consideration (Makgetla 2007:64-84, Salo, 2003:354).). BEE was of several of my informants in Manenberg highlighted as the main reason why there is no work for them. "Before we weren't White enough, now we're not Black enough ". A young man, who is a member of the Americans gang, put it in these words "... if you do not have a Xhosa surname or your skin is not Black enough, then you will never get a job". The majority in the Coloured community feared for their situation under Black majority-rule, that they would lose their middle position in the racial hierarchy of apartheid South Africa, as they enjoyed privileges vis à vis the Black population concerning housing, access to education and priority to jobs. The apartheid government believed the Coloured people to be weaker than Black Africans in physical strength and thus not able to compete with them on equal terms (Norval 1996:191; Salo, 2003:364). Through the "Coloured Labor Preference Policy" they were given precedence to jobs throughout the Western Cape. After 1994 and the transition from apartheid rule to democracy, the African and Coloured group have generally become poorer relative to the White and Indian groups (Western Cape Provincial Treasury 2005:10-11), and internally within the Coloured group, the difference between rich and poor has increased (Ibid). Before the Coloured people were denied the status of citizens of South Africa, today they are officially and legally citizens of the nation, but the *sense* of citizenship seems to be absent in Manenberg: the "Black party", ANC, holds the political power, and Whites are still largely holding onto the economic power (Steyn 2001:38). The young generation in Manenberg has never felt part of "The Struggle" for freedom from apartheid, because they were too young at the time. Today they feel relegated to the margins of post-apartheid. Even though apartheid has now been dismantled, the ways of thinking about race and purity that this system reinforced and developed in people has far from dismantled.

The narrative of the Coloured person

"Whatever else race is – it is a set of classificatory social constructs of considerable historical and contemporary significance." (Jenkins 1997:49).

The Dutch, who came to Africa's southern tip and settled from 1652 onwards, had children with the indigenous Khoisan hunter-gatherer peoples who inhabited the area at their arrival. The settlers imported slaves from Malaysia, Indonesia and other Central African countries, and all the children

who were the outcome of these liaisons, and who could therefore not be defined unambiguously as "White" or "Black" were designated "Coloured" during apartheid. (Adhikari 2005:2). The category Coloured was already in use before the apartheid government came into power in 1948, but this government cemented it as denoting "those who cannot be defined as either White or African" (Western, 1996; Wilson and Ramphela, 1989). In a nation where "pureness" was the ideal, the "racial hybridity" of the Coloured person symbolized something shameful. (Adhikari 2005:2). The categorization of a more powerful "other" has important consequences for a group's social world through a changing of this world and the experience of living in it (Jenkins 1997:71-72). As the apartheid system created similar laws and living conditions within the different groups, the racial classifications became, to varying degrees, important for feelings of belonging in a group, and to self-ascription of group membership. As Richard Jenkins argues on the dynamic between ascription and self-ascription:

"Ethnicity depends on ascription from both sides of the group boundary. It is important to distinguish in principle between two analytically distinct processes of ascription: group identification and social categorisation. The first occurs inside the ethnic boundary, the second outside and across it...Social categorisation, in particular, is intimately bound up with power relations and relates to the capacity of one group successfully to impose its categories of ascription upon another set of people..." (Jenkins 1997:23)

All "non-Whites" were forced to wear a racial identity card during apartheid, a document that determined which doors were open and which ones were closed to them, what training they could receive, what jobs they might have, where they could reside and live and whom they might marry. The classifications served as racial labels for the children who were born as "non-White" and as an inescapable sign of inferiority and marker of class distinction. For those who were classified as Coloured, it meant that they were excluded from the occupations that were reserved for Whites, received lower wages for the jobs they were employed in, and generally had rights which were inferior to the rights of Whites. Those who were classified as Black, were in every way inferior by law relative to both White and Coloured - as regards education, employment, wages, union rights, and everything that had to do with earning a living, creating a home and starting a family. The Coloureds were in this process involuntarily assigned to a position mid-way between the White

minority of oppressors and the Black majority who were most oppressed. Before the category "Coloured" was cemented by the apartheid government, many people saw themselves as "brown Afrikaners". Many were blood related to Whites, belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church and shared White Afrikaner values of the man as the patriarch in a nuclear family, as God the patriarch of his children. (Adhikari 2005, Norval 1996). The Coloureds shared the language, Afrikaans, with the White Afrikaners, and were instrumental in the development of the language from Dutch, as the many different nationalities of slaves and servants communicated in the plantations by means of what was later to be called Afrikaans. The Coloureds, in short, were considered "an appendix" to the White population (Norval 1995:189). The Blacks were entirely excluded from citizenship in the South African nation, but were instead given a status as citizens of the "homelands" or "bantustans", which the apartheid government created. The Coloureds did not come from one place and hence a homeland could not be created for them anywhere. One could argue, that the whole of Western Cape was the obvious homeland of the Coloured group, but it was the windblown Cape Flats that was dubbed "The unofficial Colouredstan" (Cape Argus, 21st march 1979). Cape Times described it in 1972 as a "concentration camp" : "...as you pass through the streets with the wind in your hair and the dust in your nostrils, you may see why Manenberg is already on its way to becoming a slum – a place without a soul (28th October 1972).

According to Mohamed Adhikari, the concept of "Colouredness" functioned as a social identity from the time of the formation of the South African state in 1910 to the present, and remained essentially stable because of:

"Coloured peoples assimilationism, which spurred hopes of future acceptance into the dominant society; their intermediate status in the racial hierarchy, which generated fears that they might lose their position of relative privilege and be relegated to the status of Africans: the negative connotations with which Coloured identity was imbued, especially the shame attached to their supposed racial hybridity; and finally, the marginality of the Coloured people, which caused them a great deal of frustration." (Adhikari 2005:XII).

In apartheid South Africa the Coloured person was a "second-class citizen", with limited citizenship, and the status of the Coloured group remained ambivalent throughout the reign of the

National Party, 1948-1994 (Norval 1996). One wing, the "Verligtes", within the National Party believed the Coloureds to be close enough to the Whites in terms of their language, culture and religion, to obtain rights, while a second, stronger wing, the "Verkrampes", took the opposite view. (Norval 1995:189-191). Coloureds in the Cape region had the right to vote until 1956, eight years after the National Party came to power and apartheid was introduced (McDonald 2006:45). This fact bears witness to the disagreement on the position of the Coloured group which prevailed in South Africa.

Hamish Dickie-Clarks' (1966) insightful structural-functionalist study of the the Durban Coloureds "The Marginal Situation", invites us to focus more on the sociological aspect of the marginal *situation*, instead of the marginal personality. According to his analysis, it is the inconsistency between the cultural and social dimensions of the colour hierarchy, which was the basis of the marginalisation of Coloured people in South Africa - the inconsistency between the Coloureds' complete cultural similarity and their *partial acceptance* on the social dimension, the inconsistently lower legal status and exclusion from social relationships with whites. (Dickie-Clark 1966:45, 49, 72):

"..the encouragement with the one hand and rejection with the other, produces not only inconsistencies in the matters falling within the scope of the hierarchy, but it is also, of course, part of the basic problem of race relations as a whole in those areas where contact has been protracted and the subordinate strata have become highly acculturated and integrated...The theory of South African apartheid seems designed to resolve this dilemma by trying both to slow down the tempo of acculturation and where this cannot be done, to insist that it go on in geographically separate areas."
(Dickie-Clark 1966:37).

Dickie-Clark published his study in 1966, the year the building of Manenberg started, and the apartheid theory did not resolve the dilemmas in the years following: That the coloured group had neither a homeland, nor civil rights in South Africa continued to be an inexplicable inconsistency in the ideology of apartheid, a logical flaw in the idea of godgiven natural order, executed in the separate, independent development of each group as the natural and desirable for all "races". (Norval 1996: 191). What I take from Dickie-Clark's study though, is a reminder, "...that merely

being in a marginal situation does not make everyone in it psychologically marginal” (Dickie-Clark 1966:182). The focus on the psychological marginality, which he criticises, seems to be reflected in the narrative that keeps emerging about the coloured person: that it is somehow his *personality* that is the root and reason, and not the objective marginal *situation*, which is not investigated in the complex dynamic of socio-economic societal structures, policies and media-representations. Van der Ross discusses in an article in the Cape Times 1963, how the Coloureds use cream to make their skin lighter, and when all his efforts do not make him white, he develops neurosis. As Dickie-Clark criticises in general about in his contemporary writers on the issue:

“...when the concept of marginality is used it is not always clear whether the terms “marginal man” or “being marginal”, refer to being in a particular kind of social situation or having certain psychological traits, or both. As long as biological, psychological and sociological elements are all mixed up, there will be confusion...”
(Dickie-Clark 1966:185).

I argue that this very confusion gives strength and endurance to the master-narrative of the coloured person as somehow responsible for his own situation and yet not able to help it, as that is just how he is, according to the circular logic of the narrative.

Almal is saam in die struggle – Black consciousness?

Many Coloureds, from all social strata joined forces with Black, Indian and liberal Whites in “The Struggle”, the illegal resistance against the regime (Adhikari 2005). According to the marginality-theory of Dickie-Clark, this can be explained by the principle of the shifting balance in the situation of the Coloureds:

“Their marginal situation of cultural similarity along with incomplete acceptance and participation in the social system of the dominant white stratum, meant that there would always be both advantages and drawbacks in their situation. As long as their was hope of greater acceptance and participation in the future, an alliance with the lower subordinate strata was unthinkable for any but the doctrinaire. The period of “negative” apartheid had drastically reduced that hope and diminished the advantages of being Coloured. It seemed that now the only way to rid themselves of

the disadvantages of their situation was by co-operation with all the Government's opponents in order to abolish the colour bar altogether and for everyone" (Dickie-Clark 1966:68).

Van der Ross writes of the South African Coloured National Convention in the Cape Times, 1961, and depicts it as the most representative body of Coloured people ever to meet together in South Africa. Their goal was to be part of the united resistance, the Struggle. The youth component in the Struggle cannot be dismissed, and the Coloured youth formed part of this. Colin Bundy (1985) points out how youth based resistance was made possible and probable in the South Africa of the 80's, because, among other factors, "organic intellectuals", which Gramsci stresses are important in revolutionary action, were present in the communities of Cape Flats, where classes were grouped together by courtesy of the Group Areas Act. At the same time, the youth identified as non-whites, and as against the oppression of apartheid (Bundy 1985:305, 307, 324). This unity does not exist today. The option for young people in the 80s to identify as Black in Steve Biko's sense of Black, and in this way "dissolve" the inherent power of the narrative of marginalisation, by self-ascription to a larger interest group accepting this ascription, is not open to young Coloured people in contemporary South Africa. They may identify as Black, but they have no reason to, and are in no way invited or included in the version of Blackness that exists today. I did not meet one single young man or woman in Manenberg between 2005-2009 identifying themselves as Black, but I did meet some middle-aged ex-freedom fighters who, somewhat ambivalently, did. Among them is Mr. Adams, a dedicated teacher at Manenberg High as well as a community activist, who was involved in the Struggle and fought for freedom from oppression. He tried, in his own words, to "conscientise" people in Manenberg, before the elections in 1994:

"The students were very politically active in the 80s. Students took up fighting...The problem today is: How do you engage people who see that there is no way out for them - other than doing deviant activity? They are either part of the cheap labour market or they become statistics in the area. Some of them would go into deviant activity as a matter of survival. The resources at this school are very scarce...the schools closer to Table Mountain and those areas are better resourced. Our learners cannot access those because they do not have the money – we're doing an injustice to them. The mobility for them is rarely there. Our vigour (today) in trying to change our

community is still there, but sometimes the politicians they shun us. I've been teaching since 1982 and Manenberg high has been here since 1976, the year of the Soweto uprising - my passion is here. We were fighting the government on various fronts, and some of my friends paid the ultimate price – they lost their lives fighting the system. We survived, and we're still here, and we're still fighting. We're trying to show people there's another picture to Manenberg. Our community is flawed, children get together in the different courts: whose area belongs to the Americans? You're now living in A HL territory (referring to the house I was living in), I grew up in a Clever Kids territory. The struggle is the same: drugs, deviancy etc. and we try to get them involved into something other than deviancy. The children in the area, all of them are streetwise: That was the creation of the apartheid government. People in the area, we were just dumped here, and we had to survive on our own.”

Mr. Adams is describing a pattern in relation to education being reproduced in Manenberg, where the youth expel and exclude themselves from the dominant society, while they are busy learning how to survive locally. At the same time, they are not easy to engage politically as they “see that there is no way out for them”.

Education – the mark of civilization or submission?

Education is widely regarded in Manenberg as a way of improving ones circumstances, a way out of poverty for the few who do succeed in their educational endeavours – and often it also becomes a way out of Manenberg, making some people today refer to those who succeed as those who “wants to keep them better” or “wants to keep them White” – the will risk being looked upon as “sturvey Coloureds” or “perfume shitters”. Segments of the Coloured middle class during apartheid persistently sought to obtain, or regain, citizenship by staying within the parliamentary framework and demonstrate their civilized nature to the Whites in power. They fought a perpetual battle to avoid association with the majority of Coloureds in the lower class, whose “immoral behavior with drunkenness, crime, and promiscuous sex,” they blamed for their own exclusion from the White society (Ibid :79-97). They unequivocally considered education the way forward for the broad masses of Coloureds. When, through education, Coloured in the underclass would be exposed to the dominant “superior” culture, values, and ability to create financial success of the Whites, it was

expected that this would turn them into exemplary citizens, adapted to the middle class ideal of a respectable citizen formed in the image of the White man (ibid: 82).

Schooling serves the nation-state, and if one does not feel included in the nation-state, the point in schooling withers. The Coloureds were not completely included in the South Africa of White rule and the majority do not feel included in the South Africa under ANC rule. Education may be seen as the great levelling mechanism according to dominant liberal ideology, while critical scholars on education, on the other hand, will stress how schools tend to increase social inequality. According to Bourdieu, the function of education is to validate and distribute symbolic capital, ensuring that the dominant groups keep an economic advantage (Levinson & Holland 1997:5). Among the post-apartheid generation in Manenberg today, education is contested as the road leading to a good job and a better life. Often the same young people switch between conflicting views on education. Over 70 percent of the students in Manenbergs three high schools leave before reaching the final exams, and it is a vanishingly small number who study further at college or university. The potential of education to pave the way for a socio-economically improved situation must be more real and visible than it is now for the young residents of Manenberg for the majority to change their opposition to education, the established community's ideals, and cease to engage in "counter-school culture" (Willis 1993). Mr. Adams, sums up the situation:

"The children walking around here on school are reflecting the society around here: 70 percent of them are involved in gang activities. As teachers, we have a small impact. As a teacher, I have values - and they have values - and sometimes our values clash, because the moment they leave here, they go out into their own society and they forget about our values. For most of them it's a means to survive out there. How do I survive? School seems not to be the viable option to survive for most of them, man, you see.."

In South Africa, unemployment is at nearly 40 percent and in Manenberg it was estimated to be above 50 percent (Salo, 2003:350). The latest figures from the local NGO "Self Help" sounds of 66 percent unemployment in Manenberg. Those who can afford education in Manenberg, have somehow earned the money - through lawful means, or otherwise. Manenberg is a grey zone where there are no clear boundaries between law-abiding families and families where a proportion of the

household income is based on criminal activities of various kinds. This is immoral, compared with the dominant society's values and ideals, but has its own inherent morality, and is directed inwards, toward the residents themselves. To be "one of us", loyal, helpful towards neighbors and relatives, never gossip about others to the police, be social, and most importantly never behave nonchalant, as if you are better than others. This describes some of the aspects of "the moral person" in Manenberg, and the workings of "the moral economy" in the area, where the boundaries and morals, operating within dominant society, with its clear distinction between law-abiding and criminal, does not always make sense in Manenberg. This opposition to the values and ideals of the dominant society, coupled with a desire to be able to achieve those very same ideals, reflect a specific historical oppression, categorization and a marginalized political and economic situation in the new South Africa. The lack of sense of citizenship across all generations creates a dynamic that leaves limited opportunities for the youth. As Mr. Adams points out, the youth do not perceive education as the best means to survive economically, politically and socially. The Township is called "Gangland" and "Murderberg" in the surrounding communities (Leggett 2003:33-35), and violence statistics from the field speak for themselves. In Manenberg, during the year of my fieldwork, 42 murders were committed, 68 more murders attempted and countless assaults reported. (Information Management South African Police Service 2006). The environment makes it virtually impossible for young people to stay clear of taking sides; whom you belong to is often determined by where you live, what block you grew up in, and the gang "owning" that specific territory. No space in Manenberg is neutral.

The White rulers regarded the Coloured group as physically and mentally weak with a tendency towards crime and abnormal sexual behaviour, and they felt a paternalistic responsibility towards them. (Jensen 2008). They were continuously constructed and categorized as "problematic" by a series of commissions appointed by the government, and Academics in Afrikaans-language universities argued that the "criminal tendencies" of "Coloured" boys could be "measured scientifically" and be traced directly to their material impoverishment, and that the "proneness" to poverty and crime was part of the "Coloured phenomenon" (Badroodien 2002:144, note 734). How it is determined who the dangerous classes are depends on the way in which particular societies are represented and the types of knowledge that informs this representation. As Michel de Certeau says, "...the powers in our developed societies have at their disposal rather subtle and closely knit procedures for the control of all social networks: these are the administrative and "panoptic"

systems of the police, the schools, health services, security etc. (de Certeau 1984:179). Azeem Badroodiens study of the punitive environments of the "Schools of Industry" and reformatories for Coloured boys during apartheid shows how the complex dynamic between race, punishment, education and social "protection" in the South African case served to install a narrative of Coloured boys and men as potential criminals (Badroodien 2002:144).

Prison - a political protest?

Coloureds constitute a minority of about 9 percent in South Africa but there are 1678 prisoners per 100.000 Coloured in South Africa's prisons nationwide, which is a higher number than both Blacks, Whites and Indians taken together. (Jensen 2006:36). This over-representation in prisons is reflected among the youth and constitute an indispensable part of "the social imaginary" (Appadurai 1996) of young men who grow up on the Cape Flats, where a potential prison stay is something that they prepare for mentally. In their everyday negotiation of identity, the prison system is a comprehensive one, often referred to locally and among researchers (Don Pinnock 1984) as the Coloureds rite of passage. While young Black men go to the bush or the mountains and are circumcised and go through certain, secret rituals to transition into adults, it is prison which marks the transition from boys to men for Coloured young men in the underclass. As a former warden of Pollsmoor Maximum Security, Jonny Jansen, puts it:

"They are trained when they are sent to reformatories, then they arrive in the youth section of the prison where they will learn from the other inmates ... and they end up matriculating as" full-blown Criminals" in prison." (Jonny Jansen interview 9.april 2006).

Julie Peteet (1994) describes in his studies from the West Bank, how young Palestinian men incorporate beatings and imprisonment in the cultural criteria of manhood and ascribe to it the status of a rite of passage (Peteet 1994:45). Rather than allowing violence to stand as an expression of Israel's power and domination, the young Palestinians turn the social impact of the violence on its head and achieve political agency through this inversion (ibid). In the South African context, there are parallels to be found in a situation in which the state (White or Black) and its police, with its monopoly on violence, comes to represent a positively charged part of a manhood ritual, when turned on its head. A ritual where stoicism and "strong bones" is attributed to the young Coloured

man, a proud identity. In the South African context, this appropriation of violence appears to be a different kind of resistance to the Palestinian, as there is no noble common cause: freedom, a country and common culture to fight for, as is the case for Peteets informants. The Coloureds rebel against the state of affairs, the organisation of society and their place in it – or rather the fact that they feel there is no place for them in it, no room for belonging to the South African nation of today, yesterday and tomorrow. An estimated 60 percent of all boys between 11-18 are involved in gang-related activities in the area of Cape Flats: Crime offers quick financial gains, immediate status among ones peers and a straightforward "career path" in the underground economy. The area of Cape Flats has long been notorious for criminal activity, particularly gangsterism, and armed violence is a fact of everyday life on the Cape Flats (Legget 2003:3, 8). I argue that this must also be seen as the symptom of their marginal situation in the societal structure and the limited range of identities and imaginable futures in the new South Africa for this group of young people. They seek respect and recognition but without an explicit political agenda. But does this mean that we cannot analyze their actions as political in the broadest sense of the word? They are actors in their own right in their use of prison as a kind of rite of passage to mark the transition to real men with "strong bones" in a local hierarchy, but it is a (self) destructive ritual, making them exit the liminal, marginal betwixt and between phase only as the consolidation of the stereotype of the immoral, criminal Coloured and thereby further marginalizing themselves in the process and limiting the possibilities of what the future might hold for them.

Imaginings – narratives – futures – belonging: an escape from the master-narrative?

Competing narratives that call into question the validity of the master-narrative of the liminal, betwixt and between Coloured exist, some existed long before 1994, others have emerged since: among these are the rastafarians, the khoisan movements, the sturvey – Coloureds, (who focus on their class and individual achievements and do not identify with being Coloured), those who identify as "Blacks" in the sense of the Black Consciousness-movement of the 80s, and still speak of "so-called coloureds", as well as organisations such as the "Coloured Movement for the Progress of Brown People", "The Coloured Forum", "Brown Interest Initiative" etc. Most of these organisations are in the Western Cape, but none of them in Manenberg. Here, it is the master-narrative, which remains strikingly unchanged, and the less organised counter-narratives, that are drawn on in young peoples identity-making: The different religious options (devout Christian, Muslim, Rastafarian), the gangster, and the possibility of telling the story of oneself as being a

young individual in the global world of MTV are opted for, as they in different ways offer an identity and a social imaginary. In the last mentioned, being a Coloured can mean being like Rihanna or 50Cent, popular, successful and not bound to the connotations which is so embedded in the South African context. This could be the reason why Fazlin and her peers in Manenberg watch American shows and listen to American artists: The narrative of the marginal, in-between Coloured can be escaped somehow in imaginaries that draw on the world outside South Africa. My conclusion is that the young generation in Manenberg do not necessarily see themselves as Africans, or belonging to the new multi-racial South African democracy. Not many of them vote, but those who did, in Ward 45 in Manenberg, 18th of May 2011, shifted their allegiance from ANC to DA, maybe in the hope of being included in another vision of South Africa, since the ANC with Jacob Zuma as President and Julius Malema as the future, is not applying an inclusive rhetoric, as Mandela did in the early 90s.

The master narrative of the Coloured group in South Africa cannot be rewritten, according to Bruner's theory, without this happening simultaneous with societal change: "*New narrative arise...from history, from world conditions*", he writes. (Bruner 1986: 152). The status of identity politics and the political situation in South Africa in general is pivotal to both processes of changing the master-narrative about what it means to be Coloured in South Africa, and to a situation of socio-historical change in the marginal situation of the Coloureds. I give the last word to Gerhard Maré, and his point, that: "*If a "racial identity" was not a requirement, or expected, then the existence of biracial people would not be worth comment as a category separate from others*" (Maré 2005:102).