Negotiating Cultural Identity through the Arts: The African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF)

Peter Mbago Wakholi

BSc. (Bot/Zoo) (MUK) Uganda
B.A., BEd. Grad/Cert (Learning) (Edith Cowan University)
MEd (Research) (Murdoch University) Western Australia
This thesis is presented for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
Murdoch University, 2012
Western Australia
I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work, which has not been previously submitted for a degree at any tertiary educational institution.

Peter Mbago Wakholi
Abstract

Negotiating Cultural Identity through the Arts: The African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF) examines ways in which African cultural memory, and the extent to which the arts based approaches benefited the cultural identity socialisation experiences of young people of African migrant descent. Arts were used to explore the identities of a group of youth of African descent, as a means to developing understanding of the issues relating to their bicultural socialisation and ways in which Arts-based strategies could be used to address them towards bicultural competence. Bicultural competence implies the ability to function successfully in both the dominant and subordinate culture.

The research project was motivated by the fact that Australian youth of African descent experience psycho-social challenges to their cultural identity development. Quite often this includes a denigration of their African cultures and identities through monocultural and exclusive cultural practices of Eurocentric Australia. And yet the young people involved in this study carry with them embodied knowledge and memories from African culture acquired through cultural socialisation prior to arrival in Australia as well as in ‘African’ homes in Australia, through parental cultural education and transmission. Such knowledge and cultural values play a significant role in identity formation and self-concept of the African descendant youth in Australia.

Accordingly the festival was organised as an aesthetic and educative theatrical event using the Ujamaa circle and the African centred pedagogy theory, Participatory action research and Performance as a research Inquiry for the project. A participatory approach, through educative dialogue and performance
enabled the participants to reveal their own embodied knowledge about African cultural memory leading to an educative exploration of its relevance through theatrical events. The process also enabled the participants to recall and document their cultural memories and subsequently reflect on their significance to identity negotiation and construction. The methodological research process became a Bicultural Socialisation Education Program (BSEP) because it enabled the participants through the theatrical events to integrate both subordinate and dominant cultural ideas towards self-affirming epistemologies and achieve a positive self-concept of themselves.

It is the study’s conclusion that the festival, as a third space, enabled the participants to explore African cultural memory educatively by enacting art forms and dialogue that informed their African Australian identities. Furthermore, the methodological approach enabled the participants to reveal factors that influenced their bicultural socialisation experience, namely: visibility, racism, criminal stereotyping, alienation and specific issues relating to intergenerational relations. These factors present ongoing psycho-social challenges to the participants and in turn influence their bicultural socialisation experience and self-concept.

The methodological approach was effective in enabling the participants, as a group of diverse African identities to develop an African Australian sensibility and to become conscious of their own agency in mobilising African cultural memory in an Australian context, towards bicultural competence.
‘Se wo were fi na wosankofa a yenkyi’
‘It is not wrong to go back for that which you have forgotten’
Keywords

African; African Centred; African Australian; Alienation; Bicultural Competence; Bicultural Socialisation; Ujamaa Circle; Critical Pedagogy; Cultural Literacy; Cultural Memory; Cultural Democracy; Cultural Identity; Dominant; Diaspora; Ethnicity; Festival; Marginalisation; Migrant; Multiculturalism; Participatory; Performance; Politics; Racism; Refugee; Subordinate; Third Space; Youth; Young People.
The thesis project was a community based festival involving twelve young people of African descent, five patrons, two community artists and the researcher as the facilitator and cultural translator. I therefore wish to extend my sincere thanks to the young people involved in the project for trusting the process, sharing their stories, and creative imagination that culminated into an informative and educative festival. I also wish to thank the patrons for sparing their time to support the project, and the artists for playing an important role in facilitating some of the sessions towards informative performances.

I would also like to acknowledge the organisations that provided funding and resources for the project—The City of Stirling (WA); Healthway (WA), the Office of Crime Prevention (WA), The Afrikan Community in Western Australia (ACWA) and Murdoch University, without their generosity it would have been impossible to accomplish this project.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, many thanks to my supervisors, Dr. David Moody and Dr. Peter Wright your support and feedback is immensely appreciated. I have learnt so much from you.

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my wife Nasimolo Sarah Wakholi and our girls; Namusobya Wakholi Kamulegeya, Hasahya Wakholi, Namulwa Wakholi and Mirembe Musenero Wakholi for the support, passion and love. We have to tell our stories and through performance we legitimise our humanity. Ata demba satwihula!
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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACL</td>
<td>African Cultural Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACM</td>
<td>African Cultural Memory</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACMYAF</td>
<td>African Cultural Memory Arts Festival</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADY</td>
<td>African Descendant Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSEP</td>
<td>Bicultural Socialisation Educational Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPT</td>
<td>Critical African Centred Pedagogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>Elimu circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Patron Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAR</td>
<td>Participatory Action Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PaRI</td>
<td>Performance as Research Inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RVJ</td>
<td>Reflective Visual Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC</td>
<td>Ujamaa circle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Glossary of key African-source terms

**Ajabu**  
to be surprised; to wonder

**Ata demba satwihula**  
Keep working at it; do not give up easily

**Baraka**  
Blessing(s); prosperity; abundance

**Elimu**  
Knowledge; education; science

**Mungu**  
God

**Sankofa**  
Return to the source

**Uhuru**  
Freedom; independence

**Ujamaa**  
Family ties; relationship; brotherhood/sisterhood
Chapter One

Migration and African Identity: Framing the research problem

Diversity, however, is the most universal condition of human existence, and the richness of human experience derives largely from interaction, intercommunication, and interchange among specific cultures. (Nascimento and Nascimento, 1992, p.136)

Introduction

Making Sense of Place

In 1991, my family and I arrived in Australia from Africa, under the Special Humanitarian Programme. Two years later as part of multicultural festivities of Western Australia, my wife, Sarah, was invited to talk about African culture\(^1\) to children at the local primary school where two of our three daughters attended. Sarah told an African story and cooked African food for the children. According to Sarah the children participated enthusiastically in the cooking and the story telling.

The teacher wound up the lesson by reading from a pictorial book about tribal life in Africa. As the teacher flipped through the book and explained, about the tribal people, she came to a picture of an African child, sitting in dirt, with mucus and flies around her nose. The teacher then turned to Sarah and said ‘I bet this is the way Miriam (our daughter) lived while back in Africa.’ Most of the kids turned in Miriam’s direction,

\(^1\) In black Africa, south of the Sahara, there are a variety of ethnic groups with traditional cultures that differ in some respects. Nevertheless, there are deep underlying affinities running through these cultures which justify speaking of the traditional culture of Africa (Wiredu, 1980). The Arts are one area where these ‘underlying affinities’ are more visible: drumming, song, dance, funeral rituals, social structures like clan units and extended families.
embarrassing her. Sarah responded by telling the teacher that, Miriam hadn’t lived like that in Africa. Taking little notice of Sarah’s response the teacher continued with her description of tribal life in Africa. At the end of the lesson, Sarah and Miriam left disappointed with the teacher’s attitude towards Africa and the way in which her concluding presentation undermined Sarah’s interaction with the children.

A few months later we had another encounter with this same teacher. This time it was about an African musical performance that we planned to present at our daughter’s Holy Communion. The teacher rejected our proposal on grounds that African music was ‘too exciting’ and hence not appropriate for the Holy Communion Mass. My wife and I took up the matter with the parish priest. To our surprise the parish priest was supportive of our idea to perform at the Holy Communion Mass.

The experience with the kindergarten teacher made us aware of the lack of knowledge about the diversity of lifestyle in contemporary Africa, and the potential prejudice and racism in an Australian classroom. Moreover, we were concerned about the psycho-social wellbeing of our children. Denigration of African culture would undermine the self-concept of our children as people of African descent. Intergenerational conflict between us and our children would potentially be enhanced by negative feelings towards African culture developed in the early years of their schooling.

Consequently Sarah and I resolved to actively create an environment for our children through which the sense of being both African and Australian was appreciated in a positive way. The arts and musical performances in particular became a vehicle for this educational experience. It provided a means of educating our children
as well as the broader community. As a family we performed in various churches and festivals sharing our African heritage with others. It worked out well for us as parents and for our children because in the process of being involved in these artistic activities with them, we created a context for dialogue about culture and identity as well as other issues relating to their psycho-social development and wellbeing. Furthermore, sharing our culture with the wider community reassured our children that there were good things from Africa which could be embraced and articulated through their own identities.

Accordingly the research project was organised as a festival constituted of diverse theatrical events (please refer to Appendix 5.4., p.258). Through the festival twelve participants of African descent, ranging between the ages twelve and twenty four, explored issues relating to their cultural identities and socialisation between cultures (the home ethnic culture and dominant Eurocentric culture). The methodological approach to the festival included three phases, namely: Formative Phase; Bonding Phase and Uhuru Phase (details of which are discussed in the Research Design chapter). The festival as a context for the research was motivated by the success of using Arts-based cultural approaches with our children. Furthermore, the project was also inspired by the desire to ascertain the extent to which the arts based approaches benefited the cultural identity

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2 Cultural identity refers to a broad sense of cultural belongingness and shared values derived from group membership, a common history, tradition and language (Liebkind, 1992, p.150).

3 ‘Ethnicity’ has its roots primarily in anthropology and ethnology. Usually, an ethnic group is defined on the basis of biological, linguistic, cultural or religious criteria. An ethnic group can be seen as a historical cultural group with a common biological and/or linguistic ancestry, even if this is not visible in daily life (Liebkind, 1992, p.152).
socialisation experiences of other young people of African descent.

This chapter, therefore, introduces the research problem; the background issues pertaining to it; the aims and scope of the study; and concludes by providing an outline of the thesis chapters.

The Research Problem

Resettlement in a different and dominant culture in which you are a subordinate participant, presents cultural and psycho-social challenges that call for compromises, reconciliation, and ongoing agency through revaluation of experiences as part of reframing your new cultural outlook. The effect of cultural change, caused by immigration, on the one hand brings with it anxiety which is usually related to external locus of control, but on the other hand the same change might motivate the immigrant to adapt and adjust, resulting in self reliance and internal control (Hui, 1982).

This study investigates a group of young people of African descent who have resettled or were born in Australia. These participants live in homes where African culture is valued. The African culture in these homes is mediated by the parents through language, food, clothes, music, and various forms of cultural and moral teachings. Furthermore, young participants access African culture transnationally through communications with relatives in

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4 ‘Subordinate’ is used instead of ‘minority’ because, as, observed by Liebkind, (1992), “one of the problems with the group notions of ‘majority’ and ‘minority’ is that they already seem inseparably intertwined with value differentials: the ‘minority’ is more often on the ‘losing side’. The categories of ‘majority’ and ‘minority’ seem to reflect inherently a normative hierarchy which combines the idea of status and legitimacy, of numbers and of deviation from the norm. To be a member of the majority seems to place an individual automatically inside the group; to be a member of a minority places him or her outside, either towards the top when it is an elite group, or towards the bottom in the case of an oppressed group (p156).”
the African diaspora and physical reunions through visitation. Through such means Africanness or African cultural memory is embodied in these young people (Kumsa, 2005; Tettey & Puplampu, 2005). The young people, however, have a challenge to learn to live in a Euro-Australian culture with their embodied African culture which is usually not valued by the dominant culture (Matekere, 2009; Windle, 2008; Zwangaboni, 2008; Flanagan, 2007; Wakholi, 2005, 2007a, 2007b). This contradiction is not always easy to deal with and may lead to psycho-social challenges for young African migrants (Wakholi, 2010; Matereke, 2009; Berry, 2007; Udo-Ekpo, 1999; Dei, 1994). Consequently this research will inquire into the tensions and challenges that young people experience in mediating the two cultures; and also explore the ways in which African cultural memory and the arts may facilitate agency in dealing with these tensions and challenges.

Bicultural youth; throughout their development, must contend with: (1) two cultural systems whose values are very often in direct conflict, and (2) a set of socio-political and historical forces dissimilar to those in the dominant culture (Kumsa, 2005; Darder, 1991). And yet the collective behaviour and social life of the Black/African community is bicultural because it draws on its own group behaviour and, simultaneously, patterns derived from the dominant cultural system of Euro-Australian derivation.

These challenges are more intense for the young people from homes where the parents have limited functional knowledge of the dominant culture and where

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5 The term bicultural is utilized instead of ‘minority’—a term that linguistically, and hence politically, reflects and perpetuates a view of subordinate cultures as deficient and disempowered (Darder, 1991).
socialising agents like cultural translators, mediators and models are absent (Gordon, 2006; de Anda, 1984).

Consequently the tendency for these young people is to devalue their parental ethnic culture and attempt to conform to the dominant culture which is not easily accepting of them. The consequence of this contradiction is the possibility of identity confusion and intergenerational tensions between young people and their parents (Filio, Pontinen & Molsa, 2006; Kayrooz & Blunt, 2000). Furthermore, since the dominant culture is not easily accepting of them, partly due to their distinctive visibility and cultural difference, they often experience discrimination and racism (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Smith & Reside, 2009; Mungai, 2008; Windle, 2008; Flanagan, 2007; Quigley-Tan & Sankaran, 2005; Wakholi, 2005; Udo-Ekpo, 1999).

Bicultural identity presents ongoing tensions within the self hence sharing strategies of managing cultural difference with those who have successfully evolved a strong bicultural identity may be helpful to those experiencing difficulties.

Cultural Translators

Cultural translators are probably the most effective agents in promoting dual socialization. A cultural translator is an individual from a bicultural individual’s own ethnic or cultural group who has undergone the dual socialization experience with considerable success. The cultural translator is able to share his or her own experiences, provide information that facilitates understanding of the values and

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6 The researcher in addition to raising his children (along with his wife) biculturally, he also had experience of over ten years working with the education department as a high school teacher. This gave the researcher the opportunity to develop the qualities of a cultural translator.
perceptions of the dominant culture, and convey ways to meet the behavioural demands made on subordinate members of the society without compromising ethnic values and norms. Thus, the increasing success of each successive generation in dealing with dominant culture depends not so much on the degree of assimilation as on the increase of the number of translators available (Gordon, 2001, 2007; de Anda, 1984).

Due to the recent arrival of African migrants to Australia, there is yet to be a significant number of cultural translators from within the African community. Nsubuga-Kyobe and Dimock, (2000); Okai, (1995); Udo-Ekpo, (1999) and the West Australian Department of Community Development’s: *African Communities’ Forum on domestic violence report*, (2005); all point to the need for the evolution of this pool of cultural translators. Moreover art as translation of social reality or articulation of imagined possibilities (Bhabha, 1994) offers an appropriate medium for exploring issues relating to bicultural socialisation and developing participants into effective cultural translators. Eisner (2008) concurs when he observes that:

> In theatre the individuals portrayed by actors are often larger than life. It is their overwhelming character that awakens us to the qualities in the human condition that we often neglect in our daily life. In other words the drama on stage can be more vivid than what one might normally find...One could argue that it is the very exaggeration of the features of a situation through which we come to grasp its significance. (p.21)

From the foregoing the arts offer possibilities for exploration of issues pertaining to bicultural socialisation.

*Schooling and the African Youth*

Another issue of concern for the project is that schools present challenges which impact on cultural
identity of the African descendant youth. A Eurocentric educational curriculum is the norm in most schools in Australia (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Wakholi, 2010; Seddon, 2001; Partington & McCudden, 1992; Harker, & McConnochie, 1985). School curriculum is mostly lacking in positive African themes, which are essential for strengthening bicultural identities and self esteem of African descendant children. Teaching about Africa is predominantly Eurocentric. In Society and Environment courses, the teaching about Africa focuses on such themes like the Anglo Boer wars and Australia’s political links with South Africa during the colonial era. The other aspect of Africa that students are taught is Egypt and its historical heritage of pyramids and the pharaohs, mostly from a Eurocentric perspective, viewing these civilisations as outside of Black Africa. Black Africa or Africa south of the Sahara is taught through the World Vision and CARE Australia anti poverty projects whose emphasis is on poverty and the associated sponsor-a-child initiative. Well-intentioned as they may be, these forms of teaching about Africa focus on negative aspects, leaving out the impact of globalisation and corporate interests that are associated with Africa’s political economy and poverty. Alternative perspectives of the contributing causes of Africa’s poverty, like exploitative trade relations and mining investments in Africa by Australian companies (Creamer, 2008), are hardly mentioned to the students. For example Rodney

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7 This observation is based on the parenting experience of the author. I have raised four children three of whom have completed high school through the West Australian Catholic Education System. But also, Cassity & Gow (2005) in ‘Making up for lost time: the experiences of Southern Sudanese young refugees in high schools’ and Earnest, Housen & Gillieatt (2007a) in ‘Adolescent and Young Refugee Perspectives on Psychosocial Well-being’ discuss some of these issues, relating to schooling and the curriculum, in their papers.
(1972) in his book entitled *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* has pointed out, in a detailed analysis, of how imperialism undermined Africa’s institutions through the ‘Scramble for Africa’. Furthermore western modernity is presented as the essence of human existence and hence the universal basis of human progress ignoring alternative conceptions of life and human experience.

Problems with the school curriculum are well documented by Harker and McConnochie (1985) in their discussion of the nature of schools in Australia and New Zealand in respect to Aboriginal and Maori students. The authors note that the curriculum is predominantly assimilative. Overwhelmingly the role of education has been one of developing in Aboriginal and Maori children a set of skills, values and behavioural characteristics which approximate as closely as possible those of their European descendant peers. Similarly, Earnest, Housen and Gillieatt (2007), have, for example, observed that African descendant youth, place high priority on education, often possessing high expectations of education and future employment. Unfortunately, the current system in Australia appears to be failing them. School is a very important socialising environment through which young people of African descent ought to secure maximum support and meaningful education which strengthens their bicultural identities. But that is not happening at the moment (Wakholi, 2010; Brown, Miller, Mitchell, 2006; Cassity and Gow, 2005).

**Media and Negative stereotypes**

Media is another consideration, for the research, because it impacts on the psychological and social well-being of the African descendant youth. Negative stereotypes in the media may lead to a negative self-concept by African descendant youth. Most African images
in the press are accompanied by negative reporting. Collins (2005) has noted that the supposed links between immigrant minorities and criminal behaviour is a recurring theme in Australian migration history. The emergence of Asian immigrants in large numbers in the mid-1970s, following the abandonment of the ‘White Australian Policy’, for example, was accompanied by media-driven fear of Asian crime. Media representations of immigrant minorities produce and reproduce stereotypes of violent and criminal communities. The Australian of December, 26, 2006 contained an article entitled ‘Warning on African refugee gangs’ (Kerbaj, 2006). Although the title implied the existence of criminal gangs the article itself was more speculative, acknowledging the lack of concrete evidence of the ‘gangs’ existence. Youth social gatherings are not necessarily a reflection of gangs and Australian media, in this instance, naively presents them as such (Windle, 2008; Collins, 2005).

Consequently, the media stereotypes about the African migrants and sub-Saharan Africa as well may be internalised by the Australian public. Internalisation of negative stereotypes about African youth potentially creates attitudes that may influence the social relations between African migrants and the rest of the community. The attitudes of other students and teachers towards African descendant students in schools and attitudes of potential employers towards the African community members may also be influenced by such negative reporting. This in turn may affect the self-esteem and

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8 For example the report entitled “Pathways to apprenticeships and traineeships for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds” has noted the reluctance of employers to hire new migrants. Due to their limited cultural knowledge they are seen as requiring more training and their existing skills and experience are undervalued, leading to discrimination (Walker, Tilbury, Volet, Tungaraza & Hastie, 2005).
life chances of the African descendant youth in Australia.

Cultural Identity-Psychological considerations
Research in social psychology suggests that self-concept is in large part a social product, determined by the attitudes and behaviour of others towards the individual (Breakwell, 1992; Chase, 1992; Porter and Washington, 1979). The implication of this observation for the African migrant is that there is a possibility of developing low self-esteem due to constant exposure to negative media reporting about Africa and the associated stereotyping (Matereke, 2008; Windle, 2008; hooks, 2003).

Udo-Ekpo (1999) noted that there were strong negative feelings of rejection, marginalisation, and sense of hopelessness within the group of African migrants he interviewed. Their feelings of hopelessness produced passivity and sense of fatalism. He further suggested that if not checked, its cumulative effects could show up for years, well into the next generation. Tan-Quigley and Sankaran’s (2005) research, conducted on behalf of The Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia produced further evidence of racism being a key challenge to the migrant resettlement experience in Western Australia. According to Tan-Quigley and Sankaran, the incidents of racial discrimination reported by participants in the study involved people from the following groups: landlords, property owners, real-estate agents, bus-drivers, police, teachers, customs officers, shop-keepers, and work colleagues (p.104). A more recent report by the Australian Human Rights Commission (2010) 'In our own words. African Australians: A review of human

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9 Udo-Ekpo’s study was conducted amongst diverse communities and individuals of African migrants in Australia.
rights and social inclusion' confirms the continued exclusive practices of African Australians.

Furthermore, a 2005 forum in Perth sponsored by the West Australian Government, examined issues pertaining to domestic violence in the African migrant communities. Key causes of domestic violence as identified by the participants included: men’s financial pressures and insecurity; cultural differences and difficulty in adjusting to the Australian way of life; relationship problems in the family, including intergenerational problems within families; lack of education on arrival and access to services, or knowledge of available services; and lack of understanding of African cultures, traditions and family values by members of the dominant culture (Domestic Violence Report 2005, pp.12-13).

Domestic violence in the African migrant community and the associated issues raised in the report reinforces the importance of undertaking this research project as the violence among parents may affect the young people.

Critical revaluation of African Culture

In an attempt to find solutions to some of these challenges I am mindful of the need to take a critical revaluation of the African cultural experience in modern times. This experience is clearly multifaceted and is an outcome not only of encounters with what one might regard as alien cultures and religions, but also from the problems internal to the practice of the indigenous cultural values, beliefs, and institutions themselves in the setting of the modern world (Gyekye, 1997). Therefore, due consideration is given to colonial and postcolonial experiences of Africa and its diaspora as well as emergent African philosophies and their attempt to deal with Eurocentrism and African-centred ideas. To create a new cultural identity it may be necessary for
the participants to critically assess African culture in the context of a globalised world.

For as Wills (2000) observes “no one knows what the social maps are anymore there are no automatic belongings, so, more than ever, you have to work for, and make, your own cultural significance (p. xv).” However, Gyekye (1997) points out that “our values as human beings are created within the crucible of the existential conditions in which we live, move, and have our being, and those values are often formed by our conceptions of what we want to be or what we think we ought to be (p. 297).” What do African descendant youth in Australia want to be or what do they think they aught to be? In this thesis the young people respond to this question through their own voices and artistic expression. Therefore the next section outlines the aims of the research and the scope.

Aims of the research and scope

The aims of the research include the following:

• Identify what challenges exist for a group of young people of African migrant descent, ranging from those born in Australia to recently arrived migrants, in relation to the development of their bicultural identity;

• Critically examine what African cultural values have relevance for this group of African descendant youth;

• Interrogate the ways that the arts may be used as a medium for negotiating cultural identity;

• Propose an artistic/educational approach to strengthening bicultural identity of the African descendant youth.
In this project I posit that the Arts-based education research (ABER) approaches; the Participatory action research and Critical African centred pedagogy theory (CACPT) provide a useful form of inquiry into the challenges relating to bicultural identity of the African descendant youth. In addition it is also possible to explore ways in which the arts may be used in an innovative way to develop empowering approaches to bicultural existence. Furthermore, I propose that African cultural memory is relevant to the socialisation experience of the African descendant youth, as a source of cultural ideas for strengthening bicultural identity and as a means of sustaining intergenerational harmony through intracultural and intercultural dialogue. Accordingly the scope of the research project is guided by the research questions outlined in the next section.

Research Question

The main research question is: In what ways can the Arts be used to explore the relevance of African cultural memory in negotiating the cultural identity of the African descendant youth in Australia?

Other sub-questions include:

- What are the challenges that exist for a bicultural group of African descendant youth?
- In what ways do African cultural values and symbols inform the cultural identity of the African descendant youth?

These questions are explored through theatrical events using diverse Arts-based techniques as a means to developing an understanding of the role of African cultural memory in the participants’ bicultural socialisation experiences.
Organisation of Thesis

This thesis is organised into ten chapters as follows:

Chapter One
This chapter introduces the research problem and explores the background issues relevant to the research topic. It presents the aims of the research, the research questions, as well as the theoretical frameworks used to investigate these. The chapter concludes by outlining the thesis chapters.

Chapter Two
Chapter two situates the study by exploring the relevant literature and positionality of the researcher.

Chapter Three
Chapter three examines the notions of performance and cultural identity in the context of the African diaspora. Performance is a fundamental dimension of culture as well as the production of knowledge about culture. It may include anything from individual agents’ negotiations of everyday life to the stories people tell each other, popular entertainments, political oratory to bounded events such as theatre, ritual, festivals and parades. The chapter explores the nature of performance in African culture and the contemporary interpretation that communities and artists give to it. This chapter concludes by proposing that African artistic traditions are relevant sources of cultural symbols and values.

Chapter Four
This chapter explores the notion of bicultural identity and bicultural competence. The arts and cultural memory are also reviewed as important contexts for cultural identity negotiation. The chapter concludes by
exploring the possibilities of using the Arts-based approaches as a discursive space for cultural identity.

Chapter Five

Chapter 5 is the research design chapter which is based on three conceptual paradigms, namely participatory action research (PAR), Dr Akinyela’s Ujamaa circle and the critical Afrikan centred pedagogy theory (CACPT); and Performance as a research method. The rationale for the choice of each paradigm and their appropriateness for dealing with the aims and research questions of the project are also elaborated.

Chapter Six

This is the first results chapter. It presents the results from the formative (preliminary phase) of the research project that was a needs assessment and ‘testing the waters’ stage. It involved bringing together the youth participants, patrons and artists to brainstorm project ideas. The formative phase included four sessions: building networks among youth and patrons; developing the concept of African cultural memory; building networks among young people and artists; and building publicity for the project (Harmony Week). It was an important phase for developing relationships among the participants and the researcher.

Chapter Seven

This chapter examines the notion of bonding as a third space phenomenon through which hybridity is explored performatively. The first part develops the notion of bonding as a process of hybridity. The second part explores African drumming and Song and Dance as theatrical events through which bonding is facilitated. The third part of the chapter, examines Reflective visual journals (RVJ) of the participants as a space for self-
affirming discourse. The chapter concludes by asserting that bonding as an epistemological process offered possibilities for generating knowledge that counters stereotypes and prejudices emanating from the dominant culture and consequently helped to enable bicultural competence.

Chapter Eight
This chapter explores two theatrical events that were part of the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF) and their relevance to bicultural socialisation of the African migrant descendant youth involved in them. The two theatrical events included a play, the Real Deal, and a collection of diverse theatrical performances under the umbrella title of the AfricanOz Idol. Drawing on African cultural memory and dominant culture, the two theatrical events provided the twelve participant youth with a third space through which to explore their bicultural identities. Therefore the chapter elaborates the processes and outcomes of these two theatrical events.

Chapter Nine
The discussion in this chapter is based on the final evaluation (Elimu circle) at the end of the theatrical events. In the final evaluation participants reflected on their involvement with the project and subsequently provided valuable information in relation to the festival’s significance as an educatively empowering theatrical event.

Chapter Ten
This is the final chapter it outlines the conclusions to the research project emphasising their significance in the context of the aims and research questions.
Chapter Two

Situating the Study

The African scholar has two clear tasks before him/her. First to expose and destroy all false ideas about African peoples and culture that have been perpetuated by western scholarship. Vague terms such as Tribe, Folk, Non-literate or even innocent looking ones such as Developing, etc., must be subjected to critical analysis… (Okot p'Bitek, 1970, p.7)

Introduction

According to Ladson-billing, (2003) the process of developing a worldview that differs from dominant worldview requires active intellectual work on the part of the knower because schools, society, and the structure and production of knowledge are designed to create individuals who internalise the dominant worldview’s knowledge production and acquisition processes. The purpose of this chapter is, therefore, to situate the study by reviewing the relevant literature. The literature review is preceded by explaining the positionality of the researcher.

Positionality

Education and Culture

Looking back in time growing up, in Africa, was a process of socialisation with inherent contradictions between two forms of cultural experience, namely, African indigenous cultural education and British colonial derived school education. The postcolonial education system and its curriculum content in most subjects were similar to that of colonial Uganda. For example, in 1972, ten years after independence year nine English included: Gulliver’s Travels by Jonathan Swift, The Thirty Nine Steps by John Buchan and Treasure Island by Robert Louis
Stevenson. The curriculum did not include any African writers such as Ngugi who at the time had published three novels including *Weep Not Child* (1964), *The River Between* (1965) and *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) which addressed the problems and consequences of colonialism in Africa. Ngugi (1993) for instance states that:

A Grain of Wheat was part of that tradition of the struggle for the right to name the world for ourselves. The new tradition was challenging the more dominant one in which Asia, Africa and South America were always being defined from the capitals of Europe... (p.3)

Similarly Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* (1958), *No Longer at Ease* (1960), *Arrow of God* (1964) and *A Man of the People* (1966) all of which examined the crisis, in African culture, brought about by colonialism and missionary activities were not availed in our formal education curriculum. Consequently, as Abraham (1962) notes:

Through the orientation of the formal school, a great opportunity for enriching African cultures was thrown away, for there was no organised and purposeful drive to borrow and adapt, urged by sense of needs and capacities, a process which would have meant an interweaving of elements of Western cultures with African cultures in understandable and digestible form. (p.109)

There was hardly any integrative educational experience that I can recall which linked formal schooling to home/community cultural-environment. A systematic study of African languages along with the English language, which was the formal language of instruction, would have enriched our vocabulary base and our bilingual ‘switching’ abilities. The grammatical and vocabulary translations between English and African languages, for example, were never used as a teaching strategy. It was as if there was something wrong with teaching between languages. In fact we were punished for
speaking African languages at school. Such punishments included the cane and picking rubbish around the school. Ngugi (1981) and Maathai (2007) confirmed similar experiences during their school days. This demeaning attitude towards African languages and culture created a sense of inferiority among students towards African languages and culture. That is why Wiredu (1998) suggests that colonialism was not only a political imposition, but also cultural. Furthermore, that colonialism gravely affected African religions and systems of education. Education was delivered in a medium of one foreign language or another and yet languages are not conceptually neutral; syntax and vocabulary are apt to suggest definite modes of conceptualisation. A consequence of which is the cultural alienation of African scholarship from its indigenous heritage and languages.

Indigenous Education

African indigenous education, on the other hand, was a community based experience with the clan unit and village as its social context. It covered both the theoretical and practical fields of social, religious, economic and philosophical needs (Mbiti, 1989; Tiberondwa, 1977; Ocitti, 1973). Indigenous education consisted of myths, legends, folk songs, proverbs, riddles and folktales, which were collectively defined as oral literature; and ritual events associated with birth, naming of a newborn, initiation, marriage, death and ancestor reunion (Finnegan, 1970). Religion, ritual and art existed primarily to support the social order

10 Some people, in Africa, give offerings of food and libation to the 'living-dead' because they are still part of the family. The food and libation so offered are tokens of the fellowship, communion, remembrance respect and hospitality being extended to those who are the immediate pillars or roots of the family. The living-dead solidify and mystically bind together the whole family (Mbiti, 1989, p.105).
Schooling or the learning of skills, and social and cultural values and norms were not separated from other spheres of life (Marah, 2006).

In African life and thought, the religious is not distinguished from the non-religious, the sacred from the secular, the spiritual from the material. To be born into an African society is to be born into a culture that is intensely and pervasively religious and spiritual thus requiring participation in the religious beliefs and rituals of the community (Gyekye, 1996; Mbiti, 1989; Idowu, 1973). Through social education, i.e., learning through observation and participation in community events and ritual, I absorbed and appreciated the nature of African culture and its underlying philosophical and spiritual ideas as taught by elders and my parents.

In communal society, such as the traditional African society, bringing up children to feel responsibilities towards others is part of the whole process of socialisation. The ethic of responsibility, rather than of individual rights, is inculcated from the outset. Children are taught to be motivated in their actions more by their obligations to contribute to the welfare of the community than by consideration of their own rights and self interests (Gyekye, 1996). In traditional Africa, the individuals do not and cannot exist alone. They must cooperate. They owe their existence to other people, including those of past generations and their contemporaries (Ejizu, 2008; Mbiti, 1989). While growing up I saw my mother share salt, sugar, food, clothing, and other basic household resources with neighbours, and sometimes she sent me to collect similar staples from neighbours. Because my mother taught sharing through her actions and social relations, I appreciated the community connectedness with our neighbours. Some of these values
are disappearing due to globalisation and rural-urban drift.

Postcolonial Desires

Now I realise how limited the public school curriculum was as the teachers taught without making meaningful connections between school and community epistemologies. The contradiction created by this form of education has shaped my intellectual desires to explore, more meaningfully, approaches that interweave, the good things, from both African and contact cultures (Gyekye, 1997; Wiredu, 1980; Abraham, 1962). Interweaving begins with a critical comprehension of African histories and epistemologies (Gordon, 2007; Marah, 2006; Williams, 1987).

The arrival of missionaries and colonialists in Uganda (Africa) was disruptive (Ngugi, 1993; Mudimbe, 1988; Kenyatta, 1965) and led to the denigration of African cultures. The missionaries and colonialists regarded the traditional worship and cultural practises as primitive and superstitious, they discouraged the wearing of certain ornaments which indigenous Africans believed to be curative and they burned the shrines that were used for worship (Marah, 2006; Mbiti, 1975, 1989; Idowu, 1973; Kenyatta, 1965). These activities by the missionaries and colonialists undermined the spiritual foundations of African cultures leading to a psychological debasement of African identities (Wiredu, 1998; Ngugi, 1986, 1993; Davidson, 1984). On the whole things which were associated with African culture were regarded as of little value. The indigenous teachers were thus removed from their places of influence and replaced by new teachers who were either European missionaries or African converts. The latter had been indoctrinated in the church and made to believe that the indigenous people
had to change their ways of life if they were to get to heaven (Tiberodwa, 1977).

From Tiberondwa’s analysis it was unlikely that a teacher or educator of Abraham’s (1962) imagination, one with the skills to critique and subsequently interweave elements in Western and African cultures, would have been nurtured or allowed to exist in a formal school. Teero (2002) sums up quite well the colonial intentions:

...colonial powers sought to destroy the cultural patterns of traditional societies largely because many of their essential features prevented traditional people from subordinating social, ecological and spiritual imperatives to the short-term economic ends served by participation in the colonial economy. There is no better way of destroying a society than by undermining its educational system. (p.9)

Hence postcolonial education in Africa presents contradictions and complexities, inherited from the colonial state, which have resulted into an identity crisis (Wiredu, 1998; Ngugi, 1993; Abraham, 1962). This condition has been described by some scholars as mental colonisation (Fanon, 1967, 2004; Wiredu, 1998; Ngugi, 1981). This is how Fanon (2004) puts it:

The Black man has two dimensions—One with his fellow Blacks, the other with the White man. A Negro behaves differently with a White man and with another Negro. That this self division is a direct result of colonialist subjugation is beyond question... (p.17).

Ngugi (1981) in Decolonising the Mind observes that the process of colonialism had two destructive aspects. The first was the destruction or the deliberate undervaluing of a people’s culture, their art, dances, religions, history, geography, education, orature and literature. The second was the conscious elevation of the language of the coloniser. The domination of a people’s language by the languages of the coloniser was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonised.
Similarly Wiredu (1998) has discussed in detail the problems of the colonial encounter with Africa. Wiredu notes that, “Colonialism was not only a political imposition, but also a cultural one; gravely affected, or even perhaps infected, were our religions and systems of education” (p.1) leading to a cultural identity crisis\textsuperscript{11} in African communities on the continent and the diaspora. This has consequences for the project participants because the conceptual perception of themselves is partially influenced by their African cultural memory to which the colonial epistemologies\textsuperscript{12} are contingent.

Accordingly approaches to mental decolonisation in this project take a deconstructive approach to dominant epistemologies and indigenous culture (hooks, 2003, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2003; Smith, 1999; Gyekye, 1997; Wiredu, 1980). Furthermore it is proposed that embodied knowledge originating from the African cultural experience counts as useful knowledge in the African Australian diaspora. Such embodied knowledge however should not be embraced uncritically but rather be subjected to critical scrutiny by balancing “the enthusiasm for cultural revivalism with a spirit of forward-looking self criticism (Wiredu, 1980, p.59).”

\textit{Identity Crisis and Marginalisation}

Each time I appear at a conference or a gathering of some sort in Australia, there is always someone who will walk up to me and ask: Where are you from? Which part of Africa do you come from? Do you like it here? What made you come to Australia? There must be lots of

\textsuperscript{11} The use of the colonisers languages, like English, French, and Portuguese as a substitute to indigenous African languages; the preference of European names to African ones and abandonment of African religiosity are appropriate examples.

\textsuperscript{12} Christianity as presented by missionaries, English language and its embedded Eurocentric values are good examples.
trouble out there? Much safer here isn’t it? Do you think you will return to Africa? I always respond to these questions cautiously depending on who is asking them. But Achebe (as cited in Appiah, 1992), notes

It is... true that the African identity is still in the making. There isn’t a final identity that is African. But, at the same time, there is an identity that is coming into existence. And has a certain context and a certain meaning...Because if somebody meets me, say in a shop in Cambridge [England], he says “Are you from Africa?” This means that Africa means something to some people. Each of these tags has a meaning, and a penalty and a responsibility. All these tags, unfortunately for the black man [woman], are tags of disability... (p.74)

For Achebe (as cited in Appiah, 1992) African identity is, for its bearers, only one among many salient modes of being, all of which have to be constantly fought for and rethought and consequently it is part of the writer’s and/or artist’s role to encourage the creation of an African identity (Soyinka, 1976). Likewise, as a researcher I believe that conscious and rational revaluation of the African heritage in relation to contact cultures, through the arts, is relevant to the process of evolving a strategically advantageous African Australian identity.

Questions like: ‘Which part of Africa do you come from? Do you like it here? What made you come to Australia?’ may appear to be honest but on some occasions they are suggestive, alienating, and a reminder that you do not belong. They can also be a source of frustration when you are attempting to work yourself into the dominant culture. My daughters, who have grown up in Australia with full Aussie accents and mannerisms have to put up with these questions all the time. Implied in the questions is that their visibility as black African Australians presents a contradiction or barrier to their Australianness. That is why Matereke (2009) argues that
African migrants need to create positive images of themselves so that:

They can begin to deposit their narratives into the collective memory of the nation and continue in the struggle to subvert the totalising discourse of Australianness that is hinged upon essentialism and exclusivity. (p.141)

Moreover, Materereke (2009) observes that the question of 'Who is an Australian?' is as problematic as it is unavoidable. This is because the attempt to answer this question is further complicated by a search for the 'essence' of Australianness. Furthermore, it also raises issues of race, ethnicity, language and religion. For Materereke the dominant perspective of Australianness is one shaped by Australia’s national foundations and its allegiance to the British Empire. This perspective, of Australianness needs to be deconstructed if we are to decipher its further influence and implications to the migration and settlement of Africans and other nationalities in Australia. This is because it is exclusive and assumes synonymy of Australianness with White Anglo/Caucasian features and values (Materereke, 2009).

Cultural Identity, Postcolonialism and Postmodernism

Research exploring issues of African identity in the African diaspora should take into account two very important critical theorising frameworks, namely, postcolonialism and postmodernism because of their relevance in critiquing colonialism and modernism. Therefore I intend to use these paradigms mindful of their overlapping and contradictory relationship. The two emerge from different and perhaps opposite cultural traditions but have met at a moment when imperialism and the associated capitalist expansion are being critiqued and revalued in the context of globalisation.
'Postcolonial' as noted by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1995) does not mean 'post-independence', or 'after colonialism', for this would falsely ascribe an end to the colonial process. Post-colonialism, rather, begins from the very first moment of colonial contact (Ashcroft et al., 1995). The term implies both a situation coming after colonialism and a situation in the heritage or aftermath of colonialism (Fortier, 1997). Postcolonialism as a contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism allows us to incorporate the history of anti-colonial resistance with contemporary resistances to imperialism and to dominant Western culture (Loomba, 1998).

Postmodernism, in contrast, can be seen as the social and cultural patterns of response to being in the postmodern world. It entails the failure of all master narratives, such as the myth of progress and the idea of one true religion which might allow for a total and unified understanding of the world (Fortier, 1997). Accordingly the major project of postmodernism is the deconstruction of the logocentric centralised, master narratives of European culture; and from this perspective it is very similar to the postcolonial project of dismantling the Centre/Margin binarism of imperial discourse (Ashcroft et al., 1995).

During (1995) has argued that the concept of postmodernism has been constructed in terms which more or less intentionally wipe out the possibility of postcolonial identity. This is because the conceptual annihilation of the postcolonial condition is actually necessary to any argument which attempts to show that 'we' now live in postmodernity. Hooks (1990) makes similar observations when she states that:

Critical of most writing on postmodernism, I perhaps am more conscious of the way in which the focus on
"otherness and difference" that is often alluded to in these works seems to have little concrete impact as an analysis or standpoint that might change the nature and direction of postmodernist theory. Since much of this theory has been constructed in reaction to and against high modernism, there is seldom any mention of black experience or writings by black people in this work, specifically black women. (p.1)

The postcolonial desire, therefore, is that of decolonised communities; communities whose epistemological narratives are grounded in a critique of the colonial project but also mindful of the irreversible nature of historical events. Therefore for the post-colonial to speak or write in the imperial tongues is to call fourth a problem of identity, to be thrown into mimicry and ambivalence (Bhabha, 1994), and, hence, to challenge master narratives that undermine the identities of the subaltern\textsuperscript{13}. That is why Ngugi (1981) argues that the question of language for postcolonialism is political, cultural and literary (Ngugi, 1981). Language plays an important role in shaping identity and defining cultural memory which in turn influences intercultural, intracultural\textsuperscript{14} and crosscultural\textsuperscript{15} relations. It is the author’s contention that the imperial tongues should be appropriated by the subaltern to develop perspectives of cultural resistance (to master narratives) in a bicultural context. Accordingly postcolonialism and postmodernism, in this thesis, are assumed to be contingent to the politics of cultural identity; and the arts provide an appropriate medium for cultural dialogue and resistance.

\textsuperscript{13} Subaltern implies oppressed subjects in a colonial/post-colonial system.
\textsuperscript{14} Intercultural and intracultural implies cultural dialogue amongst people of African descent.
\textsuperscript{15} Crosscultural implies dialogue between people of African descent and those from non African cultures.
Cultural Identity and the Arts

The choice of an arts based enquiry is therefore appropriate because the arts provide an ideal medium for exploring some aspects of African culture and identity especially issues pertaining to the development of bicultural competence (Gordon, 2007), a concept which implies possession of those qualities that enable an individual to function effectively, between and within the dominant and subordinate culture (Gordon, 2007; de Anda, 1984). Embodiment of such qualities is crucial for the proper function of an African descendant in Australia. Through arts performance it is possible to reclaim or recreate those identities of our own choice (Leavy, 2008; Bharucha, 1993; Ngugi, 1993; Asante, 1990).

Bicultural competence calls for a deconstruction of notions of African, what it means to be an Australian a black, a white and part of the mainstream (Gordon, 2001, 2007, hooks, 2003). Performance experience of theatre offers participants the possibilities to explore and articulate these concepts performatively. It is here that the participants as people of African descent will question what is genuinely and fundamentally relevant to their existence and humanity. A philosophical approach to performance may lead to spiritual and psychotherapeutic dimensions that will inform their bicultural competence.

And as Gilbert (1995) notes, in respect to Aboriginal dance, as well as resisting identities imposed by the dominant culture on individuals or groups and/or abrogating the privilege of their signifying systems, dance can recuperate postcolonial subjectivity because movement helps constitute the individual in society (Gilbert, 1995). Therefore performance as an inclusive concept of diverse art forms is a useful medium for cultural expression and affirmation.
Performance offers possibilities for metaphysical\textsuperscript{16} connection between the embodied knowledge of the performer and an audience. For instance, Soyinka, a leading African playwright, has observed that an African audience is part of the space of the performance and therefore metaphysically part of the conflict taking place. Soyinka, therefore, sees the use of the stage (that is the space used by the actors during a performance) as affective, not merely effective, because it affects the audience in a certain emotional and physical ways (Jeyifo, 2001). Therefore the use of this space moves from being metaphorical to being metaphysical: the stage space consequently becomes an appropriate location for cultural negotiation and dialogue, enabling the deconstruction of notions relating to migration, race relations, African Australian identities, subordinate and dominant culture and bicultural socialisation and competence (Leavy, 2008; Gordon, 2007; Etherton, 1982).

Moreover, Schechner (1992) provides a useful, elaboration of performance when he observes that performance can engage our intellectual, social, cultural, historical and artistic life in a broad sense. From this perspective, philosophical exploration of the African cultural phenomena may be facilitated through performance. However as cultural practice is political\textsuperscript{17}, an examination of the link between culture and power can

\textsuperscript{16} Metaphysical is used in a similar sense to the notion of ‘Metaphysical arts’—Arts or practises which deal with the interaction between the inner mind and the external world (http://vsociety.net/ accessed on 22/12/2012).

\textsuperscript{17} The state through its constitution and policies defines the cultural values expected of its citizens. Australia after emerging from a White Australian policy (in the late 60s), is experimenting with Multiculturalism, which is still viewed suspiciously from the conservative right (Castles, Cope, Kalantzis, and Morrissey, 1988; also see Andrew Fraser’s (2007) paper ‘Rethinking White Australian Policy’ http://www.downundernewslinks.com/article/Rethinking_the_White_Australia_Policy.html which is loaded with racist comments about African and Asian immigration into Australia.
create the conditions that will support the emancipatory interests of young people (and adults) of African migrant descent. By incorporating young people’s voices through artistic performance, empowering knowledge about themselves will be revealed. Therefore artistic performance can be an appropriate context for formulating new ideas, reevaluating culture, for contemplating new identities and consequently strengthening bicultural identity.

In utilizing the arts as a framework for cultural identity negotiation, a crucial question becomes: should art educate, inform, organize, influence, incite to action, or should it simply be an object of pleasure? (Boal, 1979). Brecht, (1964) proposed that:

We need a type of theatre which not only releases the feelings, insights and impulses possible within the particular historical field of human relations in which the action takes place, but employs and encourages those thoughts and feelings which help transform the field itself. (p.190)

Boal’s question and Brecht’s proposition provide useful contexts through which to develop culturally educative theatrical events. Just as objective social reality exists not by chance but as the product of human action, so is its transformation. Liberating education begins with the ‘subjects’ and it is essential that they participate in the emancipation process with an increasingly critical awareness of their role as agents of transformation (Freire, 1970/2000). Through the arts, as an educative experience, it is possible to conceptualise and enact informative scenarios for rethinking and reshaping African Australian identities to meet the economic, cultural and political exigencies of the modern world (Eisner, 2008; Appiah, 1992; Gyekye, 1997).
The next chapter explores the notions of performance and cultural identity in a diaspora context as a means to providing insight about the performative nature of African cultures, and the significance of this in identity negotiation.
Chapter Three

Performance and Cultural Identity: an African Diaspora Context

While Asians in particular transformed Australian cuisine, the African contribution is likely to be in the arts, especially music and dance. (Udo-Ekpo, in Ahmed, T., 2005)

The notion of emancipatory literacy suggests two dimensions of literacy. On the one hand, students have to become literate about their histories, experiences, and the culture of their immediate environments. On the other hand, they must also appropriate those codes and cultures of the dominant spheres so they can transcend their own environments. (Freire and Macedo, 1987, p.47)

Introduction

The artistic nature of African culture is explored in this chapter since it informs the notion ‘performance and cultural identity’. The notion of performance and African identities is explored in the context of the African diaspora. African diaspora and cultural memory are assumed to be an important source of empowering cultural knowledge (Maathai, 2009; Gordon, 2007; Marah, 2006; Ngugi, 1993; Asante and Asante, 1990; Mbiti, 1989; P’Bitek, 1979; Ocitti, 1973; Kenyatta, 1965). Through theatrical events cultural memory is performed and cultural values passed on to the next generation. Moreover African traditional theatre is participatory and celebratory. “It is also total, because it combines many art forms, music, poetry, dance, acting, miming, mask, painting, singing and dialogue (Enekwe, 2002, p.31).”

Accordingly the first part of the discussion in this chapter explores the concept of African diaspora as a means to establishing its most significant features. African diaspora is an important conceptual context for
exploring cultural identity of the African Australian youth because it informs their transnational positioning or belongingness, the being ‘here’ and ‘there’ (Kumsa, 2005). This is followed by a discussion of the concept of cultural memory as an essential constituent of cultural identity (Gordon, 2007; Agnew, 2005; Boadu, 1990). The third section explores performance and cultural identity the two terms are related because cultural identities are asserted performatively. The performative nature of African culture is explored by examining African music; African dance and their psycho-dramatic nature (Nzewi, 1983). The fourth section examines the concept of festival as a theatrical event whose cultural context is the community (Sauter, 2004). The notion of African festival is developed and through Soyinka’s theatre the theatrical nature of African festival is elaborated. The chapter concludes by commenting on the contemporary role of African festivals and how they may inform the ACMYAF in Australia.

African diaspora-theoretical considerations

Although the themes and ideas encapsulated by the term African diaspora had been developed long before the term itself came into fashion (Shepperton, 1993), the concept as popularly conceived is a denotative label for the dispersed people removed or exiled from a common territorial origin, sub-Saharan Africa. The term African diaspora was not used to refer to people of African descent until the mid-1950’s, when it begun to be employed by intellectuals involved in Pan-Africanism and the effort to raise consciousness and create solidarity.

Wole Soyinka is one of the leading playwrights in African theatre. He has produced extensive work, in the form of plays and has written extensively about the arts. His critical and evaluative approach to African culture and politics makes his work relevant to the ACMYAF project.
among blacks across the globe (Dubois, 1965/2007; Padmore, 1956).

As initially constructed in the Pan-African political ideologies of Blyden (1872), Garvey (1986), Du Bois (2006), and Padmore (1956), what identified the universe of Africans and African-descended peoples was blackness. Outside of ‘racial’ blackness, for these intellectuals membership in the black world was determined by common experiences of racial terror, slavery and marginalisation, based on internationally held racist ideologies of black inferiority (Gordon and Anderson, 1999).

Herskovits (1990), following the pioneering work of Woodson (1968) and especially Du Bois (2006, 1965/2007), recognised the problematic nature of race as an analytical category and focussed on culture as the key element in the analysis of the black world. The Herskovitsian notion of ‘African Cultural Survivals’ and their persistence in all communities of African descent, coupled with Boasian\(^{19}\) notions of cultural relativism, became the basis for a new theorization of what was soon to be called the African diaspora. It became conceptualised not simply as a racial entity but as a cultural community dynamically uniting Africa and its communities in displacement through commonalities of African cultural practise and world view. This perspective of Pan-Africanism provides the theoretical underpinning for nationalist Afrocentric scholarship of

\(^{19}\) Boas, Franz (1858-1942), German-American anthropologist and ethnologist, born in Minden, and educated at the universities of Heidelberg, Bonn, and Kiel. He pioneered in the use of a scientific approach to anthropology. He also demonstrated the necessity of studying a culture in all its aspects, including its religion, art, history, and language, as well as the physical characteristics of the people. One of his most important conclusions was that no truly pure race exists, and that no race is innately superior to any other.
which Ani (1994) and Asante (1988) are the leading proponents. Their main assertion is that the African American community’s conceptualisations of its identity should be based in African culture (Asante, 2003; Gordon and Anderson, 1999; Ani, 1994) rather than Eurocentric white culture.

From its beginnings, the African diaspora as a theoretical project has been political. The term itself begun to be employed at a particularly fertile moment in the civil rights and Pan-African movements by intellectuals and activists striving to increase racial consciousness and solidarity in confrontation with racism and colonialism (Gordon and Anderson, 1999; X, 1999; Masolo, 1994). African diaspora has provided the foundations for a cultural politics of identity among peoples of African descent. Hence the notion of African diaspora has a performative function. It can serve as a catalyst for self-recovery: collective black self recovery (Hua, 2005’ p.203).

Despite the undeniable intellectual and political achievements facilitated by this formulation of the African diaspora paradigm, there are those working from what can be broadly termed a postmodern perspective who question it. Appiah (1992), for example, is one scholar who argues that prominent theories of black cultures and identities rely on forms of racial or cultural essentialism that collude with western understandings of race, culture, and nationalism. Appiah (1992) argues that these scholars’ claim that the Afrocentric aspiration to construct an authentic natural and stable rooted African identity and a racial self results in an ethnic absolutism that reifies the very categories of racial oppression. For their part, these critics (Mercer, 1994; and Appiah, 1992) offer alternative means of opening up
our understanding of the African diaspora as an intellectual project (Gordon and Anderson, 1999).

Some of these critics have turned to the notion of ‘hybridity’ for resolution of these problems in theorizing the African diaspora. Mercer (1994), for example, produces a theoretical version of diaspora as hybridity that places even less emphasis on the search for identity in territorial, cultural, or racial origins. In a general sense he uses the term diaspora as a noun to refer to ‘the domain of disseminated and dispersed identities originating from an initial loss of one’ to the conditions of displacement and necessary entanglement with ‘white’ culture through which black culture (outside of Africa) has been forged. He also uses the term as a kind of adjective, speaking of ‘diaspora identity,’ ‘diaspora aesthetics,’ and a ‘diaspora perspective,’ to suggest that peoples living in displacement develop particular kinds of culture and consciousness characterised by processes of hybridisation (Mercer, 1988).

Mercer (1994) constantly attacks efforts to assert cultural or racial authenticity and celebrates the creative mixing of traditions, the appropriation of dominant ‘master’ codes toward subversive aesthetics and political ends. For Mercer, there is no unified black community, and blackness is an open signifier complicated by the divisions of class, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity. While Mercer’s perspective offers a powerful critique of racial and cultural essentialism and calls necessary attention to the diversity of African communities, his approach is insufficient to deal with the lingering power of specially racialised forms of power and subordination (Hooks, 2003; Gordon, 2001; Yeboah, 1997; Gilroy, 1993). Furthermore, while
essentialism has emerged in recent diaspora discourse as an ugly label for any tendency to see the imprint of the homeland or ancestral culture, in this case Africa, we can hardly deny that Africa has had much to do with the ways that new world Africans have chosen to address the realities before them from the moment they emerged from the slave ships. Memories of Africa, a sense of these roots served exiles well, especially when conditions became intolerable (Okpewho, 1999). Dyson in the introductory remarks to ‘Roots’ confirms this observation, by Okpewho, when he states that:

Alex Haley’s ‘Roots’ counted as much more than a mere book. It tapped deeply into the black American hunger for an African ancestral home that had been savaged by centuries of slavery and racial dislocation. More than the sum of its historical and literary parts—some of which have been rigorously criticised and debunked—Haley’s quest for his roots changed the way black folk thought about themselves and how white America viewed them. No longer were we genealogical nomads with little hope of learning the names and identities of the people from whose loins and culture we sprang. Haley wrote black folk into the book of American heritage and gave us the confidence to believe that we could find our forbearers even as he shared his own. (Dyson, p.ix, in Roots by Alex Haley, 1974/2007)

Indeed exploration of cultural memory through literary forms is useful for reconstituting people’s identities.

The work of Gilroy (1993) represents a middle ground between the ontological essentialism of Afrocentrism and the antiessentialism of diaspora as hybridity. He addresses the question of the unity and commonality of the African diaspora as a theoretical and political problem rather than as an ontological given rooted in a presumed racial essence or mythological origin. For Gilroy, diaspora refers to the historical dispersal of African peoples through enslavement, the creation of

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20 ‘Roots’ is book profiling Alex Haley’s search for his origins, in Africa. The search began with a story told by Kunta Kinte, a slave, from whom Alex Haley descended. It is a story about identity and cultural memory.
similar yet different black cultures in the New World, and the contemporary effort to imagine a shared sense of peoplehood in confrontation with persistent systems of racialised terror (Gordon and Anderson, 1999).

He tackles the question of the roots (or rootedness) of the African diaspora by focussing not on shared racial or cultural essences and origins but on similar, sometimes shared, experiences of racial subordination and struggle. He is particularly interested in how forms of black culture, especially music, encode distinctive epistemologies and aesthetics that run counter to the presumptions of modernity and provide the possibility of political struggles that transcend the boundaries of nation. Gilroy’s theoretical context provides a useful approach for the ACMYAF project because it enables the enaction of theatrical events as a medium for generating culturally self-affirming discourse. Gilroy’s work foregrounds the theorisation of diaspora as a problem of politics and identity (Gordon and Anderson, 1999). For the African migrant community, in Australia, Gilroy’s theory offers a useful approach to the conceptualisation of performance and cultural identity as an intercultural and cross-cultural political project. Furthermore it provides a theoretical framework for interrogating African cultural heritage and memory as a problem of both body and mind. For as Mans (2004) notes:

...in Africa mind and body are traditionally conceived as one and the same. One knows life through one’s body. Life is embodied–felt and experienced in all its sensory levels, and learning is situated in physical experience, not dissociated intellectual pursuit. Hence, the body and its ability to move in meaningful ways is more than just a vision of physicality (p.80).

Through this kind of conceptualisation, of the body and mind, it is possible to develop a context and meaning of an African Australian theatrical expression and
identity. African Australian theatrical expression becomes a form of epistemology, an arts based epistemology, that builds on life experiences subsequently leading to a more conscious and purposeful development of bicultural competence that draws on the African cultural memory.

The next section explores the notion of cultural memory highlighting its significance in cultural identity reconstruction and renewal. Cultural memory is assumed to be embodied and performative.

Cultural Memory

Assmann (cited in Holtorf, 2008) defines cultural memory as the ‘outer dimension of human memory’ embracing two different concepts: ‘memory culture’ (Erinnerungskultur) and ‘reference to the past’ (Vergangenheitsbezug). Memory culture is the way a society ensures cultural continuity by preserving, with the help of cultural mnemonics, its collective knowledge from one generation to the next, rendering it possible for later generations to reconstruct their cultural identity. References to the past, on the other hand, reassure the members of a society of their collective identity and supply them with an awareness of their unity and singularity in time and space; a shared consciousness by creating a shared past. All cultures re-enact cultural memory through ritual, festivals, theatre, writing, song and so on, as signifiers of their cultural identities. From the foregoing cultural memory informs cultural identity, performatively, and this is of significance to the ACMYAF project because the theatrical events enacted during the festival may be perceived as performance of cultural memory that informs cultural identity.
Furthermore Holtorf, in reference to Assmann, suggests that cultural memory is not about giving testimony of past events, as accurately and truthfully as possible, nor is it necessarily about ensuring cultural continuity rather it is about making meaningful statements about the past in a given cultural context of the present. Memory does not revive the past but constructs it. The quest for memory is the search for one’s history. Sites of memory are collective yet individual, living yet dead. Therefore, understanding of how memory works within diaspora studies can help us rewrite our past (Hua, 2005).

Through Arts-based methods cultural memory can be reconstructed performatively: to rewrite notions of home and belonging, to develop various performative identities, to retell one’s located life history, to recognise the importance of embodied memory and counter memory, to document a genealogy of resistance, to derive a new knowledge of self-growth and self recovery, and to differentiate memory as nostalgic yearning and memory as an intention to remember critically, to understand our relationship to the past, history, time and spatial belonging (Hua, 2005; Kumsa, 2005, Kenyatta, 1965).

The next section examines the nature of African culture as a performative culture through which cultural memory is sustained. Community is central to the theatrical events and through community participation the essence of African culture and its performative nature is signified.

Performance and Cultural Identity

According to Drewal (1991) performance is a contested concept, meaning that its very existence is bound up in disagreement about what it is, and that
disagreement over its essence is itself part of that essence. Therefore, for Drewal, performance is open-ended, but it privileges process, the temporally or processually constructed nature of realities, and the agency of knowledgeable performers who have embodied particular techniques and styles to accomplish it. In the broadest sense, performance is the praxis of everyday social life and hence a fundamental dimension of culture as well as the production of knowledge about culture. Carlson (2004) too agrees that performance is a contested concept; however he does give credit to one highly suggestive attempt to give an appropriate definition. Drawing on Baumann’s (1989) definition of performance Carlson (2004) observes that:

All performance involves a consciousness of doubleness, through which the actual execution of an action is placed in mental comparison with a potential, an ideal, or a remembered original model of the action. Normally this comparison is made by an observer of the action—the theatre public, the school’s teacher, the scientist—but the double consciousness, not the external observation, is what is most central. An athlete, for example, may be aware of his own performance, placing it against a mental standard. Performance is always performance for someone, some audience that recognises and validates it as performance even when, as is occasionally the case, that audience is the self. (p.71)

From Drewal’s (1991) analysis and Carlson’s (2004) observations about Baumann’s definition of performance, ‘as a praxis of everyday social life’ performance is an appropriate conceptual context for developing a discourse about cultural identity, of the African descendant youth in Australia. This is because performance enables participants to reconstruct embodied knowledge into relevant epistemologies about themselves. Moreover, as Leavy (2009) observes, “...performance based methods can bring research findings to life, adding dimensionality,
and exposing that which is impossible to authenticate (p.135)."

Furthermore, through performance ideas about ourselves can be enacted and negotiated thus turning performance into a powerful vehicle for the expression of emotions and consequently a comprehensive repository of knowledge (Schechner, 2002).

Mays (1986), drawing on Erikson (1968), has suggested that identity must be examined not just from an individual perspective, but also in terms of the individual’s relationship within the social and historical developments of society. This position opposes the idea that an individual’s inner motives, ego and traits are the primary determinants in the development of identity. Drawing on the African American experience, Mays (1986) notes that black African identity is shaped by the dominant culture of whites. Black persons develop within a culture that teaches that all their behaviours, beliefs, and characteristics are inferior, maladjusted, and inadequate. Consequently black people internalise a sense of inadequacy.

Similarly Gordon (2001), a British African-Caribbean, has observed that the people of African descent do not receive affirmation for the basic values, beliefs and behavioural styles of their minority culture in British society. The irony of cultural dominance is that it counteracts and overrides the positive aspects of African migrants own innate subcultural influences (Mosby, 1972). These observations are relevant and similar to the black African experience in Australia where their cultural identities are demeaned and viewed suspiciously (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Smith and Reside, 2009; Willsmore, 2009; Windle, 2008; Wakholi, 2005; Udo-Ekpo, 1999).
But as Bhabha (1994) has observed, terms of cultural engagement, whether antagonistic or affiliative, are produced performatively. Such performance may include anything from individual agents’ negotiations of everyday life, to the stories people tell each other, popular forms of entertainment, political oratory, to bounded events such as theatre, ritual, festivals, parades, and more (Drewal, 1991). Performance, then offers possibilities for purposeful re-enactment and interrogation of cultural memory, through the embodied self, with the intention of negotiating cultural identity. Consequently performance becomes not merely an art, or complacency in tradition, but a means of understanding historical, social, and cultural processes (Schechner, 2004) towards self-recreation and self-affirmation. Performance as a tool for understanding is clearly evident in the subsequent chapters (6, 7, 8 and 9) wherein the theatrical events devised by the participants are discussed.

The next section, explores the theatrical nature of African culture, including its psycho-dramatic intentions expressed through music and dance.

**African Music as a theatrical event**

One cannot talk of the sources of African theatre without mentioning its two basic projections: music and dance; song and choreography. African music cannot be separated from all that makes up the social scene, the traditional and the general mode of life of black Africa south of the Sahara (Traore, 1972). Music is an integral part of African life. The musical games played by children are never gratuitous; they are a form of musical training which prepares them to participate in all areas of adult activity—fishing, hunting, farming, grinding maize; and attending weddings, funerals and dances. This
explains why every conceivable sound has its place in traditional African music, whether in its natural form as it is produced by the object or animal in question, or reproduced by an instrument that imitates them as faithfully as possible (Bebey, 1975; Ocitti, 1973; Traore, 1972).

Music also plays a paramount role in initiation ceremonies (Bebey, 1975). For example, among the Bamasaba of Uganda, candidates for the circumcision initiation ritual are taken through various stages of preparation for the initiation ceremony using music and dance as spiritual, motivational and pedagogical components. Usually there is an ensemble of drummers, dancers and mentors who accompany the candidate(s), providing rhythms, to which the candidate improvises songs from an existing repertoire or his original creations21.

The initiation ceremony of the Adiukru (Ivory Coast) known as the Lohu—for admitting numbered adolescents into adult society, also uses music. During a certain length of time before the ceremony, the boy’s have to wear women’s clothing and allow their hair to grow long. At the end of the Lohu their hair is cut and their normal clothing restored. As soon as they are dressed as men they celebrate wildly around the village and then reconstitute themselves for an orderly procession to take part in the conversation with the drums. The ceremony concludes with singing and dancing (Bebey, 1975).

The rite of passage, as conducted by the Adiukru, of Ivory Coast, has a metaphysical significance since the candidate passes through several stages of physical and psychological experience engaging both the body and the mind. Moreover the feminine initiation experience, by the initiation candidates, is also an important aspect of

21 Author’s personal observation while growing up in Africa.
psychological empathy with the feminine side of themselves. In the African cultural memory youth arts festival (ACMYAF) the theatrical events incorporated a rite of passage through which participants were involved in dialogue about issues pertaining to cultural identity; and to play character roles that allowed them to assume different psychological identities from their own. The participants improvised scenarios; experimented with dance ideas to create choreographies, based on their own experiences and cultural memory leading to transformative outcomes.

As Nketia (1974) has asserted the factors that shape and maintain musical practice in Africa operate in the direction of both change and continuity. The Islamic period\(^2\), for example, increased the scope of overlap to the extent that it introduced new resources and features that were adopted over an extensive area. But it also created a new cleavage between the musical practise of islamised and non-islamised societies. Within islamised societies, continuity of tradition was assured through the integration of old and new material and through the extension of the use of music in new aspects of social life.

The European period, (nineteenth to twentieth century), however, was marked by divergent tendencies that led to the emergence of new musical subcultures. It introduced new levels of identification that went beyond those of the ethnic group, and heralded in a new era of internationalism. Consequently, new distinctions in musical practise arose—particularly between traditional

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\(^2\) The faith and culture of Islam formed Asia’s last major contribution to the development of Africa. Islamic culture implied more than a religion: a new language, new concepts of law and government, and new standards of dress and architecture accompanied the new faith. Islam was carried across North Africa by the armies that burst out of Arabia in the middle of the seventh century A.D. (Hallett, 1970, p.17).
and contemporary practice, as well as in levels of musical activity relating to idiomatic categories—which established the division between traditional, popular, and art music in sub-Saharan Africa (Euba, 2003, Nketia, 1974).

Much of what was inherited from the colonial period was retained, including Western military band music, and even national anthems in Western musical idiom were accepted. Now it appears that increased attention is being given to expanding the scope of traditional music in national programs, in addition to emphasising its relevance to modern cultural institutions. The creative response to all this is beginning to show itself in adaptations of traditional music for use in new contexts, as well as in new popular and art music based almost entirely on traditional materials (Nketia, 1974). Both traditional and contemporary forms of African music were experimented with and incorporated into the African cultural memory youth arts festival (ACMYAF). The next section explores dance as a theatrical event and complimentary art form to music.

**African Dance as a theatrical event**

Traditional African dance is the integrated art of movement that is controlled by its music which is governed by its languages. African dance is not like any other form of dance. Its relationship to music, thereby language, is what chiefly distinguishes it from any other art forms. Without African languages, African music would not exist. Therefore, there are as many styles of African dancing as there are different ethnic groups and languages. Because of the great number of different ethnic groups and languages in Africa it would take forever to elaborate on each ethnic dance (Green, 1994). Therefore the discussion of African dance is limited to
the Ramogi dance of the Luo people, of Kenya. The choice of Ramogi dance is due to its richness in story and theatrical content relevant to the ACMYAF. The section concludes by exploring the psycho-dramatic basis of music in African dance.

African dance is part of the lives of the people; it translates everyday experiences into movement. The event could be of great historical significance, such as commemoration of an Independence Day, or everyday significance such as birth, puberty, putting a baby to sleep or pounding of maize to make a meal. Among the Luo people Ramogi dance is performed to depict the Luo culture. It is performed during and after burial ceremonies, during wrestling games, installation of chiefs and general entertainment. The dance is slow and involves graceful movements of parts of the body—arms, shoulders, hip and legs. The dance formations include circles, lines; and body movements include shoulder rotation and improvisations in squatting, sitting and standing, postures.

A leader who usually holds a fly whisk directs dancers into different dance formations and patterns, using a whistle. The leader wears joho/jara, (a long piece of garment), and carries a shield, spear and club, probably symbolising war origins of this dance. You also have one or two Nyangoma, stilt walkers, who dance on their stilts. The costumes worn include owalo (sisal skirts) tied around the waist, head gears made of feathers either of ostrich or any other poultry. Feathers are sewn on a piece of cloth or any other material and tied around the mid arm (Odwar, 2005).

Ramogi dance is communal and is accompanied by singing, which enhances its socialising effects. The songs that accompany the dance guide the dancers and they
strengthen the purposes of the dance through text. The texts of the songs vary and cover general topics such as praises of leaders, marriage, and portrayal of different characters in the community (i.e. the lazy, the cheats, and the promiscuous), rebuke bad behaviour, and they also mimic animals. The instruments that accompany the dance are there to enhance the beauty of the songs and hence the entire performance (Odwar, 2005). Dance, in African culture, has both a social and aesthetic significance through which cultural memory is constructed. In ACMYAF dance was used to explore and perform cultural identities of the participants. Choreographies were negotiated by participants of different African backgrounds to create unique dance forms that defined their identities.

The Psycho-Dramatic Intentions of Music in Dance

Nzewi (1983) in his exploration of the relationship between African music and dance notes that what is often lumped together as traditional or folk music of Africa has, actually, four conceptual categories: (1) music event; (2) synthesis of music and dance event (3) synthesis of music, dance, movement, drama and (4) plastic arts event. The music cum dance category is usually characterised by the presence of a rhythm of dance component in the overall texture as well as an action rhythm quality. Action rhythm refers to the kinetic impulses inherent in a music texture. At the psychical level it generates the mood to dance. At the physical level it delineates the basic dance steps and the dance phrasing. The dance-specific aspects of the presentation would then be noticed as the spatial configurations of the parts of the dancer’s body and in the overall eurhythmics of dance conception as an aesthetic art. A rhythm of dance line in music is usually carried by a distinct instrument or, in some case, two
instruments in complementation. It could also be carried in a voice part, and in other instances it is perceivable as a substructural synthesis of the overall texture of an ensemble. In dance music then, the action rhythm generates and sustains the dance urge (psychical tolerance) while the rhythm of dance guides the choreographic structure (musical intention) inherent in the music. This explains the presence of diverse styles in African dance which is almost as varied as the ethnic music in Africa.

The synthesis of music, dance, movement and drama are categorizable as the typical traditional theatre. The role-acting dimension of the integrated theatre conception could be played as mime, dance-drama, dialogue or a combination thereof. Music provides the substructural framework for acting; dramatises the actions and celebrates the conclusion of the entire presentation or its episodes (Nzewi, 1983). Music and dance are, therefore, important components of African theatre and hence given significant attention in the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF).

The embodied aesthetic qualities of African dances which are articulated through body movement are relevant to cultural identity performance and self-concept. Some of the dances developed by the participants, during the festival, confirmed the significance of dance/choreography as a performative context for bicultural competence.

The next section examines the traditional concept of festival as a theatrical event whose cultural context is the community. Community in traditional Africa is a highly valued social structure. Accordingly the nature of African festival is explored as a community event both in its traditional and contemporary form.
African Culture and the Arts

Festival Community

Ejizu (2008) has observed that the sense of community and humane living are highly cherished values of traditional African life. This statement remains true in spite of the apparent disarray in the experience of modern politics and brutal internecine wars in many parts of the continent. People generally return to their villages from their residence in the cities from time to time to join members of their village community to celebrate important traditional rituals and cultural events like initiation, title-taking or festival.

Defining the concept of festival

According to Falasi (1987), festival commonly means a periodically recurrent, social occasion in which, through a multiplicity of forms and a series of coordinated events, participate directly or indirectly and to various degrees, all members of a whole community, united by ethnic, linguistic, religious, historical bonds, and sharing a worldview. This definition implies that both the social function and the symbolic meaning of the festival are closely related to a series of overt values that the community recognises as essential to its ideology and worldview, to its social identity, its historical continuity, and to its physical survival, which is ultimately what the festival celebrates (Falasi, 1987). That’s why Turner (1987) argues that “cultural performances are closely related to social structures, social history, and social processes, with their underlying rhetorics (p.74).” Therefore, festivals are an important communicative vehicle to build, reinforce or affirm ethnic identity (Kaeppler, 1987).

The organisation of social life in traditional societies gives a special place to the festival, for
there is a general consciousness of its potential as a vehicle for communicating or affirming the values of society and for strengthening the bonds that bind its members. The traditional concept of a festival, therefore, is that of a communal celebration of life in which the members of a society participate on different levels in a number of structured and unstructured but significant events (Nketia, undated; Opoku, 1970).

The Religious Nature of African Festival

According to Olupona (2000), “More than anything else, Africa’s religious heritage bestows upon its people a worldview and a value system; it bestows a personal and social orientation to life (p.xviii).” Implied in this statement is that the religious nature of African festivals also defines the social structures, social processes and values of the African people.

The activities of a festival may be spread over a week or more, or it may be limited to one or two days. An example is the adae, among the Akan of Ghana, instituted for remembering ancestors and for renewing the spiritual and political bonds that allow for the continued participation of the dead in the affairs of the living. The mainspring of the adae is, therefore, a set of rituals; focuses on the ancestors and the ceremonial activities, which surround the chief as the link between the living and the dead (Nketia, undated; Opoku, 1970). Among the Banyole of Uganda the link between the living and the dead is Omuntuusa (Spiritual agent) who summons the spirits of the dead through ritual drumming of Efumbo (Spiritual drum) and song, until a medium becomes possessed and ‘spoken through’ by the spirits (personal observation of the author). Omuntuusa is a community
spiritual agent through whom existential contradictions are addressed and ‘resolved’ through ritual\textsuperscript{23}.

Among the Agikuyu of Kenya there was the \textit{Ituika} ceremony held every twenty-five years or so that marked the handing over of power from one generation to another (Ngugi, 1998). According to Kenyatta (1965) in his book \textit{Facing Mount Kenya}, the \textit{Ituika} was celebrated by feasting, dancing, and singing over a six-month period. The laws and regulations of the new government were embodied in the words, phrases and rhythmic movements of the songs and dances. How \textit{Ituika} came to be was always re-enacted in a dramatic procession. Central to all these varieties of dramatic performances were songs, dance and occasional mime.

That is why Ngugi (1998) asserts that drama in pre-colonial Kenya was not, an isolated event, but rather a parcel of the rhythm of daily and seasonal life of the community. It was an activity among other activities, often drawing its energy from those other activities. It was also entertainment in the sense of involved enjoyment; it was moral instruction; and it was also a strict matter of life and death and communal survival. This drama was not performed in special buildings set aside for that purpose. It could take place anywhere—wherever there was empty space. In other words drama was an embodied community activity.

The \textit{Ituika} festival was eventually destroyed by the British colonial government. The missionaries in their proselytising zeal saw many of these traditions as works of the devil. They had to be fought before the bible could hold sway in the hearts of the ‘natives’ (Ngugi, 1998, Mbiti, 1975, 1989; Abraham, 1962).

\textsuperscript{23} Based on personal observation by the author.
Abraham (1962) observed similar problems in Ghana where:

The missionaries too were guilty of their own acts of vandalism. Thinking that the Akans and other Africans worshipped their objects of art, they collected a great many such objects with great assiduity and consigned them to the flames. It is a miracle that some specimens have survived. (p.108)

Traditional festival is a combination of ritual, ceremonial, artistic and recreational activities, which take place in different locations according to a defined schedule. There are activities performed by selected groups outside the view of the general public. The membership of such groups is usually pre-determined on the basis of rank, status or office, kinship or other basis of group affiliation. An element of secrecy surrounds such activities and may generate feeling of awe, and sometimes even fear and tension among those who are prevented by custom from being present, especially when secrecy is enforced by law or religious sanctions. These activities are generally ritually connected with sacred objects, sacred places or personalities and entail participation in music and dancing.

As an institution, traditional festivals have shown a remarkable capacity for survival in spite of social and cultural changes that have taken place as a result of the impact of western cultures, technology and education. Festivals continue to be important contexts for cultural continuity and renewal. Hence ACMYAF was organised with the assumption that festivals are important vehicles for meaningful appropriation of African cultural knowledge towards informed cultural identity.

_Festivals a contemporary Role_

As would be expected, the religious impact of traditional festival has somewhat weakened, particularly
for those who have embraced new faiths. But nowhere has this lead to the curtailment of symbolic actions originally inspired by traditional beliefs, for these constitute the essence of the spectacle that make festivals unique dramatic events. The social and artistic roles of festivals, on the other hand, have assumed new importance in contemporary life and may continue to be the mainstay or basis of patronage in the public aspects of festivals for people in all walks of life. Traditional festivals now provide one of the vital links of the changing contemporary world with the past, and a major channel for the expression and renewal of cultural identity (Mudenda, 2008; Kaeppler, 1987; Nketia, undated). Through the work of Wole Soyinka, an African playwright, the notion of African festival is explored in a contemporary context. Soyinka’s approach suggests a creative renewal of African culture through the arts.

Soyinka’s Theatre as Festival

The pre-festival tension is almost tangible in some of Soyinka’s plays. In Kongi’s Harvest, the theme is the symbolism of the New Yam, the ancient life, living spirit, the sign of fertility and the tilling of the soil.

Kongi represents the modern dictator who abuses the people’s respect for old rituals and exploits tradition to enhance his own power. When the great day breaks and Kongi is to be given the first of the New Yams it appears that, despite amnesty rules, Kongi intends to hang several political opponents on the day of the festival. One of them is shot while making an attempt on the life of the dictator. The daughter of the victim, who is herself a member of the resistance, sees to it that at the last moment the head of her father, hidden in a copper pot, is given to Kongi instead of the First Yam.
When the lead is removed, the bystanders see the head of the old man and everyone flees in panic. Only Kongi remains paralysed by fear, staring at the gift. The end of the festival illustrates the conflict between the harvest feast of life, as his subjects wish to celebrate it, and the real harvest of an administration in which human lives are not important. Kongi’s harvest leaves few illusions about totalitarian governments. Only the resistance symbolises a gleam of hope (Schipper, 1982).

In theatre as a social phenomenon the relationship between the public and the action is Soyinka’s main concern. Soyinka believes that although, in principle, every work of art that enlarges the horizon of the human spirit can be an instrument of change theatre is the most revolutionary form of art. Wole Soyinka is a sceptic who mistrusts power, because power corrupts. According to him the writer ought to occupy himself with the reality of his own society, and fight for the awakening of conscience and for freedom of expression (Soyinka, 1988; Schipper, 1982). Furthermore, Soyinka places much emphasis on the recuperation of the positive values of African indigenous culture; he sees these values as both a storehouse of ideas and expressive material that can deepen artistic expression and as a vital refuge from the horrors and evils of history (Jeyifo, 2001; Soyinka, 1990). Accordingly ACMYAF used diverse techniques to incorporate African cultural memory in the theatrical events.

Conclusion

From the foregoing discussion under the broad heading of Performance and the African Identity diverse themes have been explored in an effort to show that theatre in traditional Africa is diverse and part of the everyday life. Theatre is enacted on a regular basis
through diverse community events. Therefore theatre does not appear to the people as an occasional event but is part of the social structure through song, dance, and story telling, ritual, worship and ceremonies. Based on the foregoing discussion it is possible to conclude that in traditional Africa theatre nurtures cultural identity.

According to Nzewi (1986) traditional theatre is a medium for encoding philosophies of life for onward transmission to posterity. Since theatre requires constant exhibition to the public in a more or less set form, it is a most resourceful vehicle of retention and transmission of values and maxims. Traditional theatre, therefore, is an embodiment of a society’s history, sociology and anthropology. For African descendants in Australia, theatre offers possibilities of renewing cultural memory and identity.

In the next chapter I review literature about cultural identity negotiation in the context of multicultural Australia.
Chapter Four

Negotiating Cultural Identity: an Australian Context

But I have come to accept that the experience of immigration has been a central part of my life just as it was the centre of my father’s life. And I suspect that in this nation of immigrants, where so many of us have come from unlikely places to meet in unlikely places for generations on end, there must be a way for us to communicate our experiences, our sense of loss as well as our hopes. Perhaps there is a language that can bring us closer together, if we only dare to speak it. (Ivan Jaksic, 2007, p.33)

Introduction

This chapter explores the notions of cultural identity and acculturation in relation to experiences of young people of African descent in Australia. Acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members (Berry, 2007). The first part of discussion ‘the burden of history’ examines the race relations in Australia. Secondly multicultural education as a context for cultural socialisation is discussed. Thirdly, the social psychological challenges faced by the African descendant youth are examined. Fourthly the complexity of culture and its political nature is explored. It is assumed that a dialectical view of culture and its link to social power is essential to understanding the logic that supports the various forms of dominant and subordinate power relations (Darder, 1991), and how these power relations influence the identification of the African descendant youth. Fifthly models which attempt to explain cultural adjustment options into a dominant culture are examined.
The burden of history

Castle, Kalantzis, Cope and Morrissey (1990) have noted that Australia, like some other nations (New Zealand and Canada) used racism as an instrument for securing social solidarity. By drawing the boundaries of the nation in an exclusionary way, racism creates an 'imagined community', drawing people together through affective links which transcend conflicting socio-economic interests. Whites or whiteness has been mythologised as one coherent group despite much closer commonalities between poor white and poor black or rich white and rich black. That notwithstanding racism became a deep-seated feature of Australian ideology and culture. The White Australia Policy was a central element of Australian nationhood from the late nineteenth century right through to the 1960s (Lopez, 2000; Yarwood and Knowing, 1982).

Similarly in Africa, colonial racism perpetuated myths about the 'savage' and 'primitive' as a means to justify colonial expansion and exploitation (Davidson, 1984). Captain Richard Burton, one of the most admired explorers of the African continent, for example, wrote the following in 1860, after reaching the shores of Lake Tanganyika:

The study of the Negro is the study of man's rudimental mind. He would rather appear degeneracy from the civilised man than a savage rising to the first step, were it not for his total incapacity for improvement. He seems to belong to one of those childish races which, never rising to man's estate; fall like worn out links from the great chains of animated nature. (Davidson, 1984, pp. 15)

Davidson (1984) has suggested that such ideas were understandably convenient in a period when Europeans were beginning to think—as many were by the 1860s—that Africa was their oyster. For as it was wrong to invade and
dispossess your equals, it might be morally right to invade and dispossess your natural inferiors, for their benefit as well as your own.

Such historical myths feed into contemporary perceptions of Africa and Africans as noted by Windle (2008):

Racialisation of African refugees in the Australian media appears to find its proximate source in the activation of race as an explanatory category amongst police, giving license to a xenophobic minority. This activation draws on the history of racism in Australia, on wider colonial narratives about primitive Africa, on the perennial discourse of dangerous youth, and even on fears about American cultural imperialism (in the form of black 'gang-culture'). As with Indigenous Australians, the dominant frame is one of underlying societal risk. (Windle, 2008, p.563)

According to several studies (Markus, 1994; Castle et al., 1990; Yarding and Knowing, 1982; Stevens, 1972) racism in Australia exists in several forms: first, racism towards Aborigines has been continuous and intense throughout Australian history. At present, anti-Aboriginal racism takes the form of prejudiced attitudes, and of economic and social marginalisation.

Second, some migrant groups are victims of structural racism, through the mechanisms of labour market segmentation (Colic-Pesker and Tilbury, 2007; Tan-Quigley, 2005). In a study by Tan-Quigley (2005) entitled All Dressed up Nowhere to Go in which she interviewed young people of Somali, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Iraq and Afghani background, she noted discrimination against employment. Being attired in the Islamic head-dress (hijab); speaking with an identifiably 'foreign' accent; being 'Black'; being an immigrant were all associated with denial to employment by some employers. Tilbury and Colic-Peisker (2007) made similar observations, of discrimination in the labour force, towards African refugee migrants.
Third, the Blainey debate of 1984, as an attempt to develop an embracing racist ideology, did point to the existence of racist attitudes that could be articulated and mobilised. Parker (1997), for example, has noted that Blainey, a Professor of History at the University of Melbourne, spoke in March 1984 to a group of Rotarians at Warrnambool, Victoria, about his concerns regarding Asian immigration to Australia. He legitimised his concerns in his talk and later publications by a need to protect the dominant Anglo-Celtic Australian culture from alien and ‘unacceptable’ habits and beliefs of other nations and cultures. Blainey spoke in his many writings and interviews of unacceptable living standards, cooking methods, employment expectations and the population increases which caused unemployment, conflicts and division that consequently posed a threat to ‘the Australian way of life’ (Blainey, 1984). Such theorising by racist scholars has sustained racist ideology in Australian society which is intolerant of cultural difference and consequently presents challenges to the African descendant youth.


More recently, Tanner (2008) in ‘Redmond Barry’ Lecture entitled ‘Africans Face racism’ at Victoria State Library has observed that:
Everyone has heard of Somali taxi-drivers with PhDs. There are countless African-Australian refugees with high-level qualifications who've found it virtually impossible to work in their field of expertise in Australia. Our system of recognition of overseas qualifications is quite tough. This problem now has a new dimension. More and more African-Australians with high-level qualifications from Australian universities can't find jobs. Even in the midst of dire skills shortages. Their degrees are from Melbourne, not Mogadishu, but even they are finding it hard to find employment. Why is this happening? Subtle forms of racial discrimination are much harder to deal with than the blatant actions experienced by past generations. (Reported by Nicholson in the Age, 04/08/08, pp.1-3)

For the African descendant youth racism constitutes a significant social psychological experience. However, with the emergence of multicultural policy in Australia new discourses about identity and socialisation are emerging.

**Multicultural Education and the African Youth**

Australia embraces a multicultural policy. Since the popularization of this policy in the late 1960s and early 1970s, its proponents have argued that multicultural education and the associated notion of cultural pluralism (Lopez, 2000; May, 1999; Theophanous, 1995) can bring about successful socialisation by ethnic 'minorities' into dominant culture. The central claim of this policy being that multicultural education can foster greater cultural interaction, interchange and harmony, both in schools and beyond (May, 1999). Contrary to this expectation is the failure or inadequacy of multicultural education (Partington & McCudden, 1992; Castles, Kalantzis, Cope, & Morrissey, 1990; Jakubowicz, 1984).

Multicultural education has had a largely negligible impact to date on the life chances of minority students African descendant youth included (Wakholi, 2010; Earnest, Tambri and Gillieatt, 2007; Brown, Miller...
and Mitchell, 2006; Cassity and Gow, 2005). The racialised attitudes of majority students, the inherent monoculturalism of school practice, and the wider processes of power relations and inequality which underpin all these24 (May, 1999) have undermined the effectiveness of multicultural education policy. For example, Cassity and Gow (2006), in their research amongst African descendant youth in Western Sydney high schools have observed that:

Overall, the schooling system is not working well for many recently-arrived African young people. There are success stories but, in general, students are struggling within new institutional settings. In the three schools we surveyed the numbers of newly arrived African students have rapidly multiplied. Evidently, teachers, school support staff and youth workers feel ill-equipped and under-resourced to deal with the soaring numbers. While school staff and youth specialists have successfully worked with refugee young people, the new African students present a range of unfamiliar cultural, linguistic and historical backgrounds. (Cassity and Gow, 2006, p.1)

Moreover, the school yard experience is not encouraging in terms of developing social networks and cross cultural communication as suggested by the participants in the research:

‘They think we look different’
‘Some of them think that we are all the same’
‘People think that African people don’t know how to speak English and also they are different from normal people’
‘Cannot attain a degree since their life’s are full of fight on streets’
‘The other students think that students from Africa know nothing about school. ‘They think we are too poor.’ (Cassity and Gow, 2006, p.10)

Partington and McCudden, (1992) argue that teachers and principals are part of the problem that

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24 See Harker and McConnochie (1985); Partington and McCudden (1992); Dei and others (1999).
leads to unsuccessful socialization, of ethnic minority students, into schools when they observe that:

Often school teachers and principals are unaware of the negative impact of the school curriculum on ethnic minority students because of the lack of communication between home and school. Ethnocentric attitudes among teachers may preclude any interest in finding out the specific needs and attitudes of ethnic minority families, and so the students are isolated from effective assistance in their schooling. (p.18)

Hence they suggest that schoolteachers and administrators need to involve parents in the schooling of ethnic minority students which may in turn lead to improved curriculum delivery and positive social relations between ethnic minority students and the wider community of the school. Such an approach which values the background of the students will facilitate development of social networks that benefit their bicultural identities.

From the foregoing the primary socialisation of the African descendant youth takes place within cross-currents of differing cultural fields. Hence for African descendant youth living in a predominantly Eurocentric Australia, facets of culture and identity are often self-consciously selected, syncretised, and elaborated from more than one heritage (Vertovec, 1999). There is a social, psychological and political dimension to this process because bicultural socialisation is influenced by power relations between subordinate and dominant culture25.

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25 The dominant culture refers to the ideologies, social practices, and structures that affirm the central values, interests and concerns of those who are in control of the material and symbolic wealth in society. The subordinate culture refers to groups who exist in social and material subordination to the dominant culture (McLaren, 1988, quoted in Darder, 1991, p.80).
Social psychological challenges

Social psychological challenges experienced by African migrants in Australia lead to alienation and marginalisation. The social properties include factors of migration and cultural difference such as ‘visibility’, intergenerational conflict and situations in which two or more cultures share the same geographical area, with one culture maintaining a higher status than another. The psychological properties involve a state of what Du Bois (2006) labelled ‘double consciousness’ or the simultaneous awareness of oneself as being a member and an alien of two or more cultures. This dual pattern of identification and a divided loyalty may lead to an ambivalent attitude (Berry 2007; LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993). This ambivalence is evident in some African descendant youth as suggested by the participants in a research project conducted by Wakholi (2005)\(^2\). One of the participants noted of this ambivalence as follows:

> If you came to school and said you like *matooke* (steamed banana) or just wearing African attire, then you would even be more different from what you already are. So you try to act normal as the way they are, so that you are not different from anyone else because you’re already black and you are the only black person in the school. And if you were really into the African culture, you would be more different than what you already are. (Wakholi, 2005, p.90)

LaFromboise et al., (1993), argue that a common assumption, that living in two cultures is psychologically undesirable because managing the complexity of dual reference points generates ambiguity and identity confusion needs to be deconstructed. This is because ambiguity could easily be perceived pathological and yet there is also a positive perspective to it (Berry, 2007; Wakholi, 2005).

\(^2\) This was a research project involving ten young people of African migrant descent as part of a Masters of Research Education (MEd) entitled ‘African Cultural Education a Dialogue with African Migrant Youth in Western Australia’ (2005).
LaFromboise et al., (1993), note that Goldberg (1941) and Green (1947), in their response to the marginal human theory, suggested that people who live within two cultures do not inevitably suffer. Both authors suggested that being a ‘marginal person’ is disconcerting only if the individual internalises the conflict between the cultures in which he or she is living. Goldberg (1941) cited in LaFromboise et al., (1993), proposed that there are some advantages of living at the border between two cultures. A marginal person may: (a) share his or her condition with others of the same original culture: (b) engage in institutional practises that are shared by other ‘marginal’ people; (c) experience no major blockage or frustrations associated with personal, economic, or social expectations; and (d) perceive him/herself to be a member of a group. Therefore, a person who is part of a subculture that provides norms and a definition of the individual’s situation will not suffer from the negative psychological effects of being a marginal person. Goldberg’s assertion is confirmed by a participant in the African migrant youth research project, when she suggests that:

African migrant families need African cultural Education and that is where you even talk of our difference. It doesn’t mean that we will segregate ourselves, it just needs to be recognised that I’m going to be who I am. I’m not going to have blonde hair. I’m not going to have the white skin, but I’m still capable of doing everything that I need to do to fit in the society that I have decided to immigrate. Something that I have noticed is, we kind of want to just fit in and accept the culture or whatever that we’ve come into. In the process you forget where you come from. Like I’m always going to be black, I’m always going to have kinky hair and not blonde hair. So that is where the cultural education comes in to teach me of why I’m different, so we need it. (Wakholi, 2005. p.101)
The participant acknowledges that cultural difference reinforced by a cultural education program is relevant to her self-concept.

**Complexity of culture**

In his efforts to unearth the fundamentally political nature of culture, Giroux (1981, 1983, 1985, and 1988) has consistently demonstrated the critical connection between culture and power in his educational theories on ideology, cultural politics and the hidden curriculum. His notion of culture incorporates the range of relationships exercised among social groups generally determined by the nature of social structures, material conditions and mediated, in part, by the power inherent in the dominant culture. Consequently, Darder (1991) argues that there are two important conditions active in Giroux’s definition. The first centres on the material conditions that arise from asymmetrical relations of power and the principles emerging from different classes and groups who use them to make sense of their location in a given society. The second condition refers to the relations between capital and its dominant classes, on the one hand, and the cultures and the experiences of the subordinate classes on the other. In this relationship, capital is constantly working to produce the ideological and cultural conditions essential to maintain itself, or the social relationships needed to produce the rate of profit.

From the standpoint of these two conditions, Giroux (1983) posits a notion of culture as a dialectical instance of power and conflict that results from the constant struggle over material conditions and the form and the content of everyday life. The meaning and nature of culture, as such is derived out of the lived experiences of different social groups and the practical
activities of ownership, control, and maintenance of institutions. From this perspective, the structures, material practices, and lived relations of a given society are not in themselves a unified culture, but rather a complex combination of dominant and subordinate cultures that serve the function of the society itself. African descendant youth, in Australia, are caught up in this complex contradiction and hence have to learn to function between the subordinate and dominant culture with a limited functional knowledge about the relations that sustain these complexities.

Therefore, comprehension and negotiation of the contradictory relations between dominant and subordinate culture requires an informed critical approach which involves learning and revaluating knowledge from both cultural contexts as a means towards better integrative strategies. Comprehending the power relations and interweaving cultural values from both contexts may lead to a more informed and biculturally embodied people who can articulate themselves effectively, in Australia. The next section explores models of second culture acquisition as a means of assessing their appropriateness to the bicultural socialisation of the African descendant youth.

Models of second culture acquisition

According to LaFromboise et al. (1993), five models have been used to understand the process of change that occurs in transitions within, between and among cultures consequent to migration. They include assimilation, acculturation, alternation, multiculturalism, and fusion. Although each model was created to address group phenomena, they can be used to describe the processes by which an individual from one culture, the culture of origin, develops competence in another, often the
dominant majority culture. For each model the underlying assumptions and the psychological impact of biculturalism it appears to generate is discussed.

**Assimilation Model**

One model for explaining the psychological state of a person living within two cultures assumes an ongoing process of absorption into the culture that is perceived as dominant or more desirable. The goal of assimilation is to become socially accepted by members of the target culture. The underlying assumption of all assimilation models is that a member of one culture loses his or her original cultural identity as he or she acquires a new identity in a second culture.

This model leads to the hypothesis that an individual will suffer from a sense of alienation and isolation until he or she has been accepted and perceives that acceptance within the new culture. This person will experience more stress, be more anxious, and suffer more acutely from social problems such as school failure or substance abuse than someone who is fully assimilated into that culture. The gradual loss of support derived from the original culture, combined with the initial inability to use the assets of the newly acquired culture, causes stress and anxiety (Berry, 2007; LaFromboise et al., 1993).

Fordham’s (1988) study of academically successful African American students identified many problems associated with the process of assimilation. According to her findings, successful students felt they had to reject the values of the African American community in order to succeed in school. Those choosing to become ‘raceless’ suffered more stress and personal confusion than did those who maintained their Africa American
identification. On the other hand, those who did not become raceless failed to meet standards imposed by the majority group. In this case, social success in the African American community was associated with school, then economic failure. That is why Murrell (2002) argues for an African-centred pedagogy for accelerated achievement and development of African American children. In this approach Murrell proposes a deep-seated understanding of African American experience, culture, and heritage and the ways that this understanding informs successful teaching of African American children.

The African migrant bicultural experience in Australia is yet to be understood as there is little research to inform the relationship between schooling and identity development of the African migrant child/youth (Cassity and Gow, 2006; Brown, Miller and Mitchell, 2006).

Acquiring new identity, through assimilation, involves some loss of awareness and loyalty to one's culture of origin. Three major dangers are associated with assimilation. The first is the possibility of being rejected by members of the majority culture. The second is the likelihood of being rejected by members of the culture of origin. Third is the likelihood of experiencing excessive stress as one attempts to learn the new behaviors associated with the assimilative culture and shedding the inoperable behaviors associated with the culture of origin (LaFromboise, 1993). Further evidence from the Aboriginal experience, in Australia, suggests that this model has serious negative consequences (Morgan, Tjalaminu & Kwaymullina, 2007; Morgan, 1987; Simon, 1987; Gilbert, 1977). The African experience in relation to this model is yet to be
researched as African migrants are a recent group in Australia.

Acculturation Model

The acculturation model of bicultural contact is similar to the assimilation model in three ways. They both: (a) focus on acquisition of the majority group’s culture by members of the minority group, (b) emphasize a unidirectional relationship between the two cultures, and (c) assume a hierarchical relationship between the two cultures. What differentiates the two models is that the assimilation approach emphasizes the way in which individuals, their offspring, or cultural group will eventually become full members of the majority group’s culture and lose identification with their culture of origin. By contrast, the acculturation model implies that the individual, while becoming a competent participant in the majority culture, will always be identified as a member of the minority culture. One of the distinguishing characteristics of the acculturation process is its involuntary nature. Most often, the member of the minority group is forced to learn the new culture in order to survive economically (Berry, 2007; Theophanous, 1995; LaFromboise, 1993).

Collectively, these studies indicate that acculturation can be a stressful experience, reinforcing the second-class citizenship and alienation of the individual acclimating to a new culture (Berry, 2007; Asante, 2005; McWhorter, 2000; Gates & Cornel, 1996; LaFromboise et al., 1993). Consequently, there is a need to explore alternative models which promote a harmonious harnessing of the good from both the subordinate and dominant as a means to bicultural competence development. Such models are the Alternation, Multicultural and the Bicultural Competence Model.
Alternation Model

The alternation model of second-culture acquisition assumes that it is possible for an individual to know and understand two different cultures. It also supposes that an individual can alter his or her behavior to fit a particular social context. Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi (1986) have argued that it is possible and acceptable to participate in two different cultures or to use two different languages, perhaps for different purposes, by alternating one’s behavior according to the situation. Alternation further assumes that it is possible for an individual to have a sense of belonging in two cultures without compromising his or her sense of cultural identity. The alternation model is an additive model of cultural acquisition parallel to the code-switching theories found in bilingualism research. One of the assumptions underlying this theory is that individuals who can alternate their behavior appropriate to two targeted cultures will be less anxious than a person who is assimilating or undergoing a process of acculturation.

Rashid (1984) has asserted that individuals who have the ability to effectively alternate their use of culturally appropriate behavior may well exhibit higher cognitive functioning and mental health status than people who are monocultural, assimilated or acculturated.

The alternation model differs from the assimilation and acculturation model in two significant ways. First, it posits a bidirectional and orthogonal relationship between the individual’s culture of origin and the second culture in which he or she may be living rather than the linear and unidirectional relationship of the other two models. Furthermore, the model suggests that it is possible to maintain a positive relationship with both cultures without having to choose between them. This
model does not assume a hierarchical relationship between two cultures. Therefore, within this framework, it is possible for the individual to assign equal status to the two cultures, even if she does not value or prefer them equally. The alternation model postulates that an individual can choose the degree and manner to which he or she will affiliate with either the second culture or his or her culture of origin.

The essential strength of the alternation model is that it focuses on the cognitive and affective processes that allow an individual to withstand the negative impact of acculturative stress. It looks at the role the individual has in choosing how he or she will interact with the second culture and the person’s culture of origin. This model allows us to examine the bidirectional impact of cultural contact (LaFromboise et al., 1993). For the African descendant youth, who are mostly multilingual, the model offers some strategies for continued retention of African languages and culture while integrating into dominant culture.

Multicultural Model27

The multicultural model promotes a pluralistic approach to understanding the relationship between two or more cultures. This model addresses the feasibility of cultures maintaining distinct identities while individuals from one culture work with those of other cultures to serve common national or economic needs. In this model it is recognised that it may not be geographic or social isolation per se that is the critical factor in sustaining cultural diversity, but the manner of multifaceted and multidimensional institutional sharing

The Multicultural model and Alternation model may be categorised as ‘Integration’ models whereby the individual values and maintains home culture but also relating to dominant culture (Vaughan & Hogg, 2002).
between cultures. The multicultural model generates the hypothesis that an individual can maintain a positive identity as a member of his or her culture of origin while simultaneously developing a positive identity by engaging in complex institutional sharing with the larger political entity comprised of other cultural groups. In this model it is assumed that public and private identities need not become fused and that the tension of solving internal conflicts caused by bicultural stress need not have a negative psychological impact but could, instead, lead to a personal and emotional growth.

Multicultural models while ideal for multiethnic societies they are constrained by challenges of a political and ideological nature. Multiculturalism as it is often debated today has a lot to do with the imposition of some cultures on others and with the assumed superiority that powers this imposition (Taylor, 1994; Bhabha, 1990). Western liberal societies are still haunted by their colonial relations with the aboriginal and colonised 'savage'. Since the beginning of colonialism Europeans have projected an image of such people as somehow inferior 'uncivilised,' and through the force of conquest have often been able to impose this image on the conquered (Smith, 1999; Masolo, 1994; Davidson, 1984). Therefore, the political imperatives of this model and its success (or failure) depend on the moral commitment from those holding political power. Multicultural societies and communities that stand for the freedom and equality of all people rest upon mutual respect for reasonable, intellectual, political and cultural differences (Gutmann, 1994). Freedom and equality needs to address the many locations created by the experience of subordination—racism and prejudice.
Bicultural Competence Model

According to LaFromboise, et al., (1993) the construct of bicultural competence as a result of living in two cultures grows out of the alternation model. Although there are a number of behaviors involved in the acquisition of bicultural competence—shifts in cognitive and perceptual processes, acquisition of new language; the literature on biculturalism consistently assumes that an individual living within two cultures will suffer from various forms of psychological distress (Gordon, 2007, 2001; de-Anda, 1984). Research suggests that individuals living in the two cultures may find the experience more beneficial than living a monocultural life-style (Gordon, 2001, 2007). The key to psychological wellbeing may well be the ability to develop and maintain competence in both cultures (Berry, 2007; Gordon, 2007; LaFromboise et al., 1993; de-Anda, 1984).

Development of competence in two cultures requires a number of individual attributes including personal and cultural identity, age and life stage, gender and gender role identification, and socio economic status, among others (LaFromboise et al., 1993; de-Anda, 1984).

Bicultural competence requires a substantial degree of personal integration for one to avoid the negative consequences of a bicultural existence. Triandis (1980) has suggested that two factors may facilitate personal integration namely self awareness and the ability to analyse social behaviour. Furthermore, in relation to bicultural competence, it is important to focus on two facets of identity development. The first involves an evolution of an individual’s sense of self sufficiency.

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28 The notion of ‘bicultural’ is a preferred perspective for this thesis because it enables the articulation of power relations underlying the politics of cultural identity. The major emphasis is on the dominant and subordinate cultures which constitute the main negotiation spaces for cultural identity of an African descendant youth.
and ego strength. Internal sense of self develops in relationship to the individual’s psycho-social experience, to the point where a psychologically healthy individual has a secure sense of who he or she is or is not (LaFromboise et al., 1993). This is where the arts-based approaches become relevant in facilitation of learning about the self and the surroundings performatively. Through critical arts-based approach, new ideas are revealed which will enhance self awareness and consequently lead to enabling attitudes necessary for functioning in the two cultures.

For Gordon (2001), ‘biculural competence’ is a deliberate process of becoming bicultural, rather than merely making erroneous claims of biculturality as an automatic and defensive response to the realities of being ‘black’ in white society. In order to achieve transformation towards ‘biculural competence’ Gordon (2001), proposes that it is necessary to gain: Self-knowledge; Educate self for critical consciousness; Nurture internal world; Seek support and embed process in life as a way of being. Achieving ‘biculural competence’ means being competent not only in terms of the culture of residence but also, and very importantly, the ‘culture of origin’.

Gordon, an African British of Caribbean origin, notes that in order to gain competence in her ‘Culture of Origin’ the challenge was to begin to connect and engage with that cultural experience and people she knew very little about. She proceeded to read the works of some of the ‘African’ thinkers who have consequently influenced her thinking and liberated her African consciousness. She also travelled to Ghana, in Africa to see the departure centres of slaves to the Americas (Gordon, 2001, 2007). This strategy of self searching provided new avenues and
important link to her African connection and legacy. And this is how she puts it:

Black culture does not provide this symbolic haven of belonging, homeliness and support and was not designed to do so... through identifying as British African Caribbean (BAC) instead of blacks, enables us to have a positive cultural legacy, as opposed to an externally imposed cultural disorder, to pass on to our offspring. In this way we begin the process of ending the generational transmission of a culture of deprivation, poverty, victimhood and soul murder. (Gordon, 2007, p.148)

Further Gordon (2007) suggests that developing conscious bicultural competence demands that we work with the visible and invisible legacies bequeathed to us by history and our ancestors; hence the incorporation of African cultural memory in the project as a context for exploring cultural identity towards bicultural competence.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the literature relating to cultural identity negotiation and socialization in an Australian context. The discussion was contextualized in Australia’s race relations and multiculturalism. The models of second culture acquisition were also discussed. The Bicultural competence model is the most appropriate for cultural identity negotiation of African descendant youth. Bicultural competence entails development of competence in both the dominant and subordinate culture. It also involves working with the cultural legacies bequeathed to us by our ancestors.

The next chapter discusses the research design.
Chapter Five
Research Design

The existential challenge to the new cultural politics of difference can be stated simply: How does one acquire the resources to survive and the cultural capital to thrive as a critic or artist? (West, 1999, p. 106)

These things must be viewed in their historic setting. The conditions of today have been determined by what has taken place in the past, and in a careful study of this history we may see more clearly the great theatre of events in which the Negro has played a part. (Woodson, 2006, p. 6)

Performance is thus a fundamental dimension of culture as well as the production of knowledge about culture. (Drewal, 1991, p. 1)

Introduction
The African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF) was located in a marginal group of migrants. It assumed the existence of a dialectical power relation between the subordinate (African) and dominant (Eurocentric) culture that influenced the performative nature of the participants’ cultural identities (Jayasuriya, 2008; Akinyela, 1996; Darder, 1991; Solis, 1980). Hence it was the researcher’s intention to create a festival which would be both a research and an aesthetic space through which the participants would explore issues relating to their cultural identity and cultural memory, eduactively. Conscious reconstruction of their African cultural memory was assumed to be an important signifier of their African Australian identity and therefore an essential component to their bicultural identity competence (Gordon, 2001, 2007; Ferdman & Horenczyk, 2000; de Anda, 1984; Rashid, 1984).
Consequently, the research design was based on feminist and ethnic methodologies (Ladson-Billings, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 2003; Dei, Hall, & Rosenberg, 2000; Smith, 1999; Dove, 1998) which offered an appropriate context for exploration of oppressive power relations that inhibit the mobilisation of cultural memory, its embedded symbolic signifiers and values. Accordingly, the methodological approaches included: the Ujamaa circle and the Critical African centred pedagogy theory; Participatory action research and performance as research Inquiry.

Therefore, the first section of the discussion situates the research by describing the nature of the participants. Second, ethics as a context for evaluating the methodological approach will be discussed highlighting the challenges associated with organising a community based research project with emancipatory intent. Third, the choice of feminist and ethnic methodological approaches articulating their appropriateness to the ACMYAF project is discussed. Fourth, the Ujamaa circle and the Critical African centred pedagogy theory (CACPT) (Akinyela, 1996) as pedagogical tools for exploring the African cultural memory (ACM) and cultural identity are examined. Fifth, the relevance of Participatory action research (PAR) methodology is discussed. Sixth, Performance as a research Inquiry (PaRI) and the importance of the researcher as a cultural translator are discussed. Seventh the ACMYAF conceptual model as a theoretical framework for the festival is discussed. This is followed by a discussion of African cultural literacy (ACL) and Bicultural socialisation education program (BSEP) the two concepts provide a theoretical rationale for the ACMYAF
model. The last part of the chapter is an overview of the festival research process.

Selection of Method

Situating the research

All research is driven by the specific values, ideologies and questions of the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The ACMYAF was motivated by the need to explore ways in which the arts may be utilised in the cultural identity negotiation, of a group of African migrant descendant youth, towards bicultural competence. The young participants, while of African descent, they represented a diversity of ethnicities29, age and social-economic background.

The twelve participants were of African descent with ages ranging between twelve and twenty four. Nine of the twelve participants claimed ancestry from different parts of Eastern Africa; Uganda (6), Tanzania (2) and Ethiopia (1)) and the three, of the twelve, claimed ancestry from Sierra Leone (2) and Liberia (1) in West Africa. Four of participants were male and eight were female. In terms of cultural socialisation seven of the participants had lived most of their life in Australia and identified as African Australians. Of the five who had recently arrived from Africa, three had been in Australia for less than three years and identified as African. The other two had been in Australia for six years identified as African Australian. In regard to formal education the participants were at diverse levels—primary school (2), high school (7) university undergraduates (2) and one university graduate. Due to war in their home countries the three who claimed ancestry from Sierra Leone and Liberia had a disrupted educational experience. From the

29 Ethnicity refers to varying forms of Africanness as perceived by the participants.
foregoing the group was quite diverse and therefore provided an appropriate context for the exploration of issues relating to cultural identity negotiation. Below is a summary table of the participants with some descriptors of their identities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initials</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Length of residence in Australia</th>
<th>Ancestry</th>
<th>Perceived Identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EM</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Australian African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LM</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Australian African/Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JW</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNW</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>African Australian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHW</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>African Australian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JJA</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>African</td>
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<tr>
<td>MNW</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
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<tr>
<td>JIK</td>
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<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>African</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZM</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>African Australian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>African Australian</td>
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<tr>
<td>MMW</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>African Australian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HA</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>African Australian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ethical considerations**

As a community based research project ACMYAF involved twelve young people, six patrons, three community leaders, two parents, two artists, three funding agencies and Murdoch University. Each of these stakeholders had a specific relationship with the project which had ethical implications. Ethical positioning of the applied theatre practitioner is crucial to the
planning and implementation of all applied theatre projects (Fisher, 2005). Therefore the researcher, as an applied theatre practitioner and cultural translator\textsuperscript{30}, had to take into account the ethical needs of all those involved in the ACMYAF project. Moreover the methodological approach required the researcher to take into consideration the three principles guiding Participatory action research (PAR): shared ownership of the research project, community based analysis of the social problem, and orientation towards community action (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2001; Bessette, 2004). Whatever decisions the researcher took had to satisfy the university ethics committee requirements.

The initial step of the ethics process was to secure approval from the University Human Research Ethics Committee for permission to proceed with the ACMYAF research project. The ethics committee’s requirements had to be satisfied by explaining in detail the aims of the research project, its nature, and intended outcomes. Details about catchment areas of participants and their confidentiality, timelines and venues for the workshops, types of evaluation instruments to be administered and the storage of recordings on completion of the project had to be explained in detail.

\textsuperscript{30} A cultural translator is an individual from a minority individual’s own ethnic or cultural group who has undergone the dual socialization experience with considerable success. The translator is able to share his or her own experiences, provide information that facilitates understanding of the values and perceptions of the dominant culture, and convey ways to meet the behavioural demands made on bicultural members of the society (Wakholi, 2010; Gordon, 2007; de Anda, 1984). The researcher’s cultural translation approach was based on Dr Akinyela’s Ujamaa circle method. The experimentation with the Ujamaa circle method during the researcher’s Master of Education research project [(Wakholi, P. (2005). African Cultural Education: A dialogue with African Migrant Youth in Western Australia. School of Education, Perth, Murdoch University. MEd. (Research).)] provided an insightful background for applying this technique.
The target group for the project was young people of African descent. Therefore the researcher prepared two types of consent forms one for adults, 'Over 18s' (Appendix, 5.6), and another for the 'Under 18s' (Appendix, 5.5). The Over 18s were expected to read and sign, the forms, for themselves and the under 18s, had guardians/parents to sign on their behalf. Most participants had a good understanding of the English language. Consequently, the problem of interpretation between languages did not arise. However, during the consent form completion process the researcher read the contents of the form to potential participants and clarified issues where necessary. Once the researcher was satisfied that the participant had understood the contents of the consent form, signatures, of both, the applicant or guardian of the applicant, and the researcher were inserted on the consent form.

To ensure safety of the participants all adults involved in the project namely, artists (2) and patrons (6) were requested to provide police clearance certificates (for working with young people).

To ensure confidentiality of the participants’ documentation: photographic and videorecording of the workshops was carried out using a video camera and a digital camera provided by the researcher. All the research material was to be stored by the supervisor at the end of the research project.

On the principle of shared ownership of the project the researcher intended to place some of the artistic outcomes of the research, for example the play script and video recordings, with a resource centre in the catchment area of the participants as a resource accessible to the community. However this generated ethical concerns from
the University ethics committee and hence the idea was abandoned.

Another concern for the researcher was the photographic, video documentation of the theatrical events of which the participants were interested in having copies. This raised ethical dilemmas for the researcher particularly the contradiction between community ownership of the project and confidentiality requirements for the participants as laid down by the ethics committee. How was the researcher to deal with requests from the participants for photographs and video recordings? No research documentation was supposed to be given out because of the confidentiality requirements for the participants. But, what happens to participants who wished to have access to some of the documentation? The researcher was unable to resolve this ethical problem. This issue requires further clarity on the possibility of documented material being accessible to the participants.

The ACMYAF as a community based project required funding to sustain most of its theatrical events and this implied approaching funding agencies. Unfortunately for emancipatory research approaches grants policies are usually predetermined by the funding bodies hence limiting the possibility of applying emancipatory approaches. Consequently the planning of a community based research has to take into account the grants criteria before applying for the funds. In some instances the researcher has to take an informed 'guess' about the likely outcomes of the research and apply/acquit the funds on behalf of the community/project. Otherwise it becomes difficult to reconcile the timelines for acquittal, of the funds, and the research process.

There is also the issue of ideology governing the funding process. On one occasion the ACMYAF application
was denied funding on the grounds that the project was
driven by the researcher’s PhD agenda rather than it
being a community initiative. This was true to some point
but the funding agency overlooked the fact that the
researcher was a member of the marginal community which
provided the cultural context and ideas for the festival
initiative. Furthermore community initiatives are
facilitated and led by individuals’ within communities
and as Ife (2003) observes:

Community development involves a big element of trust;
trusting the community to know what it wants, and
trusting the process rather than defining (and worse,
measuring) the outcome. (Ife, p.2)

Consequently effective community based projects may not
fit in the accountability timeline requirements of the
funding agencies “especially when accountability is
regarded as accountability to managers, rather than
accountability to community itself (Ife, p.2).”

Based on the foregoing it becomes difficult to do
emancipatory research which relies on government funding.

The ethnic research ethic (Conrad, 2006; Dei and
others, 2000) requires investigating and understanding
phenomena from an empathetic perspective grounded in
African-centred-culture and values (Elabor-Idemudia,
2000). Accordingly the researcher’s ethical approach was
guided by this principle to provide an environment
through which the participants were empowered to explore
and probe the African cultural memory and its symbols.

The ethnic research ethic was an important
consideration, especially, in regard to the two artists,
involved in the project, who were from a dominant
Eurocentric cultural background. They needed
clarification about an empathetic participatory approach.
The researcher dealt with the subject of empathetic
involvement, by the artists, by discussing with them the
aims of the research and the assumptions underlying the bicultural nature of the participants' identities.

In addition to the ethnic and feminist ethical approaches the researcher was guided by Fisher’s (2005) ethical interpretation of truth and trusted the participants to reveal their embodied truths. Fisher (2005), on the subject of truth in community based theatre work, and drawing on Badiou’s ethics, argues that as theatre practitioners we should not be tempted to turn towards a search for a universal definition of truth or goodness, instead we must seek to identify truths that are ‘relative to’ each of the different contexts we encounter. Moreover, we all share a capacity for truth and our task as potential ethical subjects is to enable the truth process to emerge and then be faithful to it.

Fisher, (2005) in analysing Badiou’s ideas suggests that the ethical arises through our commitment to the truth of an event. Consequently our task as applied theatre practitioners can be construed as one of generating an encounter or an intervention that enables the truth process of a group or a community to emerge. Accordingly the festival became a third space, (Moje, Ciechanowski, Kramer, Ellis, Carrillo, Collazo, 2004; Bhabha, 1994) a place for negotiation; for enacting and performing the embodied truth of the participants.

Furthermore Fisher (2005) suggests that applied theatre practitioner must encourage and provoke the client group to move beyond received ‘opinion’ and to engage in a creative process that will enable the participants to consciously critique their situation. This preposition sits well with the Participatory action research and the Critical African centred pedagogy approaches that the researcher adopted for ACMYAF project. Participants were engaged in diverse tasks which
required them to appeal to their intuition and critical conscience. This approach begs the question: “Can a performative intervention illuminate and affirm the truths that are necessary for community cohesion yet obscured, undervalued and neglected: its shared beliefs and purpose? (Fisher, 2005, p.252).” This question is explored through the results and discussion chapters, six, seven, eight and nine, because it provides a useful frame for evaluating the relevance of ACMYAF methodological approaches to strengthening the bicultural identities of the young participants from a marginal group. The next section discusses the rationale for the methodological approaches chosen by the researcher.

Rationale for the methodological approach

With the emergence of feminist and ethnic paradigms, research has become a location for constructing counter knowledge to truths emanating from dominant cultures (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Smith, 1999). Ethnic paradigms offer emancipatory possibilities that empower subordinate and marginal groups such as that of the African descendant youth (ADY) in Australia. Moreover, from an indigenous perspective:

Western research is more than just research that is located in a positivist tradition. It is research which brings to bear, on any study of indigenous people, a cultural orientation, a set of values, a different conceptualisation of such things as time, space and subjectivity, different and competing theories of knowledge, highly specialised forms of language, and structures of power. (Smith, 1999)

Positivists, seek the facts or causes of social phenomena apart from the subjective states of the individuals (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Positivistic emphasis on scientific analysis negates intuition as a cognitive tool for gaining knowledge. Intuition as a cognitive tool for gaining knowledge is diametrically
opposed to analysis, but the two are also complimentary. For example, analysis yields objective knowledge; intuition yields subjective knowledge (Graves, 2002). Intuitive cognition offered the participants possibilities for accessing African cultural memory and enacting their embodied knowledge performatively.

The positivist approach was adopted by European anthropologists to do research on other cultures in the new world resulting, sometimes, in prejudiced and ethnocentric forms of knowledge about the new world (Smith, 1999; Mbiti, 1989; Williams, 1987; Davidson, 1984; Abraham, 1962). Ethnocentric positivism led to the creation of the ‘exotic Other’; the ‘savage’ and the ‘primitive,’ (Smith, 1999; Mudimbe, 1988) labels which are still prevalent in some social environments of Australia (Mungai, 2008; Windle, 2008; Cassity and Gow, 2007; Flanagan, 2007; Udo-Ekpo, 1999) and therefore influence the social relations between black Africans and European descendant white Australians; and the psychological well being of African Australians. By invoking impartiality and objectivity, positivistic social science absents itself from the controverted social arenas in which the “ills produced by bureaucracy, and authoritarianism, and inequality are played out (Greenwood and Levin, 2003, p.143).” That is why a new generation of qualitative researchers who are attached to poststructural; postcolonial and postmodern sensibilities (Greenwood and Levin, 2003; Akinyela, 1996; Giroux, 1992; Asante, 1988; Mudimbe, 1988) argue that positivist methods are but one way of telling stories about society or the social world. Accordingly positivist quantitative research approaches, were considered inappropriate for the ACMYAF project.
The ACMYAF was therefore located within the feminist and ethnic paradigms (Murrell, 2002; Collins, 2000; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Smith, 1999; Dove, 1998; Akinyela, 1996; Ngugi, 1993) which often includes postmodernist/postcolonial schools of thought.

In regard to postmodernism I am mindful of hooks’s (1990) caution, that:

The postmodern critique of ‘identity,’ though relevant for renewed black liberation struggle, is often posed in ways that are problematic. Given a pervasive politic of white supremacy which seeks to prevent the formation of radical black subjectivity, we cannot cavalierly dismiss a concern with identity politics. Any critic exploring the radical potential of postmodernism as it relates to racial difference and racial domination would need to consider the implications of a critique of identity for oppressed groups. (p.3)

A critique of identity for marginalised groups aught to take into consideration the historical and contemporary power relations that have influenced the identity developments of subordinated people. Mudimbe (1988) examines these influences in detail. Mudimbe (1988) in his book entitled, ‘The Invention of Africa’, drawing on the poststructuralist tradition, offers a powerful genealogy of the African episteme as a product of a complex interplay of different forms of Western power, both political and cognitive, which, in Mudimbe’s view, succeeded in alienating and objectifying Africans as the ‘Other’. For Mudimbe, the colonising structure of Africa was composed of three complementary hypotheses and actions: the domination of physical space, the reformation of ‘Natives’ minds and the integration of local economic histories into the Western perspective. Hence the colonising structure embraces the physical, human, and spiritual aspects of colonising experience.

The ideological and theoretical texts emerging from this colonising structure present an identity challenge
for African people that require a decolonisation of the mind, religion and philosophies of African people

The consequences of colonialism are embodied in the contemporary generations of African descendants, which means a discussion of cultural identity and memory about African descendants ought to take into account the colonial factor (Fanon, 2004; Masolo, 1994; Nascimento & Nascimento, 1992; Asante and Asante, 1990; Mbiti, 1989; Williams, 1989; Abraham, 1962) as a significant component of the African cultural memory and identity. This is how Fanon (1967) describes the identity crisis:

Every colonized people—in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality—finds itself face to face with the language of the civilising nation; that is, with the culture of the mother country. The colonised is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country’s cultural standards. He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle. (p.18)

In this research project which explores issues relating to cultural identity and bicultural competence of African migrant descendant youth, living in a Eurocentric culture, Fanon’s observation becomes fundamentally relevant and a feminist and ethnic methodological approach absolutely imperative. So that empowering epistemologies are created.

Ladson-Billings (2003) in critiquing the aggressive manner of the Euro-American epistemological tradition, observes that different discourses and epistemologies serve as both counter-knowledge and liberating tools for people who have suffered, and continue to suffer, from the Euro-American ‘regime of truth’ (p.399). Epistemology is more than a ‘system of knowing’ (p.399)
that has both internal logic and external validity. Literary scholars, for example, have created distinctions between literary genres such that some works are called literature whereas other works are termed folklore. The literature of the people of colour is more likely to fall into the folklore category. As a consequence, folklore is seen as less rigorous, less scholarly, and, perhaps, less culturally valuable than literature (Finnegan, 1970).

Consequently, the claim of an epistemological ground is a crucial legitimating force (hooks, 2003, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2003; Freire, 1970/2000; Smith, 1999; Akinyela, 1996; Asante, 1988). That is why some scholars (Denzin, 2003; hooks, 2003; Nabudere, 2002; Smith, 1999; Akinyela, 1996) argue that research should be concerned with moral discourse, with the development of sacred texts and a site for critical conversations about democracy, race, gender, class, nation-states, globalisation, freedom and community. Critical conversations among the ACMYAF participants required a space in which they would feel empowered to explore issues relating to their identities and marginality. Furthermore ACMYAF project was designed to facilitate both intracultural dialogue among young people of African descent and crosscultural dialogue with co-performers from the dominant culture.

Participatory action research (PAR), Critical African centred pedagogy theory (CACPT) and Performance as research inquiry (PaRI) offered appropriate frameworks for designing the research approach to the ACMYAF project. ACMYAF drew on these paradigms to create a pedagogical and performative research approach to the

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31 I use intracultural to imply dialogue about culture among people with similar cultural background or from a similar cultural environment with many shared symbols. Crosscultural is used to imply dialogue between people of very distinctively different cultures with probably very few shared symbols.
festival (hooks, 2003; Hirsch & Smith, 2002; Gordon, 2001, 2007; Sonn & Fisher, 1998). The next section of this chapter explores the research paradigms articulating their relevancy to the ACMYAF.

_Ujamaa circle and Critical African centred pedagogy theory (CACPT)_

The Ujamaa circle, based on Critical African centred pedagogy theory was the method used to facilitate dialogue among the participants. It was a complimentary technique to arts based inquiry approaches applied during the research process. Critical African centred pedagogy theory, which has its origins in the family therapy theory (Akinyela, 1996), is aimed at creating effective strategies of liberation from everyday domination experienced by black (African) people (Akinyela, 1996; Asante, 1988).

Akinyela (1996) in defining culture suggests that culture is constructed out of a struggle where the more powerful and less powerful segments of society contend for positions of power and privilege among themselves. This means that any given culture is actually a complex of cultures. In the context of the young participants involved in ACMYAF project cultural construction implies negotiation of diverse cultural-boundaries and contradictions. “Ethnic identities are not fixed for life they are variable according to context and circumstance (Brass, 1985, p.23).” Therefore the notion of African Australian is complex and yet provides a universal contextual reference for reclaiming African cultural memory and symbols.

Culture is constructed in the constant process of dynamic change motivated by shifts in asymmetrical power relations within complexes of various subject positions. The resulting material manifestations of cultural
phenomena, for example the artistic, social, and political expressions of groups and individuals, are behaviours of resistance and survival, which assist, and motivate cultural actors to make sense of, and give meaning to their collective existence (Ngugi, 1993, 1998; Akinyela, 1996; Soyinka, 1976, 1988). Cultural performances are encapsulated contingent events that are embedded in the flow of everyday life (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). Consequently performance articulates group or individual's aspirations or values. It examines narrates, and performs the complex ways in which persons experience themselves within the shifting boundaries of globalisation and migration (Denzin, 2003). Culture as a product of power relations, between contending groups, provides a useful way to conceptualise the association between culture, power and performance; and the responsibilities of a cultural translator as a facilitating agent.

Critical African centred pedagogy maintains a historical view of knowledge. Knowledge is socially constructed and culturally mediated within societies and is therefore affected by historical context. Human beings construct knowledge in their critical reflection upon lived experiences; out of which they are able to define and name their own social and political reality. Moreover social group issues like colonialism, globalisation, migration, visibility, racism and bicultural identity challenges are motivating force of history and the locus of knowledge construction.

Consciousness, according to Akinyela (1996), is the personal awareness possessed by individuals of shared collective experience and connected interests with a group in the context of common social, political and cultural conditions. Consciousness is constructed in the
social engagement of humans with each other and the environment. Psycho-social conditions play a part in shaping the consciousness of the African descendant youth of concern, consequently the psycho-social challenges towards trying to live a fulfilled life as a bicultural people was central to the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF).

Cultural democracy is a key element of the Critical Afrikan centred pedagogy. It is a means of cultural power negotiation within a diverse population. The concept of cultural democracy is a policy, which recognises the destructive and oppressive nature of cultural invasion. Cultural democracy is the human right of each ethnic/cultural group or person in a culturally diverse society to have equal access to life chances and sources of social power (Ramirez & Castaneda, 1974). Critical Afrikan centred pedagogy shares some philosophical principles with Participatory action research (PAR); for example, the emancipation objective of oppressed (marginalised) people is similar in both paradigms. Critical Afrikan centred pedagogy, however, emphasises the African diasporic experience especially as it relates to oppressive relations in predominantly Eurocentric communities. The experience of slavery, colonialism, imperialist exploitation and racism, by African people justifies the use of emancipatory methodologies in ACMYAF (Stanfield II, 2000; Smith, 1999; Nabudere, 2002).

Participatory action research (PAR) Participatory research is a philosophy of social research often associated with social transformation in the ‘Third World’, championed by people such as Freire (1970/2000). It has roots in liberation theology and neo-Marxist approaches to community development (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2001) centred on the concept of ‘Development’.
According to South American dependency theorists and leftist intellectuals (Esteva, 1992), 'Development' as conceptualised in Western discourse is viewed as problematic, especially when it is regarded as purely economic and hence synonymous with economic growth. The deficiencies in its usage in Western discourse, led to alternative interpretations of the word 'Development' by scholars in the 'Third World' (Amin, 1977; Rodney, 1972; Sunkel, 1966). According to these intellectuals (Amin, 1977; Rodney, 1972; Sunkel, 1966), development is a total social process, which includes economic, social, political and cultural aspects. Hence this notion of development stresses the interdependence of the different factors. From this perspective, dynamics of neo-liberal economics leads simultaneously to the creation of greater wealth for the few and greater poverty for the many (Gutierrez, 1973).

On the subject of liberation theology, as one of the precursors to Participatory action research (PAR), it was once suggested that theology had avoided for a long time reflecting on the conflictual character of human history, the confrontations among men, social classes and countries. Issues like poverty, injustice, and the oppression in which men/women live do not happen by chance; for behind an unjust structure there is a personal or collective will responsible for such happenings (Cone, 1986; Gutierrez, 1973). Cone (1986) an African American theologian summed up the essence of liberation theology as follows:

Christian theology is a theology of liberation. It is a rational study of the being of God in the world in light of the existential situation of an oppressed community, relating the forces of liberation to the essence of the gospel, which is Jesus Christ. (p.1)
For Cone there can be no Christian theology that is not identified unreservedly with those who are humiliated and abused. In other words Christian theology must deal with the material inequities and oppressive relations in the world. PAR shares a similar philosophical view with liberation theology, a critical reflection on our lived conditions with the intention of finding solutions to them (Park, 2001).

Consequently, Freire (1970/2000) in defining an emancipatory pedagogy, a precursor to PAR, argues that:

> Education as the practice of freedom—as opposed to education as a practice of domination—denies, that man is abstract, isolated, independent and an attached to the world; it also denies that the world exists as a reality apart from people. Authentic reflection considers neither abstract man nor the world without people, but people in their relations with the world. In these relations consciousness and world are simultaneous: consciousness neither precedes the world nor follows it. (p.81)

PAR differs from other forms of social inquiry because it integrates more clearly its political and methodological intentions (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2001). Consequently it provided ACMYAF with a framework for conscious engagement with issues pertaining to cultural identity and power relations associated with bicultural socialisation challenges of a group of African descendant youth in Australia (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Smith and Reside, 2009; Mungai, 2008; Tanner, 2008; Flanagan, 2007; Wakholi, 2005; Kayrooz & Blunt, 2000; Udo-Ekpo, 1999).

Three particular attributes are often used to distinguish PAR from conventional research; these include shared ownership of research projects, community based analysis of social problems, and orientation towards community action (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2001; Bessette, 2004). PAR is an empowering approach through which the
participants and the researcher examined cultural challenges and everyday experiences towards emancipatory outcomes. In ACMYAF, PAR along with CACPT and the Ujamaa circle were applied to the research process by including young people, artists, patrons, funding agencies and the researcher in a collaborative approach to the festival. The next section of this chapter explores the third aspect of the methodological design, namely Performance as a research inquiry (PaRI).

Performance as a research inquiry (PaRI)

According to Leavy (2009), performance based methods can bring research findings to life, adding dimensionality, and exposing that which is otherwise impossible to authentically re/present. Embodied knowledge can be brought to life performatively. Performance as arts-based research inquiry can provide a balance between rigour and creativity, imagery and accuracy, the individual and the collective (O’Toole, 2006). Consequently, ACMYAF involved the participants in diverse performative activities including: play, singing, dancing, drumming, story telling, reflective journal writing, script writing, painting, cooking, role playing and acting; public speaking and memory exercises. Therefore Performance, as a research inquiry had the benefit of both aesthetic and educative outcomes.

The festival as a theatrical event became a public pedagogy when it used the aesthetic, and the performative to foreground the intersection of identity politics, institutional sites, and embodied experience (Denzin, 2003). Hence the festival was a form of agency, a way of bringing culture and the person into play; a tool for cultural identity negotiation and reconstruction in methodological terms.
Performative approaches offered the African descendant youth (ADY) the opportunity to share their creativity and artistic talents in a reflective context thus enabling them to avail embodied resources for intentional identity reconstruction. The festival for this group, offered possibilities for performing embodied knowledge and critical reflection on the performance experience as a means to gaining bicultural competence (Leavy, 2009; Gordon, 2001, 2007; Pelias, 1999).

**Performance as cultural work**

Culture is not static or fixed, but is in a continuous state of transformation and the elements of culture, namely: its signs and symbols may be transformed or filled with new meanings and take on new functions and expressions during intra and intergroup\(^{32}\) contact (Liebkind, 1992). This is where performance becomes a useful strategy for enabling cultural dialogue and identity reconstruction, amongst participants of diverse African backgrounds.

Cultural translators are probably the most effective agents in promoting dual socialization, inside and outside ethnic communities. A cultural translator is an individual from a minority individual’s own ethnic or cultural group who has undergone the dual socialization experience with considerable success. The translator is able to share his or her own experiences\(^{33}\), provide

\(^{32}\) Intergroup is used to imply interaction amongst people of African descent from diverse cultural groupings for example: Ugandan, Ugandan Australian, African Australia and recent migrants from Africa. Intra group implies interaction amongst the above within a category. Interaction between African Australians who were raised in Australia from childhood, and recent African immigrants to Australia from Africa would be considered intergroup.

information that facilitates understanding of the values and perceptions of the dominant culture, and convey ways to meet the behavioural demands made on bicultural members of the society (Wakholi, 2010; Gordon, 2007; de Anda, 1984).

From a performance and pedagogical perspective the researcher, as a cultural translator\textsuperscript{34}, provided cognitive guidance to festival participants in exploring African cultural memory through their embodied knowledge in relation to dominant culture. Drawing on both dominant and subordinate cultural knowledge the researcher facilitated the development of performance ideas that were culturally significant to the participants’ bicultural socialisation. To facilitate the process of exploring African cultural memory the researcher drew on Ferdman and Horenczyk, (2000) who suggest that, usually, the claim to ancestral cultural symbols, by young people, is guided by the following key questions: (1) What constitutes the culture of my group? (2) Where are they in me? (3) To what degree and in what manner are the group’s cultural features reflected in me and my values/beliefs/style? (p. 86)

Using the Ujamaa circle and the theatrical events the researcher provided the participants with space through which to explore their ancestral cultural symbols both at an individual, using Reflective visual journals and collective context, using song and dance. Development of diverse strategies of understanding the issues of the

\textsuperscript{34} The researcher’s cultural translation approach was based on Dr Akinyela’s Ujamaa circle method. The experimentation with the Ujamaa circle method during the researcher’s Master of Education research project (Wakholi, P. (2005). African Cultural Education: A dialogue with African Migrant Youth in Western Australia. School of Education, Perth, Murdoch University. MEd. (Research): 140.) provided an insightful background for applying this technique.
participants in the context of the research questions was also guided by the ACMYAF Conceptual Model developed by the researcher at the start of the research project. The model was a product of the researcher’s migrant experience as well as a review of the relevant literature.

African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF) Conceptual Model

The African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF) conceptual model outlines the psycho-social environment of the African descendant youth living in a predominantly Eurocentric society, including contexts through which an arts-based Bicultural socialisation education program (BSEP) may be implemented towards bicultural competence. The model proposes that the exploration of the African cultural memory through a third space may provide empowering tools for strengthening bicultural identity of an African descendant youth. Jones (1991) has asserted that black personality, in a Eurocentric society, is in part an adaptation to the political contours of racism. Therefore if we view personality as the resultant of coping patterns and socialisation directives, the black personality of the African migrant descendant youth is, in part, the cumulative representation of the effects of racism. That which according to Fanon (1967):

In the white world the man of colour encounters difficulties in the development of his body schema. Consciousness of the body is solely a negating activity. It is a third-person consciousness. The body is surrounded by an atmosphere of certain uncertainty. (p.111)

Hence any theory of black personality must account for:

a) the diversity of adaptations to the fundamental realities of racialism in Australian society;
b) the fact that coping with the subtle and sometimes blatant forms that racism takes will often lead to strength of character and creativity in its expression (Jones, 1991, p. 315).

**Fig. 5.1 ACMYAF Conceptual Model**
Through the ACMYAF model the psycho-social dynamics of the African migrant descendant youth are explored with the view of helping the participants recover, their African cultural memory, and release themselves from, the constraints of “irrational, unproductive, unjust and unsatisfying social structures that limit their self-development and self determination (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2001, p.567).” Further it is possible through the model to visualise an African cultural literacy (ACL) and a Bicultural socialisation education program (BSEP) as strategies for exploring cultural identity. African cultural literacy implies critical exploration of African cultural memory and epistemologies, while BSEP is an educational experience through which bicultural socialisation issues are explored critically through both subordinate and dominant cultural contexts.

ACMYAF Conceptual Model

The ACMYAF conceptual model is a product of the researcher’s ongoing reflection on the migration experience of his family and a study conducted among young people of African migrant descent (Wakholi, 2005). The model also draws on readings in the areas of migration (Benmayor & Skotnes 2007; Yan, 2006; Agnew, 2005; Udo-Ekpo, 1999); cultural identity negotiation among migrants (Berry, 2007; Gordon, 2001; Ferdman & Horenczyk, 2000; Olshtain & Horenczyk, 2000; Fernandez, 2000; Nagel, 1994; Mays, 1986; de Anda, 1984); racism (hooks, 2007; Jayasuriya, 2007; Asante, 2003; Udo-Ekpo, 1999; Yeboah, 1997; Jones, 1991; Fanon, 1967, 2004); African Philosophy (Gyekye, 1996, 1997; Asante & Asante, 1990; Mbiti, 1989; Wiredu, 1980) and performance theory (Bial, 2004; Ngugi, 1993; Bharucha, 1993; Drewal, 1991; Schechner, 1988; Soyinka, 1988); cultural transmission theory (Padilla, 2009; Schonpflug, 2009; Baines, 1987),

The ACMYAF model is a conceptual framework for the festival. The ACMYAF festival was organised as a theatrical event (Sauter, 2004). The model seeks to capture the essence of the ACMYAF as a theatrical event whose theatrical activities were organised intentionally to facilitate the exploration of issues relating to bicultural identity of a group of African descendant youth. Sauter (2004) refers to this form of theatrical event as ‘playing culture’. For Sauter (2004) playing culture also implies a radical extension of the term ‘theatre’ consequently theatre is not restricted to a few traditional genres but includes a wide range of cultural performances such as journal writing; creation of reflective visual journals, ‘radio’ comical theatrical pieces as performed by the participants, appropriation of pop culture to create the AfricanOz Idol, song and drumming, and displaying of a stall of African cultural resources at a community festival event; as was the case with the ACMYAF. Therefore this extension in the meaning of ‘theatre’ by Sauter fits well with the ACMYAF model.

The ACMYAF was located in a specific socio-political context (Sauter, 2004; Rutherford, 1990) namely a third space that merges the ‘first space’ of people’s home, community, and peer networks with the ‘second space’ of the discourses they encounter in more formalised institutions such as work, school, church or service providers (Moje, Ciechanowski, Kramer, Ellis, Carrillo, Collazo, 2004). This is important because:...

...cultures and identities can never be wholly separate, homogeneous entities; instead the interrelationships
of differences are marked by translation and negotiation. (Rutherford, 1990, p.26)

Accordingly ACMYAF model is composed of three parts, namely: the ‘festival community’, which is constituted of the young people, artists, patrons, spectators who are also co-performers and the researcher; the ‘Psycho-Social Environment’ which influences the cultural identity development and well-being of the African descendant youth; the ‘third space’ through which the young participants enact and perform their theatrical activities and hence experience the BSEP. The third space could be a physical space like the Drama Workshop which was the main venue for the theatrical activities; a theatre stage where the young people performed a play to a group of spectators; a Reflective visual journal through which the participants engaged with themselves using reflective writing and visual illustration; or any other context through which cultural ideas, symbols and embodied knowledge are subjected to critical and informative performance.

The ACMYAF is therefore a dynamic model through which its elements interact multidimensionally creating relationships, and contradictions, that may be reconstructed performatively in a third space. The model assumes the following:

- Cultural identity is not just a given but something to be constructed, negotiated and affirmed performatively.
- Ancestral cultural memory and heritage are important sources of cultural identity signifiers and difference.
- Racism, pressure to assimilate and cultural adjustment challenges—intergenerational tensions (between parents and young people), present psycho-
social challenges that influence identity and social interaction and cultural boundaries of the African Australian youth.

• Location of African cultures in relation to each other and to the dominant culture is crucial to the self-concept and development of the African descendant youth and community in Australia.

• African descendant youth are embodied with cultural knowledge which is not necessarily acknowledged by the dominant culture and yet such knowledge is relevant to their identity and psychological well being.

• Visibility or ‘blackness’ is a fact of life in the African descendant’s migrant experience. Consequently ‘blackness’, in a world where it is usually associated with negative stereotypes, requires empowering self-affirming discourses.

• Exploration of African cultural memory through a third space, by African descendants, is imperative as it enables the participants to deal with their difference in a non threatening environment.

Festival Community

The first component of ACMYAF model is the stakeholders who constitute the festival community. The festival community includes the young people who are central to the festival; patrons who play supportive roles to the festival as mentors; artists who have an empathetic attitude and understanding of the relevance of African cultural memory and the bicultural nature of the African youth; and the audience which is referred to as a body of co-performers. Co-performers are members of the community who become performers in a drama of social resistance and social critique (Denzin, 2003).
Patrons as co-performers participated in the festival through storytelling, singing and writing about their experiences through Ngoma\textsuperscript{35} journal. The distinction between actor/audience was minimised as all participants were co-performers. The researcher was the cultural translator facilitating cognitive engagement with African cultural memory and its meaningful translation by the participants into theatrical events.

\textit{Psycho-Social environment of African descendant youth}

The second component of the model shows the psycho-social environment through which young people function and hence construct or negotiate their cultural identities. Each of these variables has a psychological and social significance to the development of personal identity. Social and ethnic identity are the products of a complex set of transactions governed by various psycho-social relationships that young people form as a result of their lived experience (Baldassar, 1999). And as Padilla (2007) observes young people irrespective of their cultural orientation must deal with issues in the development of their personal identity. Such issues for the African descendant youth include the way in which they identify themselves, culturally or ethnically. For example some of the African descendant youth may wish to identify with Country, region, language group, ethnicity, religion, gender, ‘race’ or a combination of these categories (Wakholi, 2005; 2007). Each of these labels or identity category carries a social, historical and political context significant to the young people and

\textsuperscript{35} Ngoma journal was an initiative by the Researcher to facilitate dialogue among the community festival members. Consequently Ngoma journal was one of the instruments for generating knowledge about the participants in a ‘third space’. It was edited by the researcher and circulated monthly. The contents of the journal were based on the ACMYAF activities and reflective contributions by youth, artists, patrons and researcher.
hence relevant to this study (Jones, 1991; Weeks, 1990; Fanon, 1967). This is important because as Weeks (1990) observes:

Identity is about belonging, about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others. At its most basic it gives you a sense of personal location, the stable core to your individuality. But it is also about your social relationships, your complex involvement with others, and in the modern world these have become ever more complex and confusing. (p.88)

From the foregoing the psycho-social component is constituted of factors that influence and therefore relevant to the cultural identity of a migrant youth. It includes: African culture (Subordinate); Eurocentric culture (Dominant), Visibility/Blackness and Racism; Intergenerational Communication and Biculturalism.

These factors are relevant to the understanding of an African descendant youth’s cultural identity (Padilla, 2009; Schonpflug, 2009; hooks, 2003; Gordon, 2001; Ferdman & Horenczyk, 2000; Olshtain & Horenczyk, 2000; Gordon, 2001; Fernandez, 2000; Nagel, 1994; Jones, 1991; Mays, 1986; de Anda 1984). The festival process drew on these psycho-social elements to develop the ACMYAF theatrical events.

Biculturalism, which refers to a process wherein individuals learn to function in two distinct social-cultural environments: their primary culture and that of the dominant culture of the society in which they live (Darder, 1991), is associated with four phases of psychological transition phases of migration, namely: wild dreams and arrival; memories of Africa; uncertainty and confusion; and making sense of place. These psychological transition phases are experienced differently by migrants of African descent. There is another categorisation developed by Yan, (2006), based on
refugee resettlement in America, conceived in social-economic terms, namely: arriving; adjusting; climbing; achieving and leading. Though helpful, this approach has some limitations because it is framed in material success. While material success is imperative the complexity of psycho-social challenges, as experienced by the African descendant youth (ADY), inhibit the material intentions to succeed (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Smith and Reside, 2009; Mungai, 2008; Tanner, 2008; Windle, 2008; Flanagan, 2007; Tan-Quigley, 2005). Moreover the ACMYAF is concerned about African cultural memory and embodied knowledge, of the participants which is denigrated by dominant culture and discourse. The ACMYAF model categorisation proposes that the psycho-social transition phases of migration co-exist simultaneously in an individual. For instance making sense of place which seems to be the most advanced phase of successful integration into the dominant culture could be a simultaneous process of positive engagement with 'Memories of Africa', as an ongoing intellectual and spiritual activity. On the other hand, 'Memories of Africa', for a marginalised migrant who is failing to fit in the dominant culture, may be perceived as nostalgia, a painful longing to return home (McDermott, 2002). Consequently, 'Memories of Africa' becomes contingent to 'uncertainty and confusion'. Therefore these psychological transitional phases need to be perceived as dynamic and interrelated in diverse combinations.

While Yan's (2006) emphasis is based on material progress of resettlement, the ACMYAF categorisation assumes a therapeutic context through which psycho-social elements such as cultural memory, visibility, racism, and identity are significant factors in the process of developing bicultural competence. The next section of
this chapter examines ‘phases’ of the ACMYAF model in the context of the African descendant youth.

**Wild Dreams and Arrival**

New arrivals that fit this category are those whose minds are filled with relief and joy. They celebrate an important achievement in their life—reaching a safer place. They feel that their dream has come true because now they will have better life and bright future. This is also a stage of great anxiety due to the many unknowns that the new arrivals face. Some try to forget their past and move on with a new life. At the same time they experience cultural shock because almost everything is different particularly if they are not living in proximity of their own family or ethnic community. It is a stage which may lead to frustration and confusion. For the African descendant born or raised in Australia this is a phase when they feel that they belong until reminded that they are different. It is a moment of great dreams.

**Memories of Africa & Uncertainty and Confusion**

These two phases overlap and therefore I will discuss them together. However as noted earlier ‘Memories of Africa’ may be associated with ‘Making Sense of Place’ if engaged with cognitively and/or performatively (Connerton, 1989). New arrivals experience numerous difficulties during the process of adjusting to a new society. Such difficulties include learning a new language, understanding the host culture, trying to preserve their culture and tradition. This is when some people begin wondering if they made the right decision to emigrate/resettle in a new country.

Cultural affirmation due to hostile attitudes like racism begins at this moment, but it is also the beginning of acculturation into dominant culture.
'Memories of Africa' lead to participation in ethnic community activities as a way of connecting with heritage (ancestral) culture. Unfortunately, according to Yan (2006), this is a phase where some refugee migrants get permanently stuck. It is also a stage where intergenerational tensions between parents and the children begin to emerge, as their children get socialised and try to fit into the dominant culture. Acculturation stress induces a feeling of irrelevancy of ancestral cultural heritage leading to uncertainty and confusion on how to reconstruct cultural identity and incorporation of cultural memory and symbols from the ancestral culture. It is a phase of frustration requiring support from cultural translators.

This ‘phase’ may be a precursor for making sense of place; this is where greater appreciation of ancestral heritage culture may take both a philosophical and performative dimension.

Making sense of place

This stage is a stimulating moment (Yan, 2000). At this stage a migrant has a better understanding of the dominant cultural way of life. The future can be seen more clearly and they are comfortable with themselves and their surroundings. They have probably secured Australian qualifications and jobs. Young ones have made friends and have acquired Australian accents and values. The only contradiction is their visible blackness; otherwise they do fit in the dominant culture reasonably well. On a personal level they may be ambivalent about their relationship to Africa and Africanness, especially when reminded of this by curious observers. They may be a bit philosophical about discriminatory and racist attitudes and some of them may even deny its existence (Zwangobani, 2008). It is a phase which may co-exist with the phases
discussed earlier—'Wild Dreams and Arrival'; 'Uncertainty and Confusion' and 'Memories of Africa'. This is a valuable 'phase' for exploring philosophical ideas relating to cultural identity and valuing cultural difference. The next section explores the notion of third space as an important context for developing a self-affirming discourse of Otherness.

The 'third space'

The concept of third space is an important notion in emancipatory discourse relating to marginalised groups (Moje, Ciechanowski, Kramer, Ellis, Carrillo & Collazo, 2004; Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, Alvarez, and Chiu, 1999; Soja, 1996; Bhabha, 1994). Through postcolonial theorising Bhabha (1994) has used the term third space to critique modern notions of culture. According to Bhabha third space constitutes the discursive conditions which ensure that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricised and read anew (p.37). Bhabha's argument is that the third space is produced in and through language as people come together and particularly as people resist cultural authority, bringing different experiences to bear on the same linguistic signs or cultural symbols and, likewise different signs and symbols to bear on the same experiences. Bhabha's notion of third space evokes a sense of instability of signs and symbols, a challenge to dominant conceptions of the 'unity' and 'fixity' of culture and language (Moje, Ciechanowski, Kramer, Ellis, Carrillo & Collazo, 2004). The instability of signs and symbols was experienced during the ACMYAF theatrical events.

Soja (1996), in exploring the notion of third space has argued that spatial thinking, or what has been called the geographical or spatial imagination, has tended to be dualistic, or confined to two approaches. Spatiality is
either seen as concrete material forms to be mapped, analysed, and explained; or as mental constructs, ideas about and representations of space and its social significance. Soja critically revaluates this dualism to create an alternative approach, one that comprehends both the material and mental dimensions of spatiality but also extends beyond them to new and different modes of spatial thinking. Soja’s conceptualisation beyond dualism informs the nature of ACMYAF theatrical events.

Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, Alvarez, and Chiu (1999) offer a more educationally and linguistically explicit, perspective on third space. For them young people have access or are exposed to diverse forms of discourses which can be viewed as resources for helping them to understand the natural world. Consequently the hybrid nature of these different discourses is used to generate a third space that provides the mediational context and tools necessary for future social and cognitive development. The third space may be a physical space, cognitive state or any other context through which various aspects of cultural identity are explored. The significance of the third space in the ACMYAF will be delineated through the results chapters (six, seven and eight), and the discussion chapter (nine).

Because of the two dimensional illustration of the ACMYAF model it is not possible to delineate most of the relationships between various components that constitute it. However a discourse will be developed about interconnections, relationships and contradictions between various components, through the subsequent chapters.

The next section of this chapter is an overview of the notion of African cultural literacy (ACL) and
Bicultural socialisation education program (BSEP) both of which are pedagogical components of the ACMYAF model.

**African Cultural Literacy (ACL)**

African cultural literacy (ACL) is a concept developed, by the researcher, as a complimentary construct of the ACMYAF model. It provides a theoretical rationale for the model. It is an approach to enhancing one’s African consciousness, using both the body and the mind, as a means to developing bicultural competence. Through this approach the African heritage and collective histories of the African diaspora are critically reclaimed, both cognitively and performatively by an individual as a component of the process of actively reconstructing cultural identity. Accordingly African cultural memory is a central phenomenon in ACL. African cultural literacy (ACL) assumes a critical approach to culture and histories whereby images, stereotypes and narratives generated by the dominant culture, taken for ‘truth’, are challenged in an effort to reveal alternative paths for self and social development (hooks, 2003, 2010; Asante, 2003; Gordon, 2001; Asante & Asante 1990; Gyekye, 1996, 1997; Wiredu, 1980;) in culturally affirming ways. African cultural literacy (ACL) is an attitude towards history and contemporary experiences of being ‘black African descendant’ in a predominantly white society. It is about exploring African cultural memory and epistemologies of the African diasporic communities; and performing embodied knowledge as counter knowledge to a Eurocentric regime of knowledge. It is storytelling in ways that validate the performer’s worldview and values.

African cultural literacy (ACL) is central to ACMYAF project; it constitutes a hybrid third space (Bhabha, 1994). ACL was weaved into all the theatrical events of the festival. For example in the Reflective visual
journal the participants were required to research their family backgrounds including: genealogical profiles, clans, totems, clan names, cultural tales, symbols songs and languages. Through African cultural literacy (ACL) we come to realize the deeply embodied roots and routes that bind us to different cultural discourses, narrations, images, and voice (Oikarinen-Jabai, 2003). Through African cultural literacy (ACL) meanings, creation and recreation of symbols can collaborate to enhance bicultural competence of participants. ACMYAF is both an aesthetic and pedagogical experience, through which African cultural literacy (ACL) is achieved, cognitively (through the Ujamaa circle dialogue) and performatively (through diverse theatrical events including: song, dance, and devised theatre). Culturally affirming knowledge is generated, in due course, by a marginal group of people through a dialogical approach leading to an epistemology of bicultural competence. Accordingly African cultural literacy (ACL) is a discourse about bicultural competence.

The Bicultural Socialisation Educational Program (BSEP) is related to ACL. BSEP proposes that effective exploration of bicultural socialisation experiences towards bicultural competence may be achieved through critical dialogue of both the subordinate and dominant culture in relation to social reality. BSEP demand a commitment to self education that draws on both the ancestral and dominant culture towards competent participation in both. BSEP was implemented through diverse theatrical events including the Ujamaa circle. The next section of this chapter makes an overview of the ACMYAF research process.
The ACMYAF process is divided into three phases namely: Formative Phase; Bonding Phase and Uhuru\textsuperscript{36} Phase. The Uhuru phase which was the culmination of the festival included:

- The Real Deal - A group devised play.
- AfricanOz Idol - a combination of diverse theatrical presentations before a panel of ‘judges’.
- Evaluation (Elimu\textsuperscript{37} circle).
- The Awards Night.

The overview of the phases will be preceded by a discussion of the participant group.

Participants

The participant group included twelve young people, two artists and six ‘Elders’ who constituted the patrons committee. The researcher was part of the six ‘Elders’ on the patron committee. Since the youth participants were discussed at the beginning of this chapter this section will focus on the artists and the patrons.

Artists

The researcher involved two artists in the project to teach artistic skills and facilitate some of the theatrical activities. The artists included a theatre facilitator and a visual artist. They worked along with the researcher to support the young people in developing the play entitled The Real Deal. The contributions of the artists in the theatrical events are discussed in the results chapters, six, seven and eight.

\textsuperscript{36} Uhuru is a Swahili word meaning ‘Freedom’. Swahili is a cosmopolitan language widely spoken in many parts of Africa. It originates from a cultural mix of Arabic and African Bantu languages.

\textsuperscript{37} Elimu is a Swahili word meaning education; knowledge.
Patrons

There were six patrons (the researcher included) involved in the project and each of them played an active role in the festival. Some of the patrons did storytelling, participated in the singing, dancing, and acting, and also got involved with some other aspects of the theatrical events—funding applications’ preparation and transportation of participants to the workshops site. The contributions by the patrons as mentors and cultural translators were invaluable to the project. Their roles are discussed in chapter six.

Formative phase of ACMYAF

The ACMYAF was a community based research project, involving a group of young people from the African Community in Western Australia. Involving the community necessitated identifying stakeholders that would be interested in the project and sympathetic to the participatory African centred approach. In addition to thinking about the festival as a research project the researcher begun by brainstorming a list of potential participants which included: African families known to the researcher, African community groups and their leaders, artists, service provider agencies associated with new migrants and funding agencies likely to fund the project. Once the list was ready the researcher sent out email messages and made phone calls to as many contacts as possible as a means of introducing the project idea to potential participants. The standard message that was sent out to individuals and agencies is as shown below in appendix 5.1. The last sentence ‘Please advise on the eligibility of funding from your organisation’ was usually adjusted depending on whether the intended recipients were young people, parents, community leaders or artists.
The emails send out and phone calls were complimented by visitation to various community individuals and officials in various organisations. Through these networking efforts the researcher opened up contacts with agencies and individuals who were interested in the project. These included the following: Healthway (Western Australia), Office of Crime Prevention (Western Australia), and the City of Stirling (Western Australia) which provided the funding for the project; Community Arts Network (CAN) and Arts WA were also willing to fund the project however the funds from the first three agencies were enough to cover the costs of the theatrical events. The Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre (MMRC) seconded their Community Development Worker, who played supportive roles in developing the youth committee. Perth Dynamo Football Club an African community based soccer club provided some of the participants in the project and Afrikan Community in Western Australia (ACWA) became the auspice organisation for the project and provided venue for some workshops during the formative stage. From the foregoing ACMYAF was a community based project involving diverse stakeholders.

Initial sessions
Once useful contacts had been established the researcher organised several sessions with potential participants. These sessions were intended to generate interest and ideas from the participants through verbal dialogue and performatively through their embodied knowledge. Performance was central to each session as a means of raising the participants’ consciousness about arts as a tool for exploring cultural identity. Each workshop had a program (see sample program in appendix, 5.3) and usually each session begun with a Ujamaa circle where people sat in a circle under the facilitation of
the researcher to dialogue on diverse issues. The Ujamaa circle set the mood and purpose of a given workshop session. Usually a session ended with an evaluative activity in the form of a performance or reflective sharing. All the workshop activities were documented through minute taking, photographs and video recording. The formative workshops included the following.

- Building networks among youth and patrons: Brainstorming, possibilities (at Murdoch Drama Workshop-MDWS)
- African cultural memory: developing the concept with young people (ACWA)
- Building networks among young people and Artists: Brainstorming ideas for Healthway funding application (Afrikan Community in Western Australia-ACWA)
- Building publicity for the project (Harmony week)

Building networks among youth and patrons: Brainstorming possibilities for the project (Workshop One)

The first workshop with participants introduced the participants to ACMYAF research project and generated ideas from the participants in the context of the research objectives. It was a needs assessment session through which the researcher presented the aims of the project and the underlying assumptions, using the ACMYAF conceptual model. After the introductory remarks by the researcher the group was split into two: young people and ‘elders’. The young people under the facilitation of one of their peers brainstormed ideas of what they wished to do during the festival and the intended outcomes as a result of their involvement with the project.

The ‘Elders’ focussed on the development of the terms of reference for the patron committee, identifying their relationship with the young people and the project
in general. This was a useful session in generating ideas that informed the research process and helped the researcher to refine his research questions. Details of the outcomes of this workshop are the subject of the next chapter (six).

African cultural memory: developing the concept with young people (ACWA) (Workshop Two)

The African cultural memory workshop was intended to generate ideas and meaning about the concept of African cultural memory. The concept of African cultural memory was an important construct of the ACMYAF project as it enabled the participants to contextualise their memories of Africa in the theatrical events of the festival. The memories of the participants were probed by involving them in three tasks. The first one was identifying by shading the African diaspora on a world map. This meant identifying locations where Africans have migrated to, in reasonably significant numbers. The second activity was an imagery exercise using the question: 'What comes to mind or what do you see when the phrase African cultural memory is mentioned?' In this activity the participants listened to the question and created images with their eyes closed and then illustrated these images on paper using pictures and words after opening their eyes. The final part of the session involved the question: 'How far back in time can we go in attempting to understand African cultural memory?' Through the Ujamaa circle participants engaged with this question and generated very useful ideas for defining the African cultural memory. This workshop generated interesting ideas from the participants and is the subject of detailed discussion in chapter six. The outline for the workshop is shown in appendix 5.7.
Involving young people in funding application process: Brainstorming ideas for Healthway funding application with Artist (ACWA) (Workshop Three)

The ACMYAF was community based and participatory in nature therefore it required funding to support numerous activities of the project including payment of artists, hiring of performance venues, providing food, during workshop sessions and purchasing props for theatrical productions. Three organisations offered to fund the project namely Healthway, the City of Stirling and the Office of Crime Prevention. Therefore brainstorming for this joint funding application was an opportunity to involve young people in developing artistic ideas for the project application. The researcher followed a participatory approach where the young people along with a community artist brainstormed ideas for the funding application. The artist was briefed, in advance, about the ACMYAF conceptual model and hence facilitated the application ideas within its context. Details of this process are discussed in chapter six.

Building publicity for the ACMYAF project—Harmony Week, (Three Workshops)

Harmony Week was an opportunity for the young people to present some of the outcomes from the bonding sessions to the public at a multicultural festival in Mirrabooka, Western Australia. It involved planning and rehearsing the content of the theatrical event for the public performance which included—a gospel song ‘Peace in Africa’; African dance; Electric slide dance; a guitar accompaniment song; R & B rap song. The performance included setting up a stall, about the activities of ACMYAF, for public viewing. It was an important opportunity for intercultural and crosscultural communication between the youth participants and the wider community. Harmony Week is also the subject of
discussion in chapter six. The next section of the chapter looks at the second phase of the project, the bonding phase.

**Bonding phase of ACMYAF**

*Bonding Workshops and the Ujamaa circle*

*Bonding* was an idea young people came up with as a way of building relationships through organising performance activities of their own choice. They were useful sessions for observing cultural identity orientations of the young people and their cultural aspirations. The bonding sessions were also moments for cultural negotiation amongst the participants of diverse African Australian identities. Bonding sessions included: Drumming; Song; Dance; Storytelling; Quiz Challenges; Reflective visual journal; Cooking; Role Playing and Games; Theatrical pieces. Bonding was a generative context for the theatrical ideas some of which became resources for the *Real Deal* and *AfricanOz Idol* productions. Details about bonding are the subject of discussion in chapter seven.

**Uhuru phase of ACMYAF**

*Uhuru* phase marked the final phase of the festival but was also the phase when the festival was communicated to the general public, outside of the drama workshop. Uhuru had four components: The *Real Deal* - A play production; *AfricanOz Idol* - a combination of diverse theatrical presentations before a panel of ‘judges’; The Awards Night and Evaluation (*Elimu*\(^{38}\) circle).

*The Real Deal*

The *Real Deal* was a significant outcome of the research process. It was a group devised play about

\(^{38}\) *Elimu* is a Swahili word meaning education.
migration and identity. The Real Deal was a creation from a storyline provided by one of the young participants. The storyline was then developed by the participants under the facilitation of the researcher to give it a fictional context that would articulate some of the cultural identity issues experienced by the young people. The participants, along with the researcher, developed a fictional context for the play based on cultural experience and background of the participants. The structural outline of the play which was an outcome of this process provided the theatre facilitator with a blueprint for directing the improvisations with the young people. The recorded improvisations were transcribed by the participants and edited into a script, under the guidance of the theatre facilitator and the researcher. The play was performed at Nexus Theatre (Murdoch University) as part of Uhuru. The themes and characters in the play provided insight about psycho-social and cultural challenges to the resettlement experience of African migrants. The aesthetics of African culture and the reappropriation of African cultural symbols were evidently manifested through the performance of the Real Deal. The entire process is the subject of discussion in chapter eight.

AfricanOz Idol

AfricanOz Idol was the young people’s idea, based on media popular culture of Australian Idol and American Idol. The researcher used the art form to develop, along with the participants, insightful performance about the participants’ identities and values. AfricanOz Idol is a combination of diverse theatrical performances ranging from song, dance, drumming, poetry, commentary and dialogue about performed acts and identity. As an art form AfricanOz Idol included the following characters,
namely: three judges, a facilitator, artist/performer and spect-actors. The judges and the facilitator, through their commentary and questioning, about the artists’ performance provided appropriate tension to keep the process lively and performatively informative. The process is discussed in detail in chapter eight.

The Speech and Award Night
The speech and award night was a reward night for the participants. This event was planned and hosted by the young people. The researcher along with patron members organised certificates and trophies for the participants. There were speeches by patrons and youth; quiz competition, slide show, entertainment and food. The speech and award night gave a celebratory aesthetic to the completion of the festival and is the subject of discussion in chapter eight.

Evaluation (Elimu circle)
The final evaluation was conducted at the end of the theatrical events and had two objectives, first to assess the transformative impact of the festival process on the participants, and second, to generate information, from the participants, in regard to the effectiveness of the methodological approach as a context for negotiating cultural identity. Accordingly the final evaluation by the participants reviewed the theatrical events and the ACMYAF conceptual model. The review of the theatrical events was guided by the following key questions: What did you do? What was the experience like? What did you learn from the experience? Give suggestions for improvement. This approach provided insightful information regarding the participants’ experience of the festival.
The review of the ACMYAF conceptual model components (Appendix 9.2) was in relation to the participants’ identities and socialisation experiences in both dominant and subordinate culture. This required the participants to comment on the components of the model. Accordingly the participants commented on the ‘Likes and dislikes in dominant culture’; ‘Likes and dislikes in subordinate culture’; as well as on their perception of the four moments of the ACMYAF model namely: ‘Wild Dreams and Arrival’; ‘Memories of Africa’; ‘Uncertainty and Confusion’; and ‘Making Sense of Place’. The comments about the ACMYAF model, by the participants, provided useful information about bicultural socialisation experiences of the participants in relation to dominant and subordinate cultures. This, in turn, informed the dynamics of cultural identity negotiation as experienced by the participants.

Evaluation of the project also drew on other instruments of data collection that informed the research question. These included the following: Personal journal reflection of the researcher; Cultural memory concept tasks (appendix 5.7); Ngoma Journal/Newsletter, (appendix 5.8); The Reflective Visual Journal (appendix 5.9) of the participants; questionnaire (AfricanOz Idol, appendix 5.10); questionnaire for the script writing editorial team, appendix 5.11; The Real Deal Spec-actors questionnaire (appendix 5.12); Questionnaire (The Real Deal cast, 5.13); The Real Deal Script; AfricanOz Idol Script; Focus group questioning (appendix 5.14); Ujamaa circle dialogues; Summative reflection on all aspects of the project; and Summative reflection on ACMYAF conceptual model (appendix 5.15); To make sense of the data the researcher applied the matrix for thinking about
your project (appendix 5.16) to organise data that was collected during the research process.

Furthermore the researcher made personal notes in a reflective journal about the development of the theatrical events. Therefore the analysis of the data took a metonymic approach (Pelias, 1999), drawing on the performance’s photographic and video recordings; reflective notes of the researcher and the questionnaire about the theatrical events. Results of the evaluation process provided the basis for the discussion chapter, nine.

The ACMYAF Model (fig 5.1) is another tool that the researcher uses to organise and analyse the data collected from the participants. The data from the evaluation instruments informs the relevance of the ACMYAF conceptual model which in turn makes it possible to discuss the research questions in the context of the model and the aims the research. For example the subordinate/dominant culture task (appendix 5.15) was used to solicit the participant perception about their experience of the psychological phases. This data is analysed in relation to other evaluation instruments (appendix 5.10; 5.13; 5.14) making it possible to determine the usefulness of the arts as a tool for exploring cultural identity of the African descendant youth and the possibilities it offers for cultural identity negotiation both at an inter and intra; and crosscultural level. The participants were promised a summary of the research outcomes after the examination of the thesis.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the methodological and philosophical approaches to the ACMYAF research project. The research methodological approaches are located in the
ethnic and feminist methodologies which include the Ujamaa circle and the African centred pedagogy theory (UC & CACPT); the Participatory action research (PAR) Performance as research inquiry (PaRI). The three approaches, the Ujamaa Circle (UC) and African centred pedagogy theory (CACPT); the Participatory action research (PAR), Performance as research inquiry (PaRI) are unified by their empowering nature of the participants. They are not distanced, from the researched, and therefore the researcher and the participants worked together cooperatively. The African cultural memory was an important methodological construct for the festival enabling the engagement with cultural ideas and memory culminating in the enaction of theatrical events that informed the research questions and participants’ bicultural competence.

The next chapter (six) is one of the three results chapters. It examines in detail the Formative Phase of ACMYAF which includes: Brainstorming ideas (One Workshop); African Cultural Memory exercises (One Workshop); Funding application (One Workshop) and Harmony Week (Three Workshops).
Chapter Six

ACMYAF—Formative Phase

Based in the pervasive West African cultural value for extended kin relations, the new African community in America also held a high value for kin relations which was given new meanings and interpretations in the context of domination, enslavement and resistant/resilience. (Akinyela, 1996, p.68)

Formative phase

The formative phase is the first part of the results chapters. It presents data from the first four sessions of ACMYAF project. The aim of the project was to seek answers to the research question whose subject matter was—the exploration of ways in which the arts may be used in examining the relevancy of African cultural memory in the socialisation experience, and negotiation of cultural identity by the Africa descendant youth. Therefore probing the African cultural memory in a third space as a source of cultural ideas, for strengthening cultural identity, was the main focus of the project. The formative phase was important because it facilitated the establishment of a reliable network of participants—young people, patrons and artists for the project. Moreover as a participatory community based research project it was vital that the participants are involved as equal partners in the development of the project. Consequently the participants were involved in most aspects of initial planning—identification of issues to be addressed by the project, and how to address them using arts-based approaches; and defining the anticipated outcomes of the project. Akinyela (1996) suggests that the Ujamaa circle process should be a support group which focuses
on teaching individuals and families to think critically about their daily lives, relationships and behaviour and how they fit into the social, cultural and political environment of their country’s life. Hence the sessions, through performance and dialogue, intentionally re-created the best of the hidden testimony traditions, cultural memory and embodied knowledge of the participants as a means to developing a consciousness towards ‘constructive resistance’ (hooks, 2010; Freire, 1974/2008; Akinyela, 1996) and difference (Bhabha, 1994; Rutherford, 1990). Consequently the sessions in the formative phase generated ideas from the participants which informed both the research questions and their own conscience, through critical dialogue; and performatively through enactment of embodied knowledge. Performance was central to these sessions as a context for articulating the participants’ views about cultural identity and memory.

The formative phase included the following sessions:

- Building networks among youth and patrons: Brainstorming, possibilities (at Murdoch Drama Workshop-MDWS)
- African cultural memory: developing the concept with young people (at ACWA)
- Building networks among young people and Artists: Brainstorming ideas for Healthway funding application (at ACWA)
- Building publicity for the project (Harmony week)

Building up networks among youth and patrons: Brainstorming possibilities for the project (Workshop One)

This was the first workshop of the project it introduced the participants to ACMYAF research project and solicited for ideas from them in the context of the
research objectives. It was a needs assessment session through which the researcher presented the aims of the research project and its underlying assumptions, using the ACMYAF conceptual model. The conceptual model was a theoretical model developed by the researcher about socialisation transitional changes as experienced by migrants. The researcher made it clear to the participants that the project was to be organised as a festival and the art forms involved in the festival would be based on the ideas proposed and developed by the young people themselves.

After the introductory remarks by the researcher the group was split into two: young people (12) and adults (6). The young people under the facilitation of one of them brainstormed ideas of what they wished to do during the festival and the intended outcomes as a result of their involvement with the project. The young people were given the opportunity to determine what they wanted to get out of the project. Some of the questions which guided the participants in their discussion included the following: What should be the vision statement of the youth committee? What should be the role of the youth committee? Who can become a member of the youth committee? What kind of activities should the youth committee be involved? What are the anticipated outcomes of the project? All the questions were generated by the young people and then responded to by themselves. The young people resolved to set up a youth committee for the festival composed of a minimum of five people, a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and four coordinators to oversee the exploration of the ACMYAF conceptual model through the theatrical events. The youth committee mission statement included the following ideas:

- To share African culture with others;
• To share experiences with each other;
• To explore different issues associated with African culture;
• To broaden understanding of how to transform and establish stronger cultural identity among African youth.

They also agreed that arts based approaches would be used to achieve their vision, which included: Dance (Traditional); Drama; Creative (Contemporary) dance; Songs, Music (Drumming, Musical Bands); Artistic display (Drawing, Sculpturing, Painting) and Fashion (Clothing, Jewry). They also suggested that the study of African languages, history, religion and moral education were important sources of knowledge for strengthening African youth identities in Australia.

The objectives of the youth committee would be achieved through teaching and learning about African cooking; youth meetings—to release feelings/experiences; mentors of similar ages and from diverse backgrounds; adult mentors from the workforce (having role models who know the system); outings/balls; outdoor activities; study groups—University, High School and TAFE; Debating, Public speaking.

The youth also suggested organising trips, camps, annual camps for soccer, music and other forms of performance.

The project outcomes for the youth committee were anticipated to be as follows:
• Therapeutic effects of participating youth (helping each other to find their sense of place)
• Create a ‘shopfront’ of achievers for new arrivals. (From ‘us’ to ‘we’).
• ‘Rite of passage’ through mutual support.
• Create a safe space to air possibilities.
• Breaking down the barriers—enabling dialogue between religions, languages and nationalities (Intra and intercultural communication).

From the foregoing the youth participants raised important and useful ideas relating to their own needs. The ideas suggest the need to strengthen their identities through complimentary cultural experience centred in their cultural memory.

The ‘Elders’ focussed on the development of the terms of reference for the patron committee, they identified their relationship with the young people and the project in general. And therefore they envisaged their role as follows:

1. To provide support and guidance to the ACMYAF Youth Group to preserve African Culture.

2. To assist in the planning and development of the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival Project.

3. To act as mentors to the youth who have aspiration to Leader roles.

4. To identify and apply for funding for the ACMYAF project and related Youth Group projects in collaboration with the youth.

5. The Patron Committee has the function of a Steering Committee for the ACMYAF Youth Group.

6. Patron Committee is to be made up of five members at any one time.

7. The tenure of Patron Committee (PC) members is to be up to the completion of the ACMYAF Project.

8. The PC is to review its function after the completion of the ACMYAF Project with a view to continuing to act as a group of elders to members of the ACMYAF Youth Group.
The establishment of a patron committee with clearly defined objectives relating to cultural identity issues of African descendant youth was a significant outcome given the challenges young people face including absence of significant role models of African descent (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Nsubuga-Kyobe & Dimock 2000). African elders were also a source of African cultural memory which informed the research process and project outcomes. Consequently this was a useful session in generating ideas that informed the direction of the research and the research questions of the project. Through the formation of a youth committee (7) and patron committee (6) a community base for the project was established. The role of the youth and patron committees in the project was a significant indicator of positive intergenerational collaboration. The Patron committee members contributed voluntarily in diverse ways to support and fulfil the objectives of the committee. The youth committee was central to the project and hence a source of leadership to guide the implementation and achievement of the intended objectives.

This session provided an important dimension for the project that of linking academic research with community development. The initiatives demonstrated the possibility of opening up dialogue in a subordinate group on diverse issues relating to their subordinate experience and proposing their own solutions, hence facilitating agency, through the arts. Next section examines the Cultural Memory Workshop which provided further insight about the psychological attitudes and epistemological possibilities of exploring African cultural memory.
African cultural memory: developing the concept with young people (ACWA) (Workshop Two)

Traister (1999) has observed that all memories—personal, societal or cultural are a construct. Therefore, neither a single individual nor a single institution can remember everything or provide for a total recall. That is why individuals, institutions, choose what is worth remembering and on the basis of their choices construct their personal or cultural memories and identities. Consequently the African cultural memory session was intended to generate ideas and develop parameters for the concept of African cultural memory in the context of the participants’ ethnicities. The concept of African cultural memory was an important component of the ACMYAF project as it enabled the participants to contextualise their memories of Africa in the theatrical events of the festival.

African cultural memory session was guided by two objectives namely: 1) to open up dialogue about the concept of African cultural memory and 2) to develop possible elements and perspectives of African cultural memory. The memories of the participants were probed by involving them in three tasks. The first task was to identify the African diaspora by shading parts of the world map where Africans are believed to have migrated. This meant identifying locations where Africans have migrated to, in reasonably significant numbers. The participants took turns to shade different parts of the world map inhabited by African descendants. The dispersion of Africans, according to the participants, included Africa, North and South America, Europe, Asia and Australia. The perception of African presence on all continents by the participants was a significant outcome of this exercise. It availed the participants with a
possibility of exploring themselves through a broader context of the African diaspora.

The second activity was an imagery exercise using the question ‘What comes to mind or what do you see when the phrase African cultural memory is mentioned?’ In this activity the participants listened to the question with their eyes closed; created images in their minds and then presented these images on blank cards in the form of pictures or/and words/phrases. Imagery about African cultural memory provided useful psychological insight of the participants’ impression about African cultural memory and culture.

The outcomes of their imagination included the following: for one of the participants (JW/M/21/03) he saw the landscape; the people; language; villages and towns. Another participant (MNW/F/16/16) saw a stage with people performing; Music; braiding & beading; sculptures; ancient buildings; clothes and fashion; people. I think of cultural dancing by the African women in their cultural costumes said another (ZM/F/16/06). I saw laughter; people joking; musical notes and the continent (MHW/F/18/17); I see drummers and percussionists; ladies in reed skirts dance; I see elders seated around a pot of brew, sipping and discussing; boys mimicking the warriors; girls and their mothers; and I see music! A different kind of music; I see the dancing I see the harmony (JIK/M/16/01). I see my family dancing; singing; laughing; lots of food & colours, space. (It’s like a dream)—like I am really there looking over (RNW/F/20/17). I saw the hills in Tanzania; African music; African food; barbeque and dancing (EM/F/24/24). Traditional dancing and singing people drinking traditional beer and having a ‘barby’ on a big fire. Hunting fathers and son teaching each other about life and hunting tactics share ideas ‘n’
meat they would have got (JJA/M/21/03); family togetherness; the map of Uganda (MM/F/14/06).

The participants provided diverse ideas about African cultural memory which defined this concept as a performative imagination. Performance was taking place in the imagery of all the participants. African cultural memory had an artistic and performative form. There was dancing, singing, music intergenerational conversations and family. This was a useful outcome of the exercise as it revealed the presence of similar sensibility about African cultural memory among the participants.

The imagery session was followed by a dialogue on the question of: ‘How far back in time can we go in attempting to understand African cultural memory?’ A horizontal line was drawn on a white board with labels of ‘beginning’, on the extreme left of the line and ‘present’ at the extreme right of the line.

| Beginning | Present |

Through the Ujamaa circle participants engaged with this question and generated useful ideas for further clarification of the concept of African cultural memory and subsequent development of a discourse about it.

The initial reaction of the participants was that African cultural memory should only extend to the time of slavery and colonialism. One of the participants noted the importance of slavery as follows: “I will take the example of slavery, some of us never experienced slavery but because of what we have heard and learnt, it makes us have a certain perspective of white people. That is why we should examine it.” From the foregoing exploring slavery has relevance to African cultural memory as the
dispersion of African descendants in the Americas, Europe and the Middle East is partly the result of slave trade. Furthermore the race relations that have evolved between white and black have been partially influenced by the contradictory relationship of slave and master. Williams (1987) observes that up to the sixteenth century the people we refer to as slaves were not slaves in the modern sense, but labourers either captured as prisoners of war or persons imprisoned for various offences. During the first stages of the slave trade many African kings and chiefs actually thought they were supplying workers needed abroad and at a great profit to themselves. They had not had experience with the white man’s slave system or its equation with race.

As decades passed Africans became enmeshed in the horrors of the trade, in the pursuit of guns and riches, became as brutal as the whites in dealing with their own kind, the Kongo state is a good example. Therefore slavery as an aspect of African cultural memory implies examining key players in the slave trade and the implication of their immoral actions (Williams, 1994; Williams, 1987; Curtin, 1964). Contemporary communities in the African diaspora may learn some lessons from this part of African history and how that history has influenced today’s race relations.

The participants were asked if it were possible to explore the African cultural memory, further back in time, beyond slavery. One of the participants suggested that there was no way of knowing what happened beyond the era of slavery and therefore it was irrelevant to attempt exploring the African cultural memory beyond slavery. I then asked the participants if there could be information, somewhere, about events in Africa prior to slavery. One participant responded by saying that “I
actually wanted to ask you if you have some information about this period prior to slavery.” I responded by reiterating the question I had stated earlier: “But do you think there could be information somewhere about this period before slavery?” Then one of the participants responded in the affirmative, “There would be.”

I then posed to the participants another question about where the early Egyptian civilisations fitted on the timeline we had sketched on the board. “Does it come before or after slavery?” They all responded in the affirmative that the early Egyptian civilisations came before slavery. This was an important outcome as it extended the African Cultural memory beyond slavery.

I then asked the participants to suggest when the Arab tribes moved into Africa. They all agreed that this may have happened during the Egyptian civilisations. I posed another question: “When was Jesus’s Christian era? The participants agreed that Jesus’s Christian era appeared after early Egyptian civilisations. At this point one of the participants asked why Christianity had anything to do with the African cultural memory. I put the question back to the participants and one of them responded as follows: “Christianity is a popular religion in Africa, it is connected to us and therefore it is important for us to know about it. Because we are taught about it from an early age it is important to know.” “So is Islam” another participant stated “so like the whole up North of Africa is Muslim and like most of my family is Muslim therefore you grow up knowing about the whole thing. And it is a big part of Africa as well. It is in the West (Africa), in the East (Africa) and in the North (Africa) as well.”

Based on this dialogue with the participants classical religions of Islam and Christianity are
embedded in African cultural memory and identities. Mazrui, (1986) refers to it as the triple heritage. He proposes that Africa is constituted of a triple heritage—Indigenous heritage, Afro-Islamic Heritage and the Western heritage of state formation of which Afro-Christian heritage is a component. Therefore Islam, Christianity and Indigenous African religions constitute important components of African cultural memory with implications, for interpreting, how the African migrant youth perceive their own cultural identities.

One of the participants suggested that in the early centuries Africa and the Middle East were still connected, culturally, and all those places were pretty much developed (civilised) contrary to the belief that Africans were running around, naked, in bushes. “There would have been some stuff going on, written somewhere; evidence of trade through Arab writing and things like that.” According to this participant Arab writings present a useful source of African cultural memory. This was a significant observation given that Arabs have been involved with Africa as early as the 7th century. Mazrui (1986), for example, suggests that the cultural effort to re-integrate Arabia with Africa reached a new phase with the birth and expansion of Islam. From the 7th century AD onwards North Africa became a region of twin processes Islamisation and Arabisation (a linguistic assimilation into the language of Arabs). Consequently in the North the great majority of North Africans saw themselves as Arabs. The subject of Islamic culture and its indigenisation in Africa was raised by the participants as a subject deserving examination as part of the ACMYAF project.

Another theme that emerged from the participants as possible component of African cultural memory was that of
the African artefacts, one participant noted as follows about artefacts: “I suppose with Egypt you have a lot of artefacts taken like to other states in the museums. Because they are taken out and they have high value; we need to understand the culture behind it.” Indeed in recent years the subject of preserving the cultural heritage of Africa has become of major concern and involvement by both the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural organisation (UNESCO) and some African governments (Yoshida and Mack, 2008).

The theme of African kingdoms too emerged as a possible component of the African cultural memory and it was presented by one of the participants as follows: “You know how we have the royals are we going to go back and talk about the royals? You know like South Africa how they have the Zulu tribe are we going to talk about the royals and their lifestyle? (ZM/F/16/06).”

Clearly the exercise about African cultural memory generated diverse ideas for interrogating and defining the nature and scope of the concept. This was the case because the research approach was also a pedagogy through which the participants along with the researcher/cultural translator revealed relevant knowledge to cultural identities of the participants. The research strategy was to get the participants involved in thinking and to become aware of themselves as a rational people capable of constructing ideas and defining concepts relating to their identities and cultural memory.

The workshop concluded by asking the participants to respond to the question ‘What are some of the things you wish to learn/develop through ACMYAF project?’ I encouraged the participants to limit their ideas to three. The limit to three was intended to encourage the participants to consider the most important ideas in
their minds. The response from the participants was rich and diverse availing more ideas for exploring the African cultural memory and confirming the significance of the project to the participants’ cultural identities. The responses of the participants included the following:

- The way different cultures of Africa behave; dances of different Africans; to know more about different cultures of Africans.
- To create an environment where African Australians can express themselves and also be assisted to develop their talents and increase self confidence.
- What Africa means to other Africans in the diaspora.
- First of all I want to learn through this project how others view things; learn from their experiences.
- What brought about African slavery? And hatred between Africans?
- The Islamic culture; what it means to be African; how we have influenced other parts of the world through our cultures.
- How does the African culture influence the way we live today: why is African culture relevant to African Australians?
- I want to learn about the outside influences on Africa and when these occurred; where the different hair styling of hair braiding originate; in what ways have Africans influenced the diaspora?
- Through the African cultural memory three concepts that I wish to learn about: 17th century slavery—why it occurred/who suffered /benefited...; Africans in the diaspora what does it mean to be an African living in Australia? Egyptian history—why are the
artefacts taken to other places? Colonisation and independence in Africa.

- Some facts have to be clearly explained to me about African cultural memory; how Africans went about their lives before colonial rule (immediately before).
- The bond that was built between families, marriages functions special meetings among tribes or regions; How was crime handled and who are the people who had a final say in the judgements; How did the introduction of colonialism and slavery create a barrier in the practices of African culture and how has it influenced the practices we are still following at the present day?

Clearly, from the foregoing the participants provided a rich and insightful list of ideas about the things they wanted to explore through the project. The ideas constitute diverse themes about Africa, African diaspora and contact cultures. The imagery imaginations of the participants about African cultural memory were diverse and reflected the desires of the participants. Some of the ideas were explored through the festival theatrical events however most of the unexplored ideas may constitute future educative activities. Next section examines the funding application process as an empowering experience for the youth participants.

Involving young people in funding application process:
Brainstorming ideas for Healthway funding application with Artist (ACWA) (Workshop Three)

The ACMYAF was community based and participatory in nature therefore it required funding to support numerous activities of the project including payment of artists, hiring of some performance venues, providing food, during workshop sessions and purchasing props for theatrical
productions. Three organisations offered to fund the project namely Healthway, the City of Stirling and The Office of Crime Prevention. Therefore brainstorming for this joint funding application was an opportunity to involve young people in developing artistic ideas for the project application and to experience funding application process. The researcher followed a participatory approach where the young people along with a community artist brainstormed ideas for the funding application.

The session started with an overview of the researcher’s conceptual model, The ACMYAF Conceptual Model. This was followed by the application form facilitation process by the visual artist. The visual artist brought a few books about African art which the participants perused prior to the discussion. She told the participants that being an artist is being rebellious. Moreover “Africans you come from a rich culture and the festival (ACMYAF) is a celebration of that richness.” She further noted that African art has inspired European art; the exploration of art however does not have to stay strictly in traditional form. The artistic products may include: Masks, clay, figurative, jewellery making, and shells; painting/drawing, photography and collage; weaving, textiles, costumes, painting, props, and background/backdrops. She also observed that the masks could be made part of the dance costumes.

One of the participants suggested that they could work on a timeline of how art and spirituality have evolved in Europe and Africa. This was a significant preposition considering that African art has a spiritual dimension and secondly because of massive appropriation of African Art by Europe during colonial and pre-colonial
times (Abraham, 1962, Mudimbe, 1988). The consensus among the participants was that they aim for two outcomes:

1) The art for an exhibition. 2) Props and costumes for travelling exhibitions—in schools, universities, shopping centres and any other appropriate locations.

![Visual Artist in session with the participants](image)

**Fig.6.1 Visual Artist in session with the participants**

It was further suggested that posters for advertising art exhibitions and theatre production of the ACMYAF should be produced by the participants. The visual artist suggested to the participants that there is a commercial side to the Arts in which artworks could be sold. The other art ideas for the project included a scrapbook of the entire process of the project including photographs, collage, posters, poetry writing, story writing, song writing and music. The session wound up with two musical performances by the participants.

The first one was a rap performance by three young people, recent refugee migrants from Africa. The performance was based on contemporary Hip Hop culture. The potential for using rap as a tool for cultural
expression and dialogue with other youth was quite evident in their performance.

![Youth participants performing a rap piece](image)

**Fig. 6.2 Youth participants performing a rap piece**

Rap gave them a voice and a medium for sharing their talent with the youth in the project. They received a big applause from their peers.

The second performance was by two young people, born in Africa but lived in Australia for most of their lives. They did a duet on Kelly Clarkson’s song, ‘Breakaway’. Kelly is an American pop artist.
Fig. 6.3 Youth participants performing 'Breakaway'

Song as medium through which the youth participants, both Australian 'grown' and the recently arrived African refugee migrants, articulated their identities and values was an important component of ACMYAF project.

The main objective of this session was to give young people the opportunity to participate in developing artistic ideas for the funding application and the project in general. The visual Artist shared with the participants her knowledge about visual art which in turn inspired the young people. Accordingly the session provided a mentoring experience for the young people in two ways, the first was the participative role in preparing ideas for the funding application and second the way art was presented to them as an expressive tool for their identities.
Next section examines in detail preparations for Harmony Week performance as part of community networking venture.

Building up publicity for the ACMYAF project (‘Harmony Week’, Three Workshops)

Harmony week is an annual multicultural event held in Western Australia. It celebrates the diversity of cultures in Western Australia. Performances are staged from diverse cultures that constitute the West Australian community. The event is therefore meant to celebrate that diversity. Mirrabooka a suburb North of Perth City in Western Australia, where this event was held is a catchment area for new African migrant communities. A significant number of the recently arrived African refugee migrants reside in close proximity to the suburb of Mirrabooka, in the northern part of Perth. Hence Harmony Week was an opportunity for the young people to present some of the outcomes from their bonding sessions to the public at the multicultural festival in Mirrabooka. It involved choosing, planning and rehearsing the content of the theatrical event. The content included—a Liberian gospel song ‘Peace in Africa’; Song and drumming; African dance; a guitar accompaniment song; a keyboard accompaniment song; poetry reading and Rhythm & Blues rap song. The performance also included setting up a stall, about the activities of ACMYAF, for public viewing. The theatrical material was rehearsed over two workshops. The performance at the multicultural event was an important opportunity for intercultural and crosscultural communication amongst the youth participants and also with the wider community.

Planning involved getting the twelve participants into a Ujamaa circle and outlining to them the purpose of the planning session. The participants were informed that
they had to plan a theatrical performance through which they would educate the community about the ACMYAF project and themselves. The participants came up with ideas for the performance which included song, dance, poetry and a stall display. The content of the art forms demonstrated the vitality of African cultural memory and values in the young people; and their enthusiasm to use the stage, effectively, as a communicative space.

The first item developed by the participants was dance choreography based a Central African Soukous music and Jamaican Dance Hall reggae. The choice of music and dance style drew from both the African continent and the diaspora. The dance was a combination of contemporary African Soukous dance and Hip Hop moves. The choreography ideas were drawn from watching video recordings of various artists in the African diaspora and the embodied knowledge of the choreographer. Therefore the art form drew on diverse elements of African cultural memory. The choreographer/dancer herself of African descent had lived most of her life in Australia. She arrived in Australia with her parents at the age three as migrants from Africa. Nevertheless her confidence in appropriating and reworking dance ideas, from diverse African cultures, to suit a contemporary context is in itself evidence of bicultural identity negotiation. This process of bicultural negotiation is the subject of further discussion in the subsequent chapters.

Through dance, history and heritage are carried across time and each subsequent generation gives new interpretations to these dances (Mans, 2004; Asante, 1990; Connerton, 1989). Similarly these embodied dances are carried across oceans into new lands of settlement, the African diaspora (Asante, 1990; Gilroy, 1993). Their enactment in the new lands of settlement provides a
discursive tool and resource for cultural identity performance.

Fig. 6.4 Youth performing an African Dance a combination of Soukous and Hip Hop moves

Song was another important presentation by the participants. There were three types of songs. The first one was a song in combination with drumming and dance. This was taught to the participants by the researcher based on traditional ritual ceremonies for honouring ancestors from his Kinyole cultural roots in Uganda. It is a song which ‘laughs at death’ or mocks death, but with a deeper moral essence about human relations—compliments for good deeds do not come easily.

Lead

Bali jeha hujeha (They will laugh and laugh)
Bali jeha (and laugh)
Chorus
Esse ni poleye       (But I will be silent)

Lead
Bali jeha!         (They will laugh!)

Chorus
Esse ni poleye       (But I will be silent)

Lead
Bali jeha huje hea   (They will laugh and laugh)
Bali jeha           (They will laugh)

Chorus
Esse ni poleye       (But I will be silent)

Waholi ese ni poleye (Waholi I will be silent)

Fig. 6.5 Performing ‘Ese ni Poleye’ (re-enacting cultural memory) with the young people

Basically ‘Ese ni poleye’ is a philosophical song teaching about the uncertainties of human relations. You cannot please everyone. Despite your good deeds you will...
still have enemies who will, one day, rejoice over your
death body. Therefore the best you can do in your life
time is 'to do your bit' without expecting anything in return. The participants warmed up to this song and suggested that it should be part of the harmony week presentations.

The other aspect of song was based on pop music one of which was with a guitar accompaniment and the other with a piano accompaniment. The guitar accompaniment piece was a solo performance based on rock type of music. The song performed by one of the participants was entitled ‘Breakaway’ by Kelly Clarkson an American Artist.

"Breakaway"

Grew up in a small town  
And when the rain would fall down
I'd just stare out my window
Dreaming of what could be
And if I'd end up happy
I would pray (I would pray)

Trying hard to reach out
But when I tried to speak out
Felt like no one could hear me
Wanted to belong here
But something felt so wrong here
So I prayed I could break away

[Chorus:]
I'll spread my wings and I'll learn how to fly
I'll do what it takes til' I touch the sky
And I'll make a wish
Take a chance
Make a change
And breakaway
Out of the darkness and into the sun
But I won't forget all the ones that I love
I'll take a risk
Take a chance

The choice by this participant to perform Kelly Clarkson’s song was because the content of the lyrics was empowering. According to the participant Breakaway
implied taking responsibility over her destiny. Therefore she was encouraged by the message in the lyrics. This form of performative association with the song by the participant shows how young people of African descent are defining themselves through popular culture.

Another participant defined herself through *Rome wasn’t built in a day* a pop love song by a band by the name Morcheeba; Sky Edwards was the lead vocalist for the band.

![Fig. 6.6 Youth participants performing ‘Rome wasn’t built in a day’](image)

Performing before an audience was psycho-socially important to the performers, they all received big applause for their presentations at the multicultural harmony week festival. The preceding photograph suggests an empowered feeling and presence as the performers engage with the audience. And as the lead singer observed after the event in her reflective visual journal “I was nervous but I enjoyed my solo ‘Rome wasn’t built in a day’.” The significance of Harmony Week performance event, for the participants, is captured in a journal
entry (6.7) by one of them as follows: “This day was awesome! Possibly one of the best days and experiences of my life.” The sense of feeling empowered through the theatrical event is evident from the foregoing statement and the journal entry.

Fig. 6.7 Participant’s summative reflection about Harmony Week performance

The third category of song was the choir gospel piece which was taught to the group by the participants of Liberian descent. It was a simple ‘call and response’ chorus but with an important spiritual message.
Ooh lord save all these children
Ooh lord save us all.
Bring peace in Africa.

The singing was accompanied by a keyboardist and percussionist (two of the youth participants). The richness of this art form was articulated through African gospel singing style, which combined song and rhythmic movements. In singing peace in Africa the participants brought a chanting/soul feel to the song and an infectious emotion of intensity. As recent arrivals from war torn Liberia this was not mere entertainment but a deep recall and reconnection with a lived experience and memory. Liberia was involved in one of the most savage civil wars (1999-2003) and some of the participants were themselves survivors of this war. Consequently for some of the participants singing this song had emotional and memorable significance.

The content of the art forms was a reflection of the diversity in identification, of the participants. One of the participants, for example, performed a Western classical guitar piece. The classical guitar player was born in Tanzania but had spent most of her life in Australia. Another participant, a recently arrived youth from West Africa, performed an African drumming piece. Drumming is an important aspect of African culture. The young participant who organised the drumming theatrical piece grew up with his uncle in Africa who taught him the art of drumming. The participant articulated the embodied knowledge, learnt from his uncle, through performance. ACMYAF gave him the space to recall and perform his African cultural memory in a celebrative and hence empowering way.
Through arts performance it is possible to work against conventional stereotypes to reclaim or recreate desired identities. And as already noted, in respect to Aboriginal dance, as well as resisting identities imposed by the dominant culture on individuals or groups dance can function to recuperate postcolonial subjectivity because movement helps constitute the individual in society (Gilbert, 1995). Therefore, performance as an inclusive concept of diverse art forms is a useful medium for cultural expression and affirmation as was the case with the youth participants in ACMYAF.

The stall was another important presentation for the harmony week. The young people organised the resources to be displayed by requesting each other to bring along items with African symbolism. A range of items were contributed by the participants from their home collection. They included artefacts, Omweso an African chance game, music instruments, books of African
literature, handbags, African dye textile, painting and a fibre ball.

**Fig. 6.9 Youth participants at the ACMYAF Harmony Week stall**

On display, also, was a world map indicating the origins or ancestry of each participant. There was also two posters showing portraits and profiles of people of African descent who have contributed to various fields of human endeavour. The stall attracted members of the public and hence became psychologically significant as a context for cross-cultural dialogue (Fig. 7.0).
Conclusion

The formative phase has outlined the initial process which led to the establishment of a community-based group through which the research project was conducted. This group was constituted of young people, elders (patrons) and artists. The process was a participatory and pedagogical approach through which performance was central to all activities. Through the process the young people identified their own goals and objectives of being involved with the festival. The notion of African cultural memory was explored and its essence established. The young participants envisaged African cultural memory as a performative. Furthermore, through the sessions the meaning about memory of Africa was extended to include periods before the Christian era (BCE), the times of the Egyptian pharaohs and the subsequent periods of islamisation of North Africa. Slavery, Colonialism, Cultural Heritage, Islam and Christianity were acknowledged as important components of African heritage.
Many other ideas relating to African cultural memory were identified.

The formative phase culminated into a public performance as part of the Harmony week multicultural festival. The young people performed diverse art forms whose content articulated their diverse identifications and collective formulations. Moreover the artistic nature of African cultures was clearly evidenced through some of the art forms presented by the performers.

The ideas emerging from the formative phase provide important evidence for the appropriateness of the arts as a context for exploring issues relating to cultural identity socialisation and negotiation of the African Australian youth. Outcomes of this chapter are further explored in chapter nine, which is the discussion chapter. The next chapter (seven) presents outcomes from the bonding phase of the project.
Chapter Seven

ACMYAF—Bonding Phase

The tendency to closely bond with others, acting for the welfare of others as well as oneself, may be deeply rooted in human nature, forged in the remote past as those who bonded together and became part of a group had an increased chance of survival. This need to form close social ties persists up to the present day. (Lama & Cutler, p.59)

Introduction

The first part of the chapter discusses the concept of bonding as an idea that originated amongst the participants and became a context for developing theatrical events. The second part explores African drumming; Song and Dance as theatrical events through which bonding was facilitated. African drumming, Song and Dance were used as performative tools for reclaiming the African cultural memory and exploration of bicultural identity. The third part of the chapter, examines Reflective visual journals (RVJ) of the participants. Bonding through Reflective visual journals (RVJ) assumed an autobiographical and ethnographical approach which enabled the participants to reflect on personal experiences through writing and graphical illustrations. The chapter concludes by asserting that bonding as a relationship-building and epistemological process offered possibilities for generating knowledge about the participants that counters stereotypes and prejudices emanating from dominant culture.

Bonding\textsuperscript{39}

I define bonding as a performative process, in a liminal space, third space, through which participants

\textsuperscript{39} The participants proposed that they wanted to have bonding sessions as a means of knowing each other through devised theatrical activities.
are involved in relationship-building through artistic activities, as a means of exploring cultural memory and lived experiences towards bicultural competence. Bonding as a theatrical event includes a concept of theatre as part of playing culture (Sauter, 2004). Bonding is therefore a signifying process through which Otherness is enunciated, performatively in a third space.

Bonding through a liminal position challenges liberal multiculturalism which is an attempt both to respond to and to control the dynamic process of the articulation of cultural difference (May, 1999; Theophanous, 1995; Akinyela, 1996; Taylor, 1994; Castles, Kalantzis, Cope, and Morrissey, 1990; Hall, 1990; Bhabha, 1990, 1994). Liberal multiculturalism accommodates cultural diversity as a symbolic celebration of difference avoiding issues relating to power relations and representation that may offer sustainable development of minority ethnicities. Bonding is therefore both a cultural practice and psycho-social strategy aimed at engaging participants' in reflective practices about their Otherness through relation building.

Through bonding the participants were provided with the opportunity to connect with each other and develop sensibilities about African culture and bicultural socialisation, through memories about Africa, which benefited their identities.

Through bonding it was possible for the participants to create counter knowledge, performatively, that contradicted assimilative experiences and stereotypes emanating from dominant culture. This was important because as Bhabha (1990) observes, liberal multiculturalism presents two problems, to ethnic migrants, the first one is that, although there is an encouragement of cultural diversity there is also a
corresponding containment of it by regulatory policies that promote and reinforce monocultural and monolingual practices; and yet all cultures are signifying systems that produce meanings and subjectivities (Bhabha, 1990).

The next section explores how this was achieved, performatively, through African Drumming, Song and Dance.

African Drumming

African drumming as a context for experiencing African culture and exploring African cultural memory was an important theatrical component of bonding. In sub-Saharan Africa, which is the ancestral origin of the participants, the African drum is an important ritual instrument consequently a source of African cultural memory. According to Bebey (1975), the drum is a very important component of African music hence the most representative of African instruments. The drum is what expresses best the inner feelings of black Africa. As a performance instrument the African drum provides epistemological possibilities for revealing and communicating embodied knowledge of a drummer and that of the dancers who respond to rhythms created by the drummer. Through drumming embodied knowledge was recalled and performed, by the participants, through one of the drum sessions. This session was facilitated by a master drummer from the West African migrant community in Western Australia.

The drummers were African migrants, originally from Sierra Leone, living in Western Australia. On invitation by the researcher the master drummer joined the participants with an ensemble of two other drummers. The primary object of the session was to enable the participants to experience indigenous African drumming and its embedded epistemologies. All the participants sat in a circle constituting themselves into a liminal space.
The master drummer started the session by talking about the role of drumming in African culture and highlighting its spiritual/religious essence. This was followed by drumming and singing which lasted for about fifteen minutes. The participants rose to their feet and started dancing to the beat of the drum giving it their own interpretation and spiritual connection. The participants maintained a circular motion around the drummers improvising dance routines continuously until the end of the drumming. The ability to keep time and move with the beat of the drum for a group of participants mostly raised in Australia, reflected an embodied knowledge acquired through the subordinate cultural heritage.

Fig 7.1 Participants improvise dance routines as a complimentary interpretation to the West African drumbeat in a third space.

The drumming and the spontaneity of dancing by the participants was an act of cultural translation (Bhabha,
1994), constituted of representation and reproduction of culture, in a third space. The participants defined themselves through West African drumming by generating embodied knowledge. The generation of embodied knowledge by the drummers and the complimentary translation through dance by the youth participants was an act of reconstructing cultural memory and negotiating cultural identity.

Memory according to Weissberg (1999), transforms objects into symbols, infusing them with meaning they did not have on their own, before memory possessed them. A drum, for example, does not generate danceable rhythms without the drummer. Therefore the drummers were cultural agents who transformed the social (circle) and material (Drums) surroundings into a language (rhythm) that communicated to the participants and invoked their own embedded knowledge and African cultural sensibilities (Ben-Amos, 1999).

Fig 7.2 the lead drummer involving participants in an African drumming session
This was an important symbolic event for the participants, because as Connerton (1989), observes our experiences of the present largely depend upon our knowledge of the past, and our images of the past commonly serve to legitimate a present social order. African drumming recalled and reinterpreted knowledge of the past reconstituting it into a bicultural socialisation experience of the present.

African drumming as a form of African cultural memory provided the participants with a metaphysical experience which enabled them to appreciate African culture through drumming. According to Soyinka (1976), there are three worlds commonly recognised in African metaphysics: the world of the ancestor, the living and the unborn. The drummers drew on the cultural memory of their ancestral heritage to create rhythms to which the participants responded through dance improvisation.

African drumming is a language which is constituted of diverse rhythms which characterise specific ethnicities and cultural histories. Therefore, dance as a complimentary response to drumming paralleled traditional African culture where song, dance and drumming are usually performed together in a complimentary approach.

Memories are an active process by which meaning is created; they are not mere depositories of facts (Agnew, 2005). The experience of African drumming, by the participants was an active process through which they revealed their own embodied knowledge and in turn produced culture. African drumming as a bonding event provided an avenue for exploring African cultural memory and developing bicultural sensibilities of their Otherness. The next section examines song as a bonding theatrical event for the participants.
**Song**

Song in African culture is synonymous with everyday social and cultural expression. There are songs associated with rites of passage: birth, initiation and puberty, betrothal or okwandulha, marriage, acquiring a new title or status, funeral and memorial celebrations (Bebey, 1975; Finnegan, 1970). Song in African culture plays a significant role in expression of social reality and cultural history.

The inclusion of song as a bonding theatrical event had two objectives: the first one was to facilitate an experience of African musical culture and the second was to mobilise the participants’ music ideas and interests in the context of bicultural socialisation. Music functions as a medium for identity performance and expression (Ramsey, 2003); accordingly exploration of African musical cultures by the participants, through song, was a relevant context for exploring bicultural socialisation.

While the overall return to the past, by the participants, is unrealistic, a rejection of the African heritage would leave the participants, who are themselves African descendants, in a vacuum potentially filled with confusion, loss of identity, and total break in intergenerational communication (Boateng, 1990). This is particularly important in the African diaspora where bicultural parenting (Dove, 2003; Kayrooz & Blunt, 2000), and bicultural competence (Berry, 2007; Gordon, 2001; 2007) demand creative utilisation of African indigenous knowledge, cultural history (Asante, 2003; Williams, 1987; Davidson, 1984) and consciousness (Dei, 1999; Ngugi, 1993; Mays, 1986; Wiredu, 1980) as part of ongoing bicultural socialisation of the African youth.
Participants in the project functioned in two different cultural environments where boundaries needed to be negotiated and criss-crossed in an informed way. Kayrooz & Blunt (2000), for example, have observed that the development of a bicultural parenting identity, whereby parents value and identify with the ways of parenting of two or more cultures, is a protective factor against homelessness for adolescents and a strong factor in crime prevention. They further suggest that the families who survive and thrive are those that blend their heritage/ancestral culture with the best of Australian culture. Therefore, the bonding theatrical events were organised in a context which allowed the participants to explore the relevance of African musical culture in their bicultural socialisation.

Consequently the research process engaged with the African past and contemporary ideas and paradigms to effect cultural negotiation and renewal (Skinner, 1999) among participants. It was assumed that African languages were contingent to the notion of cultural renewal (Hatoss, 2009; Ngugi, 1993, 2009). Therefore the facilitation of singing, by the researcher, took cognisance of the need for appropriation and revaluation of African culture through song and language. Accordingly some of the song material explored was in Zulu (South African), Swahili (East Africa) and Krio (West African) languages. Gyekye, (1997) cautions about reclaiming the past by stating that:

The relevance of ideas and institutions of a past to a present would be determined by their functionality, that is, whether or not they can play any meaningful or effective roles in the present scheme of things and so conduce to the attainment of the goals and vision of that present. (Gyekye, 1997, p.261)
Indeed, through singing it was possible to experience embedded cultural idioms—accent, including pronunciation and intonation of words; harmony and melody of African songs.

Three African indigenous songs were explored, namely: Baraka za Mungu (the blessing of God) a Swahili spiritual song from East Africa; Nkosi Sikelel Africa (God bless Africa) a South African spiritual song; and a Sierra Leonean Krio ritual song from West Africa entitled Dumidu. A dialogue about these songs enabled the participants to appreciate their cultural and political significance in an African context (Schumann, 2008). Nkosi Sikelel, for instance, since its composition by Enoch Sontonga, a teacher at a Methodist mission school in Johannesburg (1897) has been sung both as a spiritual and political song. As a spiritual, it’s a prayer for peace and harmony in Africa, as a political song it was sung as a resistance towards apartheid in South Africa. Therefore the song was explored both in its political and spiritual context.

Baraka za Mungu ni za ajabu (The blessings of God are amazing) is a Swahili spiritual song. Swahili is an African cosmopolitan language which originated from the contact between Arabs and Bantu people on the Eastern coast of East Africa. It is widely spoken in different parts of the continent and taught, formally, in many institutions of higher learning around the world. Therefore the researcher believed that the singing in Swahili would provide appropriate cultural experience to the participants towards bicultural competence.

Dewey (1938/1997) argued that an educational experience should be provided from the standpoint of connection with further experience. Therefore the performance of the song was accompanied by a discussion
of the lyrics and the history of the Swahili language. In a Ujamaa circle, the participants were involved in word pronunciation, voicing, harmony and body movements which articulated the essence of the song. The miming of the song involved hand movements in different directions, including: up and down; forward and backwards; and left and right in a rhythmic time.

'Dumidu' was a Krio song introduced and taught to the participants by one of the recently arrived refugee migrant participants. Prior to teaching the song JIK talked about the song and explained its meaning and essence. He told the participants that the song was a welcome song to cultural events in his homeland, Sierra Leone. It is an invitation of spectators to a performance. Teaching of the song was complimented by drumming. He taught the drumming patterns to one of the participants, who had lived in Australia for most of her life. This was significant because cultural negotiation occurred during the process of teaching and learning from each other.

Song was a valuable aspect of the bonding because it enabled the participants to engage with African cultural memory and comprehend some aspects of African singing and languages. The next section explores the second aspect of song which was located in contemporary popular cultural experience of the young participants.

*Popular Culture and Bicultural Socialisation*

Western media is a major influence on the nature of popular culture disseminated and subsequently consumed by young people. Therefore the research process, through song, took into account the need to understand the young participants’ experience of popular culture and how they defined themselves through it. The songs performed by the participants, in this context, reflected a diverse range
of taste and values. They ranged from African pop songs to Western popular songs, particularly the Rhythm and Blues (R&B). The musical influence of African American Hip Hop culture on the participants was clearly evident in their performances.

One of the participants, JW, who performed a Rhythm and Blues song by Joe Thomas entitled 'No one else comes close', when asked, by one of the participants, how the music by an African American artist influenced him, as an African Australian? This was his response:

Joe is an R & B singer and comes from a Christian family and he is my favourite. Each time I try to do something I honour him first; and I was raised in a Christian family. People think that when you do music it is all about swearing but I want to show people, that music is not just about swearing and like Joe I try to do good music.

From the foregoing, JW notes that Joe Thomas is a positive role model. Singing and Christian values seem to be an important connection point for JW and Joe Thomas. JW is of a Christian background and that seems to have an influence on the artists he listens to and the choice of music. In other words religious values, Christianity in particular, influences his cultural identity and values.

Similarly MNW after performing Tony Braxton’s 'Unbreak my heart' was asked by another participant how Tony Braxton’s music influenced her identity.

I grew up pretty much listening to R & B and I admire Tony Braxton because of her low vocal range and yet pretty much manages to still sound feminine.

MNW’s remarks imply that R & B has been a significant element of her cultural experience. Moreover, like JW, the character of an artist is an important factor in her music preferences of R & B. This is particularly important for the African migrant youth to have artists on whom they model themselves, performatively.
Furthermore, some of the role models have other qualities beyond musical skills, admired by the participants. As observed by MNW about Lauryn Hill, after performing her version of 'Killing me softly':

I used to listen to Lauryn Hill and the Fugees. Lauryn Hill is an African American woman; has a law degree but also a singer who manages to balance both. I therefore have to learn to balance my arts and singing.

MNW is modelling herself on Lauryn Hill who is both a lawyer and performing artist. Lauryn Hill as a role model provides a useful 'mentor' for cultural identity development. Life is a balancing act between various commitments and Lauryn Hill exemplifies that possibility. That is why another participant, MHW, noted of Alicia Keys another African American R & B artist:

I think she inspires me because she is a piano player and solo singer in that way she inspires me because I am also into that sort of stuff.

African American artists have a significant influence on the participants and they seem to provide positive role models to the African youth in Australia. Zwangobani (2008) has made similar observations with the African youth in Canberra who have formed an arts group called 'Kulture Break' which relies extensively on the appropriation of American hip hop and popular culture to create an identity that goes beyond the negative stereotype associated with difference in Australia.

Furthermore, through music, cultural identity is constructed and therefore the participants are negotiating their identities through it. Rhythm and Blues emerged from African American cultural production and struggle for an ethnic identity in a racist hegemony. As Ramsey (2003) asserts:
African Americans have continually (re)articulated, questioned, abandoned, played with, and reinforced their ethnic identities through vernacular musical practices and many other activities. Black vernacular musical styles and the various cultural practices surrounding them have existed as historically important modalities through which African Americans have expressed various conceptions of ethnicity. (p.36)

Therefore music is an important medium for enunciating and performing cultural identity. For the youth participants identifying with R & B was not a mere imitation, but an appropriation of a heritage in order to define themselves through it. This appropriation was elaborated through their explanations about their choice of music/artists for performance.

Leavy (2009) has suggested that arts-based practices can promote dialogue amongst participants because arts evoke emotional responses. Consequently, the dialogue sparked by arts-based practices is highly engaged, connecting people on emotional and visceral levels. This was clearly evident during the performance of the songs by the participants and the dialogue that followed it. JIK, a participant, for example, observed that:

Bonding was really fantastic; it was well dealt with—people exploring their talent which is really amazing. I learnt so much from people and also they made me feel safe and I feel that I have met the right people or involved myself in the right community. Involving in the project improved me both mentally, physically and emotionally.

As Korieh (2006), observes that individuals and groups have a social psychological ‘need to belong’ and express this need through their social identities such as ethnic groups, nationality, or political identification (p.94). JIK stated that he had involved himself with the right community—a group which made him feel safe because through the interaction with the other members, through
the theatrical event, he improved mentally, physically and emotionally.

From the foregoing song as a bonding theatrical event was an appropriate context for negotiating and signifying the identities of the participants. Furthermore, the choices of performance materials demonstrated the relevance of popular culture in the identity construction and bicultural socialisation of the African Australian youth. African American musical culture in particular was part of their performance aesthetic. The next section explores dance as a bonding theatrical event.

Dance

According to Weeks, (1990) identity is about belonging; about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others. At its most basic it gives you a sense of personal location, the stable core of your individuality. But it is also about your social relationships and complex involvement with others. Therefore the exploration of cultural memory and identity, with the participants, through dance revealed ideas that informed their identities in a relational way. There were two dances explored by participants: the first was a contemporary African dance, involving eight participants, based on West African music and culture. The second dance based on Congolese soukous dance involved two participants.

African dance, according to Kariamu Asante (1990) is a complex art and this is because its development encompasses many forms. This is highly visible in the samba, rumba, capoiera, and soukous dances. In general, African dances reflect an ethnic context, the particular qualities of an ethnic group provide the ingredients which distinguish the aesthetic and enable individual
expression as well as manifest collective expression (Snipe, 1998). This was clearly evident in the two dances performed by the participants which were distinctively different because of their structure, content and quality that paralleled their ancestral origins in Africa.

JIK, a participant in the project and a recent migrant from Sierra Leone, West Africa, taught the participants a dance based on his embodied knowledge and cultural memory. Recall of the content and structure of the dance enabled him to share his embodied knowledge about the dance. This was an important epistemological strategy for reclaiming African cultural knowledge through dance. Performance of the West African dance revealed diverse histories of gender, social status, kinship, ethnicity, and power as well as the bodily experience (Mans, 2004). Initially JIK was the centre of energy, however as other participants gained mastery of the dance, the energy was evenly spread out among all dancers. Dance from an African cultural perspective, foregrounds cultural memory as “embodied practice (Buckland, 2001, p.1).” JIK revealed his embodied knowledge of dance through repetitive practise with the other participants.

African dance is a cultural behaviour in the sense that “people’s values, attitudes and beliefs partially determine the conceptualisation of dance as well as its physical reproduction, style, structure, content and performance (Snipe, 1998, p.64).” JIK was so conversant with the dance ideas that he was able to develop them along with the participants into a coherent choreography. The process of teaching was made easier because most of the participants had embodied knowledge of African dance. Hence conceptualisation of the West African dance didn’t
present much difficulty as participants had the appropriate attitude towards learning it.

African dances are mostly learnt through observation and imitation. This was clearly evident in the dance workshops (See Fig 7.3) in which the participants not only observed, but also imitated JIK’s steps as a means to learning the dance. The mind and the body worked together to accomplish the task of learning the dance.

![Fig. 7.3 JIK on the extreme right taking the participants through the West African Dance routine](image)

Dance acts powerfully on the body, activating, guiding, facilitating, enabling and shaping embodied ideas into appropriate form (Bowman, 2004). Through JIK, ideas about West African dance were revealed to the participants. Moreover the collaboration with RNW, a participant and African Australian Hip Hop/African dancer had complementary benefits in terms of organising space (stage) and time (pattern changes). Embodied knowledge
was subjected to logical manipulation that included conscious timing and monitoring pattern changes through an organised choreographic structure. The dance culminated into a well sequenced choreography constituted of collective universal patterns and individual solo improvisation (See Fig 7.4).

![Image](image.png)

**Fig 7.4** The West African dance piece negotiated to include collective memory and individual creativity

Ngugi (1998) proposes that a performance space is also constituted by the totality of its external relations; consequently it is political and contradictory. Enactment of embodied knowledge by the African youth, in a third space, ought to be viewed as a cultural expression with a political dimension because it is oppositional and contradictory to dominant Eurocentric culture. Performance of cultural identity is political and hence demands a rational approach in which the individual is a conscious agent or actor. Dance provided
the participants with agency which enabled them to perform purposefully through generation of self-affirming discourses. The next section examines another aspect of African dance through which the dancer became an active social and cultural agent (Gordon, 2007; Freire, 1970/2000).

Gordon (2007) has observed that the idea of creating culture is a human task. Hence the fundamental task of cultural workers is to facilitate bicultural competence whereby a bicultural person becomes an effective creator of culture. This entails a consciousness and knowledge about both the subordinate and dominant culture. Consequently, the soukous dance improvisations by the two participants (see fig 7.5) demonstrated the possibility of African Australian youth becoming their own agents in bicultural socialisation and cultural production.

Soukous a popular dance style originates in central Africa it involves hip/waist movements as a well as coordinated footwork. The two dancers involved in soukous, created synchronised dance routines which included overlapping patterns and independent solo improvisations.
The two participants took up a dance space and engaged in a dialogue with each other through the embodied language of soukous dance.

Arnold (2000) in describing a dancer as an active participant in her creation observes that an active dancer is rational, imaginative and contributive. The two dancers while drawing on embodied knowledge also bounced off each other's creativity in a complimentary way responding to each other's improvisations in a kind of 'call and response' mode. While some of the ideas in their improvisations were embodied, there were some which seemed to be spontaneously created. Dance was an appropriate context to observe the cultural agency of the two participants as confirmed by one of the dancers: “I just love dancing; I feel inside that I am still in Africa even though I am an African Australian.” African dance is something she loves doing and was recreating in Australia. She further stated that: “I learnt my dancing in Africa and I was born to dance.” For this participant,
dancing was an embodied knowledge and as demonstrated through the performance it was relevant to her psycho-social well being because it gave her a voice and purpose—"I just love dancing."

The term embodiment according to Arnold (2000) is an important one for the dancer both as an artist and cultural agent. Embodiment in a phenomenological context upholds the view that the body is the basis of one's consciousness and perception. It is through the body that we perceive ourselves and others, as well as things that make up the world. It is through the body that we are able to act and be acted upon. Embodiment in this sense encapsulates the various experiences that are disclosed to the agent as she goes about her immediate involvements and concerns. Accordingly in dance, the concept is helpful firstly, because it allows the dancer to see herself as a bodily being; and secondly, because it gives the dancer an insight into how, by bodily means, ideas can be communicated or feelings expressed (Arnold, 2000).

Through their bodies, the two participants communicated their embodied knowledge and interpretation of soukous dance in a performance space. Through dance they also communicated their passion for what they had learnt from their ancestral heritage culture. Memory according to Kariamu Asante (1990) is an ontological aspect of African aesthetics renewed, from time to time, performatively. Soukous, rumba, samba and many other African dance forms are recreated and expanded through recall and repetitive imitation (Snipe, 1998). Therefore, for the two participants, the performance space became symbolically empowering liminal location, a third space, through which embodied knowledge was performed and translated.
The next section discusses the Reflective visual journal (RVJ) as an autobiographical exploration of subjective identification, a process of engaging with self as a means of developing a self-affirming discourse towards bicultural competence.

Reflective Visual Journal (RVJ)

Journal writing was a valuable component of the bonding process. This was because it provided both an individual and collective space for the participants to reflect on diverse themes relating to their lived social reality. Caruso (2005) suggests that the intent of a biographical project is to problematise the social, economic, cultural, structural and historical forces that shape, distort, and otherwise alter lived experiences. Therefore, engaging in Reflective visual journal (RVJ) writing was a biographical transcendent context allowing participants to see and understand positions of inclusion and exclusion—margins and dominant culture (Ladson-Billings, 2003).

Moreover, bicultural competence can only come about through a deliberate and conscious effort to search for relevant cultural knowledge. Such an approach according to Gordon (2007), entails a process of learning through self discovery—by engaging with life through attending to the issues life presents, as opposed to colluding with dominant Eurocentric culture in avoiding, repressing and fearing them.

Therefore the application of a Reflective Visual Journal (RVJ) as a medium for development of self knowledge by the participants was appropriate:

Because a journal acts as a record of our writing, it shows us our patterns of work and feeling, our responses to ourselves and our writing, our strategies for dealing with difficulties and challenges, it helps
us through difficult times; it helps bolster our spirits. (De Salvo, p.86)

Accordingly the Reflective Visual Journal (RVJ) was a personal journey through which the participants explored their lived subjective experiences and cultural memory through writing and graphic illustrations under the themes of: Memories of Africa; Growing up; Cultural identity (Who am I?); Making sense of place; and Self evaluation.

Memories of Africa

‘Memories of Africa’ was intended to facilitate recall and development of the African connection through parents’ genealogies/cultural heritage and childhood memories. This was considered appropriate because many of the participants live in constant denial of their African identities; they do not receive positive acknowledgement of their identities from dominant culture. The dominant culture is loaded with negative stereotypes about Africa and blackness. Moreover Africans have been inferiorised through historical colonialism, slavery (Gordon, 2007; hooks, 2003; Loomba, 1998; Ngugi, 1986), and in contemporary times through racism and western media stereotypes (Windle, 2008; hooks, 2003; Udo-Ekpo, 1999; Yeboah, 1997). Therefore cultural knowledge about participants’ parental heritage and African histories was important because it would enable the participants to be more informed about their African heritage and consequently be in a better position to challenge stereotypes. Furthermore, the participants would conceive their identities more critically through both African and Australian cultural contexts. It is pertinent to understand each cultural context with the intention of gaining self-knowledge that is relevant to the development of conscious bicultural competence (Gordon,
Hence the documentation through the RVJ was a convenient strategy through which to work towards this objective.

In the ‘Memories of Africa’ section of the journal, participants were encouraged to gather information about their parents including but not limited to: Country of birth; Ancestral place; Ethnicity; Languages spoken; Clan; Totem; Clan/Ethnic names. This was necessary because as Hua (2005) observes, remembering is valuable for marginalised groups such as ethnic minorities because marginalised groups often attempt to maintain memories which the dominant culture would like, often, to forget. Therefore getting the participants to think and document about their ancestry and cultural histories was a means of writing history and creating counter knowledge which was oppositional to dominant master narratives (hooks, 2003; Shujaa, 1997; Akbar, 1996; Akinyela, 1996; Asante and Asante, 1990). Below is an example of such a journal entry by one of the participants, EM/F/26/26.
Fig 7.6 Documenting Cultural Memory

The participant’s journal entry, in Fig 7.6, is a documentation of her origins and implies a cultural memory which is inclusive of an extended family in Africa, and a transnational belonging of herself. Such memory is part of the participant’s mental universe and therefore relevant to her bicultural competence. It provides a spiritual and hence psychological context of her ancestry. Another significant outcome of this graphic illustration is that Africa is perceived as a place of people and human relations. Such perception is important for marginalised African youth, in Australia, who are constantly exposed to negative images about Africa as a place of poverty, starving people and jungles teeming with wild animals. Beyond such stereotypes, the RVJ
revealed the presence of people, in Africa, consequently offering the possibility of constructing alternative social meanings about Africa—subjective truths, about Africa, which were more connected and empowering to the participants.

‘Memories of Africa’ also included journal entries relating to stories told to the participants by their parents. One of the participants made an entry about a story told by her mum which was subsequently transformed into a play.

‘What I remember’
I rewrote a story that I was told as a child by mum! After writing this story I was given the opportunity to put this story into a play form; with the involvement of my three younger sisters we performed this story on Uganda’s Independence Day in 2003. It was great we enjoyed the chance to perform this to the others but most of all I enjoyed connecting with this traditional story and making it mine. I really felt that I had control of the story. It wasn’t make-believe, it was a form of reality to me, although I have never experienced this lifestyle and living in Africa...

Evident from this reflection, by RNW, is the idea of intergenerational communication and transmission of African cultural knowledge. Today critics of African renaissance argue that teaching African cultural knowledge, uncritically, is essentialist and outdated given the scientific and technological demands of modern economies (Gyekye, 1997, Wiredu, 1980). Such critics seem to be driven by positivistic rationalism which undervalues the metaphysical contexts of human experience. It is true that priority in training should be given to specialist areas that may improve economic performance in African communities. However, as Boateng (1990) cautions, a wholesale rejection of the African heritage will leave African societies in a vacuum that can only be filled with confusion. ‘There are aspects of
African heritage that are still relevant to a modern African youth. Moreover the African descendant youth may find value in their cultural inheritance as stated in a journal entry by RNW:

I feel that it is important for us as African youth to listen to these stories but not only listen but write these folk stories. It would be great to film these stories or even put them into cartoon series ... There is so much that Africa can give and this just a smaller part of the Bigger picture.

It is evident from the foregoing journal entry that RNW has some strategies, for appropriation and revaluation of African cultural heritage, through documentation and filming, for the benefit of the African youth in the diaspora. They are strategies that may lead to the generation of informative African cultural epistemologies and bicultural competence.

Leggo (2008) suggests that if we do not learn to appreciate the significance of our own lived experiences, then we will always be living in the frustrating illusions of fictive creations shaped in the images of popular and dominant cultures. This is particularly true with increasing accessibility to intrusive technology—television, internet, mobile phones. Therefore in order to know the possibilities for our unique presence in the world, we need to be connected to the words that represent as well as challenge our daily understandings of who we are and who we are becoming. Probing the African cultural memory through the appropriation and reinterpretation of African culture is one way of achieving this objective. ‘Memories of Africa’ was a useful context for exploring relevance of African memory in cultural identity construction towards bicultural competence. The next section explores ‘Growing up’ as part of the Reflective visual journal (RVJ).
Growing up

The ‘Growing up’ section was designed to enable participants to create narratives and graphic illustrations of experiences relating to growing up between cultures, namely subordinate/heritage (African) culture and dominant Eurocentric culture. Growing up between cultures, for visible African migrants, entails two main challenges, namely, racism and the uncertainty of how to integrate African cultural heritage into their everyday cultural practice. Parmar (1990), in discussing memory work, suggests that the use of stories and photographs to reconstruct memories of the past in the context of the present is a productive approach to understanding cultural identity construction. This is because the use of stories and graphic illustrations produces different layers of meaning, understandings that enable reconstruction of identity.

Therefore the applications of memory-work strategies in the Reflective visual journal (RVJ) contributed to the understanding of participants’ identity construction and bicultural socialisation processes. EM’s journal entry provides some evidence:

I recall one time I was at a friend’s church with my sister and they asked us where we were from. I think one of us maybe it was me replied with something like “We’re from Belmont”. And my friends who’d brought us to the church laughed at my innocent response. At the time I may not have realised they were looking at my dark skin and frizzy hair (I used to get called Afro). I know I get curious about things but I always find it interesting...If I was a European would they have bothered asking where I was from? I don’t know...Growing up I was really shy and timid, and lacked self esteem I reckon part of this came from earlier years of being teased. I think though I took it more seriously back then, I used to carry negative experiences and take them on board and get anxious and self-conscious as a result. As I get older though and through learning and my studies I have become better at separating people’s ideas with the truth of who I know myself to be, God’s unique creation, like we all are.
EM’s entry provides a powerful reflective profile about identity construction. It includes alienation and loss of self confidence during her childhood due to negative experiences but regaining confidence as she got older. As EM got older, she learnt to deal with the negative childhood experiences. EM was fortunate to be able to deal with her frustrations, as she got older, because some people would simply get angry and subsequently fail to engage with the issues rationally. A rational approach to ‘who she is’, through the journal, was a good strategy for EM to use because it enabled her to appreciate the ultimate essence of her humanity ‘God’s ‘unique creation’.

Self-reflective witnessing of ourselves through writing helps us not to engage in accusation or self-blame, but rather invites us to focus upon defining ourselves as active and engaged, not as passive, helpless and hopeless (De Salvo, 1999). Through a reflective journal entry EM appreciated herself as someone who had learnt to separate people’s ideas and the truth of what she knew herself to be. For a marginal youth this is an important step towards the development of empowering self knowledge.

The next journal entry about ‘Growing Up’ is by RNW; it also highlights challenges faced by the participant during her identity development and bicultural socialisation:

I remember moving to Ma... in 1999 (I was year 7) it was hard for me. At this time it was a week before we started the school term. It was a year b4 high school and we had to move. Dad had got a job in Ma..., teaching. I did settle in BUT it was hard. I always wonder how we managed as a family to settle, as we were the only Africans ‘Black’ family in Ma... at this time. Most people hadn’t seen an ‘African b4’ at school I remember being looked at and spoken to by other students as if I wasn’t even human, like
something abnormal from the zoo. It wasn’t a nice feeling, anyway I survived that year. Then came high school! I did enjoy my school years specifically year 12. I did struggle with the usual mistreatments (by this I mean being left out of conversation, rude remarks + racist comments directed at me but not said directly to me). I mean these sorts of comments and treatments did upset me but I have such an empowering and supportive family that would counsel me and make me feel more of a person and build my confidence.

RNW’s entry recounts similar challenges as EM’s—disempowering and discriminatory experiences, from peers, at school. It is impossible to discuss cultural identity construction of a black/African youth, living in Eurocentric culture, without taking into consideration alienating attitudes from white peers. Such attitudes lead to what Gordon (2007) has called a ‘psychic disorientation confusion and despair’. Without parental support RNW potentially would have derailed into ‘psychic disorientation’.

Unfortunately these types of experiences are “hidden behind a wall of silence” (Gordon, 2007, p.25), since they are not easily acknowledged as serious issues to be addressed by authorities. The consequence is a loss of self esteem and confidence among black youth, as observed by RNW, ‘I mean these sorts of comments and treatments did upset me but I have such an empowering and supportive family that would counsel me and make me feel more of a person and build my confidence’. Without parental support RNW would probably have become disillusioned and dropped out of school; such is the case with many African descendant youth in British (Gordon, 2007), Canadian (Codjoe, 2005; Dei, Mazzuca, McIsaac, & Zine, 1997), American schools (Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi, 1986) and there is evidence to suggest that similar patterns of alienation are emerging in Australian schools (Earnest,

From the foregoing, Reflective visual journals (RVJ) provided an appropriate space for exploring lived experiences and social reality of the African migrant youth in the African Australian diaspora. The journal entries offered insightful information relating to the psycho-social and cultural conditions of the participants. The usefulness of the Reflective visual journal (RVJ) is further demonstrated in the next section of 'Who am I'? 

Who am I?

The cultural identity (Who am I?) section offered the participants a space through which to make a conscious reflection on their perceived identities. Hall (1992), in discussing the concept of ‘Symbolic Interactionism’ suggests that identity is formed during the ‘interaction’ between the self and society. The subject still has an inner core or essence that is ‘the real me’, but this is formed and modified in a continuous dialogue with the cultural worlds ‘outside’ and the identities which they offer. Identity, in this sociological conception, bridges the gap between the ‘inside’ and outside or between the personal and the public. Symbolic Interactionism is demonstrated by EM’s graphic illustration in her journal entry, following (Fig. 7.7).
The sources of EM’s cultural identity are numerous. They include both Australian (dominant culture) and African (heritage culture) sources—African cultural memory; schooling; media and popular culture; church; dominant culture and own perspective on life. The social construction of identity is contingent to time, place and social context (Agnew, 2005) and for the migrant youth cultural memory and transnational relations are contingent to it. That is why Tettey and Puplampu (2005) propose that translocational positionality is an appropriate framework for examining the connections between Africans in the diaspora and their societies of origin. This is necessary because Africans in the diaspora maintain significant linkages with home countries manifested in the replication of traditions, attitudes, and rites. RNW confirms this preposition when she observes that:
I belong to the whole of Africa not just one section in the east. Growing up in Australia it is hard to define myself as just Ugandan, there is no direct link between me and Uganda except for the fact that I was born there. Moving to Australia made me part of the whole global view, I am now part of the diaspora. I will never forget that I come from Uganda, BUT I know that I can’t just limit my identity to Uganda alone, Africa is where I come from and it is part of who I truly am.

RNW has a transnational view of herself when she states that she can’t limit her identity to Uganda alone. According to RNW she belongs to the whole of Africa. A continental sensibility of herself is an interesting one and does suggest a possibility of cultural renewal through diverse aspects of African cultures. But as Agnew (2007) has observed there is a dual or paradoxical nature of diasporic consciousness, one that is caught between ‘here’ and ‘there’ as illustrated in the journal entries by RNW. She belongs to the whole of Africa but her sense of being Australian is also strong when she states that:

I now call Australia my home, I have grown up in Australia, spent primary school and high school including at present time university. It is funny to think about this but although I speak with an ‘Aussie accent’ people on the street will ask me, so where do you come from? When do you plan to go back? I simply answer: ‘this is my home it is all I know!’ It just shows how ignorant people are in the community, they just assume that you don’t belong and try to make you feel like an outcast. BUT I know I belong here and I always will!

Understanding the conditions of in-betweeness; of being ‘here’ and ‘there’ is an essential strategy of developing informed approaches to bicultural socialisation and competence. RNW claim of belonging to Africa and Australia indicates the significance of two locations in her transnational location and bicultural identity socialisation. The journal has helped her to clarify these realities which she may now act upon in a more deliberate and conscious approach. The next section
explores journal entry relating to ‘Making Sense of Place’.

Making sense of place

The ‘Making sense of place’ section was explored using the following questions: How do you see yourself in the Australian futures, Africa’s futures or the global futures? This approach challenged the participants to anticipate the futures as a proactive approach to bicultural competence. EM explained her making sense of place as follows:

English is all I am fluent in but I made efforts to fit in with them too. Speaking as much Swahili as I could; wearing kanga\textsuperscript{40} like an Aussie sarong; singing with cousins and friends, lots of African songs. We really got along. Back in OZ (Australia) I speak the same but outside I look different from the majority. But when you get down to it we are all migrants, me and you. Even the first Aussie settler too... From uni and my life experiences it’s the beauty of diversity. I know I’m not alone, who wants to be a clone? It’s nice to have a bicultural identity of my own. I am happy down under. But why I ask don’t we think twice about the flowers and plants they all look different to each other. We think they are beautiful; what about you and me?

EM is exploring the theme of identity, appreciating her Otherness which she wishes to develop as implied in her statement: “It’s nice to have a bicultural identity of my own.” It is this difference that Bhabha (1990) locates in a position of liminality, a productive space of the construction of culture as difference, in the spirit of alterity or Otherness. EM is constructing a cultural identity which is grounded in the belief that it’s okay to be different. Through the journal process the concept of ‘Otherness’ was developed and this enabled the participants to become clearer of their own agency in

\textsuperscript{40} Kangas are, usually, one and a half to two meter long pieces of cloth used by women in East Africa as wrappers.
cultural construction and production. This comes out much more clearly in the ‘Self evaluation’ section.

Self evaluation

The last section of the Reflective visual journal (RVJ), ‘Self evaluation’, was about evaluating the process and experience of being involved with the Reflective visual journal (RVJ). It was guided by the question: ‘What have you learnt about yourself through the RVJ?’ Through their responses participants revealed the usefulness of a Reflective visual journal (RVJ) as a space for conscious exploration of cultural identity and bicultural socialisation. The journal was an empowering bonding space through which the participants explored their Otherness. RNW summed up the experience as follows:

We were able to write experiences and draw pictures as well as use images, anything that enabled us to connect with our African Australian (Bicultural) Identity. ‘Self Reflection’ was positive/personal and touching/emotional to do as I was able to reflect on experiences that have affected me, upset me and write about what it meant to me. As well as finding out about Africa developing the family tree was emotional as I felt as if everything came together. In regards to the importance of reflection and reading, reflection has started to come naturally to me and it is important to keep a focussed and stress free mind otherwise everything just continues to rotate around my mind.

Through this process RNW developed interest in reading and reflection that in itself was a very important outcome because it implied that the RVJ may offer useful strategies for dealing with challenging circumstances. The RVJ was also an important tool for participants’ articulation of their views about cultural identity and Otherness.

Through my journal I have been able to reflect on experiences of myself and others, thus clearing my mind and enabling me to deal with these issues and events as well as determine how I should or had reacted. This gives me a visual guideline of who I am and what I should be proud of! Even though sometimes I
feel frustrated — the journal is like a bible or really good book.

RNW suggests that a reflection on her experiences through the RVJ enabled her to develop new approaches to problems. Todres (2007) in discussing self knowledge as part of psychotherapeutic practice suggests that self knowledge is not just cognitive, but requires a rhythmical process between embodied immersion in one’s experience and grounded reflections on that experience. Consequently the use of RVJs through reflective writing and graphic illustration offered beneficial psycho-social avenues for the participants through which to examine their lived conditions and identities. This is confirmed by the next journal entry:

Before I joined I didn’t think I had much 'African' (such a general term I know) in me, now I have a lot to be proud of—especially working on the journals—I did find in me the memory of some of the language I'd learned, though basic it still was in my head (Swahili); the experiences (washing clothes by hand; playing and singing with kids, some we barely knew in the neighbourhood and yet it was fun!); my bibi na babu (grandma and grandfather) and the rest of the family, meeting them, being called mzungu/wazungu "white people" the irony...and yet kind of getting that we (my sister and I) were different, speaking English gave us away, dressing the way we did... The journal can be there to remind me from time to time—the various parts of my bicultural identity, various parts of who we are, makes me feel more comfortable with myself, my skin, more understanding of things, the way they are... and I'm sure the others in the group have found great value in this whole journaling process and other aspects of what we have accomplished in our respective ways.

Appiah (1994) suggests that we need to tell our stories because personal dimension of identity work is important. “In telling that story, how I fit into the wider story of various collectives is for most of us important (p. 160).” Bicultural competence entails the ability to function in both the dominant and subordinate
culture, translating both towards meaningful existence. Through the RVJ it was demonstrated that this was possible. Participants reflected on their experiences and identity through the RVJ and their reflections suggest that the RVJ was a useful tool for exploring cultural identity as a psycho-social experience towards bicultural competence.

From the foregoing the bonding process had a critical perspective which allowed the participants to probe their Otherness, performatively, through cultural memory. Akinyela (1996) suggests that critical consciousness is a process and not an end in itself. Therefore, as participants learn to question and challenge their conditions of life, they learn to experience themselves as subjects and comprehend the significance of their own subjectivity to the construction of knowledge about the 'objective' world. Bonding was therefore an enunciative process through which participants constructed knowledge about themselves and the world (Freire and Macedo, 1987).

Moreover bonding through Critical African centred pedagogy theory (CACPT) (Akinyela, 1996) emphasised the goal of human beings becoming cognizant of their connectedness to and active participants in the process of nature. Critical African Centered pedagogy theory (CACPT) identifies personal alienation and cultural isolation as the fundamental contradiction which creates the sense of imbalance and disconnectedness within people whose primary cultural cognitive style is relational (Darder, 1991; Ramirez and Castaneda, 1974). One participant, EM observed that bonding created a sense of connectedness among the participants:

I feel like I'm continuously creating African memories for myself just by being in the group I'm learning new songs, dancing, stories, history, and leadership from watching all you guys. It's been a pleasure and I know some of the guys feel like we're
family. I feel that too, we're all learning from each other and helping one another that's the best part, for me in all this; and the sharing of ideas and questions too… It's like a little community, we're kind of creating our own identities too—we're defining who we are and I like that.

It’s evident from the foregoing that bonding, through the theatrical events, enabled new ideas and meanings about identity and Otherness of the participants to emerge. Furthermore, it allowed people with similar experiences and background to connect with each other.

**Conclusion**

Bonding as a performative notion in a third space was developed through theatrical events which involved young participants of African migrant descent in song, dance, African drumming and Reflective visual journal writing. Through the theatrical events the participants examined their bicultural socialisation performatively and subsequently bonded as a group. The theatrical events were both cognitively engaging and artistically empowering, enabling the participants to draw on their cultural memories to develop African Australian sensibilities about themselves. Through bonding cultural difference was explored and appreciated, by the participants, as a legitimate cultural context for defining the participants’ identities. Cultural difference, as a component of cultural competence, serves as a cushion against oppressive and marginalising Eurocentric cultural attitudes.

The next chapter discusses Uhuru Phase of the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF).
Chapter Eight

ACMYAF—Uhuru Phase

The Real Deal and the AfricanOz Idol

Form, feeling, and time (rhythm) are the key criteria in discussing the aesthetic of black people. The form, feeling, and rhythm must come out of our cultural consciousness or memory. (Asante, 2003, p.107)

Caring educators open the mind, allowing the students to embrace a world of knowing that is always subject to change and challenge. (hooks, 2003 p.92)

Biculturalism is concerned with the inner experience of culture, including points of possible conflict and its impact on the individual, the group and their well-being. (Gordon, 2007, p.135)

Introduction

This chapter explores two theatrical events that were part of the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF) and their relevance to bicultural socialisation of the African descendant youth involved. The two theatrical events included a play, the Real Deal and a collection of diverse theatrical performances, under the umbrella title of AfricanOz Idol. Drawing on ancestral heritage culture and popular culture, the two theatrical events provided the twelve participant youth of African descent with a third space through which to explore their bicultural identities. The inquiry into the cultural identities of the participants, through the theatrical events, in a third space, was also enunciative, enabling the participants to articulate their identities through a play, music, dance, reflective dialogue, satire and storytelling.
Accordingly the first part of the chapter discusses the Real Deal, as a third space theatrical event through which issues relating to bicultural socialisation were explored dialogically and performatively. The process of developing the play including the storyline, creation of characters, plotting the scenes, improvisation of the scenes, script writing, rehearsals, making props, and final performance was a praxis that enabled enunciative exploration of bicultural socialisation issues and development of skills.

The second part explores the second theatrical event, AfricanOz Idol which was a collection of diverse theatrical events performed before a panel of ‘judges’, a master of ceremony and spectators. AfricanOz Idol was modelled on popular culture-media programs: The Australian and American Idol. The difference between the media programs and AfricanOz Idol was that the latter was a research based theatrical event with an epistemological intent of using performance as a praxis that informs bicultural socialisation. The chapter concludes by reaffirming the importance of the two theatrical events as third space phenomena with an educative purpose that facilitated the development of a consciousness towards bicultural competence, among the twelve participants.

The Real Deal

The Real Deal was a theatrical event about the experiences of young people of African descent; through the theatrical event the young participants devised a play that explored issues relating to their bicultural socialisation and identities. As a third space theatrical event the play drew on both the African cultural memory (ancestral heritage culture) and dominant culture. Through the theatrical event the participants recalled their African cultural memories and interweaved them with
their lived Australian cultural experiences to produce an educative play.

**Storyline**

In reference to a theatrical event, Aston and Savona (1991) suggest that the story is the basic narrative outline, plot and the means by which narrative events are structured and presented. Therefore the storyline for the *Real Deal* provided by one of the participants, a recent migrant youth from Africa became the basis for plotting the scenes and developing the narrative of the play. The storyline was appropriate because it enabled the participants along with the researcher to develop themes and ideas relating to their psycho-social and cultural experiences. Furthermore through dialogue, song, dance, props and music it was possible to plot scenes that were inclusive of African aesthetics. This in turn aided the bicultural socialisation experience of the participants.

The storyline was modified following a dialogue with the participants, shifting the central conflict from an intergenerational conflict to cultural difference between two African young women (Kadijah and Sara). The story was about a young man, Richardson, who had recently migrated to Australia with his mum, dad, and a big sister Kadijah. As a new migrant Richardson made quick attempts to adjust to the Australian life. He was a bit of an artist, a singer, and occasionally performed at a local African restaurant. In the process of adjusting to Australian life he got involved with an African Australian girl, Sara, who came from a middle class background. However his sister, Kadijah, was not keen on the relationship between Richardson and Sara. Part of the problem was Kadijah’s limited understanding of Sara’s cultural identity. Sara an African Australian was viewed with
resentment by Kadijah because she did not behave ‘African’. Therefore the central conflict in the play revolved around Kadijah’s resentment towards Sara and labelling her a Coconut\textsuperscript{41}. Accordingly the play raised issues relating to bicultural socialisation and competence of African Australian youth. Kadijah’s assumption of one form of African identification was problematic because migration into a dominant, and different, culture entails complex bicultural socialisation experiences that may lead to varied identifications. Moreover, theory on immigration psychology (Benmayor & Skotnes 2007; Berry, 2001, 2008; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, and Vedder, 2001; Ferdman & Horenczyk 2000) suggests that integration, the most ideal aspect of acculturation, involves the selective adoption of new behaviours from dominant culture and retention of valued features of one’s ancestral heritage culture (Berry, 2005). Therefore a so-called Coconut cultural orientation is a reflection of bicultural socialisation. Nevertheless there is a possibility that the resentment towards Coconuts implies a reference to assimilated Africans whose attitudes may be resentful of African identities. Accordingly the characters of Kadijah and Sara are important because they reveal the psycho-social relations amongst African Australians and furthermore alert us to the varied identifications of African Australians. Therefore the modification of the storyline through dialogue with the participants enabled the

\textsuperscript{41} Coconut is a term used in a derogatory way towards black people who have been socialised into dominant white societies. Being physically ‘black’ and having a behavioural outlook of dominant culture makes them resemble a coconut which is white inside and ‘black’ outside. Therefore newly arrived African migrants in Australia sometimes use this label against their peers who lived in Australia longer. Coconut, as an element of cultural difference, is an important metaphor that needs to be deconstructed.
creation of characters that resembled the social reality of the participants.

Characterisation

Characters in a play, as noted by Aston and Savona (1991) are important not only in terms of who they are, but for what they do. Therefore the elaboration of characters in the Real Deal opened up possibilities for plotting scenes that explored diverse issues relating to bicultural socialisation of the participants. These issues included—the recency of arrival in Australia, intergenerational differentiation, social class, bicultural socialisation challenges and the diverse forms of African Australia identifications. These themes emerged from dialogues with the participants and provided valuable contexts for plotting the scenes. All the themes related to the cultural experiences of the participants and therefore the characters and narrative generated during improvisation was an extension of their psycho-social world.

In order to create characters similar to themselves the participants were split into two groups: those who had lived in Australia for most of their lives in one group and recent migrants from Africa in the second group. Using a structured questionnaire (Appendix 8.1), each group was encouraged to develop a psycho-social and cultural context of their character(s). Sara and her family background were developed by the participants who had lived in Australia for most of their lives while Richardson and Kadijah’s family background was developed by the participants who had recently arrived from Africa. This approach offered the participants with the opportunity of enhancing the realism of the characters and the play as a whole. As an outcome of this exercise
the nature of the characters resembled that of the participants’ cultural experiences and background\textsuperscript{42}.

Aston and Savona (1991) suggest that we need to know the relations of a character to all the others and to the many functions and modes of signification. Accordingly relationships between characters were developed in two phases: the first phase was the ‘character development phase’ facilitated by the researcher, it culminated into the scene plotting as outlined in (appendix, 8.2); the second phase was the ‘scene improvisation phase’ with the theatre facilitator. In the first phase a questionnaire was used in each group to develop the profiles of the characters, and dialogue was used with all the participants to review the storyline and the scene plotting. Accordingly development of characters tapped into the psycho-social and cultural backgrounds of the participants leading to a generation of ideas, from their cultural memory that informed the play production process. Gordon (2001, 2007) suggests that achieving bicultural competence means being competent not only in terms of the dominant culture, ‘the culture of residence’, but also and very importantly the culture of origin, the ancestral heritage culture. For the participants the culture of origin is African, but also what we might call ‘African diaspora’, the latter being constituted of the heritage culture that they experience in their homes and communities. Hence the characterisation process drew on this diversity of cultural backgrounds.

\textsuperscript{42} Kadijah was an exception because she was developed by a youth participant who had lived in Australia for most of her life but had opportunity to interact with African peers who had recently arrived from Africa. She usually felt alienated by the recently arrived peers from Africa. She drew on that experience to develop and play Kadijah.
Improvisation of Scenes and Script writing

Improvisation according to Pascoe (2000) is a dramatic act that is spontaneously created by actors without a script. The participants, with the assistance of the theatre facilitator and the researcher, functioned in a third space to create ideas for each scene using their imagination, creativity and cultural memory. During improvisation the participants used their physical and mental capacities in response to what was offered by the situation, setting or other participants. During improvisation the participants revealed informative narratives that led to realistic development of the play.

The improvisation process was enunciative because it drew on, and articulated, the young people’s life experiences, as remarked by one of the participants:

All the adults in the play were based on characters that all of us have come across be it in our travels back to particular regions in Africa or even from grown ups here in Perth. Often, one might have forgotten about a particular habit or nuance but then once we all started talking and workshopping scenes, certain traits would keep coming up and we’d have an “a-ha” moment and say “Yes! That is exactly what this person does”, and often we would find that this was the case across the board.

Indeed the ‘a-ha’ moments during the improvisations provided the participants with an opportunity to appreciate a collective sensibility about their own bicultural socialisation experience, that in turn helped them to create and define their own social-cultural reality through the play.

The process had an epistemological significance, as well, for the participants as observed by one of them:

...through developing the different characters the members were able to learn from each others different experiences and opinions in how the characters should react in certain situations. This challenge enabled the characters to develop realistically.
Being able to learn from each other’s experiences, and subsequently constructing characters more realistically, was a valuable methodological outcome for the research process and the participants.

In a typical improvisation session, improvisation was usually preceded by theatre games followed by a dialogue about the nature of the scene and the characters involved; the relationships of the characters towards each other and essence of the scene. The theatre games were usually fun and engaging enabling the participants to find out things about each other and themselves that benefited their performance roles. The games were a great value because they challenged the participants to imagine and create ideas performatively. Usually the games were followed by a dialogue about the scene. This enabled the participants to generate ideas and in turn develop the psycho-social and cultural contexts of the characters. A typical extract from ‘Scene two’ is shown below in (Fig.8.1). The dialogue notes, in figure 8.1, suggest that the participants were challenged cognitively to engage with the deeper essence of the characters and the scene. The key question enabled the participants to think more deeply about the scene and the characters involved. Consequently the final nature of the characters was an extension of the participants’ psycho-social world since the characters were developed from their own experiences and imagination.
Richardson has a dad, mum and sister.

**How would you see the (Richardson’s) dad and mum? (Key Question)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dad</th>
<th>Mum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defeated</td>
<td>Lovely lady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice if you met him</td>
<td>Thinks Australia better than home (Africa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet</td>
<td>Gorgeous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice with everyone</td>
<td>Instead of being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But tough on the kids, perhaps</td>
<td>controlling the mum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How is he on a good day?</strong> Smiles on a good day</td>
<td>could be the dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotypical dad</td>
<td>Parent- not typical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patriarchal family?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sister (Kadijah)**
Feels weighed down by parents
More confident than the mum

The psychological constructs and social reality created by the participants, about the characters enabled an informative and educative play, the *Real Deal* to emerge. Dialogue about scenes and characters and the subsequent improvisation was a generative process of an epistemology that informed the bicultural socialisation of the participants. Dialogue about scenes and characters, and improvisation of the scenes were recorded and subsequently transcribed and written into a coherent scene text.

**Scriptwriting**

The script writing was done by a script writing committee which was constituted of five participants plus the theatre artist as its facilitator. The script writing committee was formed early at the start of scene improvisations for the play and as one of the participants on the writing committee explained its role:
...it was to help make the process of writing scenes up for our drama 'The Real Deal' easier and faster for everyone; having one committee focus on it to really move it along. It made the process more formal, rather than having a random member contribute, we had to have a committee to help come up with the major ideas and then the whole group could decide what should stay and go.

The committee was initially constituted of three participants with the theatre facilitator as its fourth member. The committee was expanded later on to six members, accommodating an extra two participants who had contributed to the script writing. The script writing committee members wrote the scenes, from the transcribed notes of the improvisations and edited their own copies following feedback from committee members. Through scene writing the participants contributed, effectively, to the shaping of the characters and scene narratives. Through script writing the participants were involved in creating their own social reality.

Writing was also transformative because the dialogical and collaborative nature of the writing process enabled the participants to appreciate each other’s point of view, and as one of the participants observed “reading and watching from others contributions I’m more in touch with how one might approach scriptwriting if I was ever to pursue that in future.” Accordingly the writing process was enunciative as it enabled the writers to synthesise ideas, individually and collaboratively, through feedback from each other, into a coherent text. Further it was a space of collaboration and gaining writing skills, as noted by one of the participants:

There is no 'I' in a team. ... I've learnt that M..., the Maestro, N... and M... are talented writers and I've learnt that it's also about so-called behind the scenes people. Without the likes of M..., M..., S... and M... tirelessly writing out the transcripts of the original scene improvisations...our jobs would have been much
harder. It's about ideas and ultimately everything I wrote was my own work but constructive feedback was a lifeline...

Script and Rehearsals
The completed script was availed to the participants so that they could learn their lines. Learning lines was a cognitive process requiring mastery of the narrative and committing it to memory but also connecting with the characters. Therefore the participants were involved in memorising their lines, familiarisation with the play as a whole; reading the whole play script; comprehending the basic elements of the plot, understanding their own role and its relationship to other characters (Oddey, 1994; O'Toole, 1992; Courtney, 1974). The process of learning lines and rehearsing was quite engaging and seems to have benefited the participants as observed by one of them:

During this process of getting different individuals to learn lines and become a certain character, I have slowly begun to see the importance of developing and becoming that character. During the rehearsal I have been playing Kadijah, her character is 'out there'.

The participant engaged with Kadijah’s character by not only learning the lines but trying to understand her nature in the real world. Kadijah did exist ‘out there’ she said, and hence she sought to depict her personality and attitudes by drawing on her own experiences with the recently arrived African Australian peers. She notes:

Through playing the character of Kadijah I was able to transform into a girl who had recently migrated here from Africa. I feel that it was a challenge in a way as I had to behave in a certain way that showed a negative attitude towards a fellow African. It was also easy as I have experienced these mannerisms a lot with people that I have met, so I was able to imitate and use this to create Kadijah.

The rehearsal process was therefore an important phase for the participants’ metaphysical experience because getting into character also implied understanding the nature of the character. Therefore the psychological
transformation to become the character demanded a
cognitive and emotional connection with their nature, and
as one of the participants revealed, it involved ongoing
practise:

The fact that I am a young woman and the character I
played was a middle aged man. I had to not only learn
to move and talk like a man, but I had to maintain a
fake accent too. But after weeks of practise it became
almost natural, though I would constantly have to
ensure that I would pretend to be the character a few
minutes before actually going on stage and delivering
my lines to help me recall who I was playing.

Entering the world of the male character implied
getting to know the character’s psycho-social world
therefore in terms bicultural socialisation entering the
world of an African man also implied gaining some
knowledge about the patriarchal nature of African
culture. Accordingly this was a beneficial experience for
the participants because it facilitated access to the
African cultural world and consciousness. Gordon (2001)
has observed that gaining competence in her culture of
origin was a significant challenge because it meant that
she was going to try to connect with people she knew so
little about. She started off by exploring the African
diaspora. Through reading she engaged with the African
thinkers who have since influenced her thinking and
liberated her African consciousness. From the foregoing
bicultural socialisation is enriched, educatively, by
purposeful engagement in performance because performance
facilitates access to characters that may inform a
performer’s psycho-social world.

Final Performance

The final performance took place at the University
theatre (Nexus Theatre, Murdoch) before an audience of
about two hundred spectators. Performing before such a
big audience was empowering. It was a culmination of a
year’s work by the young participants, artistic facilitators, patrons and the researcher/facilitator. It was a moment to celebrate and to see the characters in their complete form, fully grown and at their best in their roles but also it was a moment to celebrate a theatrical production emerging from a liminal space. The young people, through humour, song, dance and dialogue, engaged the audience by drawing their attention to issues that influenced the participants’ psycho-social worlds.

Figure 8.2 A Scene in the play, the Real Deal

The theatrical process was empowering because it enabled the participants to share their story with the wider community, and as one of them observed at the end of the play:

It was incredibly fun but more than that it was a challenge and one that we overcame and worked through. For those who were there from start to finish and committed themselves during the entire process it was rewarding and feeling that sense of accomplishment was grand. Nothing said team effort more than ‘the Real Deal’.

Commitment was crucial otherwise it would have been impossible to put it all together with just a handful of
participants. Furthermore the cultural differences among the participants did not stop them from working together towards a common objective as noted by this participant:

Even with all the obvious differences the members were still able to develop a really powerful and well organised play. Each individual was able to work together, and share ideas even with definite contradictions and values but still put together a production that actually addressed some of these differences.

The power of the theatrical event in enabling young people of different African cultural backgrounds to explore issues relating to their bicultural socialisation culminating in a play was a significant outcome of the methodological approach. The play articulated some of the issues relating to the participants’ identities which suggested a multiple positionality of African Australian identities as noted by the following participant:

My character brought a lot of conflict in the play, enabling people to reflect on the issues that concern us as African Australian youth. It was a very different character to play, very negative and ‘stuck up’. She had no understanding or recognition of other people’s views as she felt that she was always right. I liked how she brought out the issue of ‘Coconut’ as it speaks of the truth of what some of us who have lived here longer in Australia face amongst our fellow African youth peers.

The play enabled the articulation of issues relating to bicultural socialisation of African identities in Australia revealing the tensions and possibilities of coexistence, of diverse African identities, without essentialising one particular context of African or African Australian identity.

The play culminated into a nicely choreographed dance using a popular West African song and diverse dance techniques. Moreover the choreography was negotiated between recent arrivals and participants who had been in
Australia for most of their lives, and as one of the participants noted:

Through the dance and singing I was able to explore the African cultural memory, J… had very recent and vivid dance skills that were traditional and that I had the opportunity to learn and adapt to my own style. But through this I felt really connected…

The participant appreciated the opportunity of negotiating culture through artistic dance collaboration with another participant who had recently arrived from Africa.

Figure 8.3 Dance in the play, the Real Deal
The dance and song experience enriched her bicultural identity 'I felt really connected' reinforcing the fact that exploring African cultural memory enhances bicultural socialisation towards bicultural competence.

The finale of the play was two African songs accompanied by African drumming. All the young people came on stage and sung the two songs one a Krio song, Du mi du, from West African and the second one, a Swahili song, Baraka za Mungu, from East Africa accompanied by a Djembe drumming. The symbolic return to their African roots through African songs and drumming secured Africa’s
cultural presence in the bicultural identities of the participants. Furthermore it confirmed the significance of the third space as an emancipatory space where African cultural values relevant to bicultural socialisation are reappropriated performatively. While Du mí du is a welcome song to a social gathering, Baraka za Mungu offers blessings. The spiritual nature of song and African drumming reminded the young people, and the audience of the living presence of the African cultural memory.

The Real Deal was a valuable context for exploring cultural identity and bicultural socialisation of the African Australian youth. The methodological approach to developing the Real Deal through the creation of characters, dialogue about scenes and the nature of characters, improvisation of scenes, recording improvised scenes, transcribing recorded scenes, scene writing, editing, compilation of the final script, rehearsals and final performance was participatory and educative. The participatory and educative approach led to transformative outcomes for the participants; the broader implications of these transformative outcomes form the subject of discussion in the next chapter (chapter nine). In the next section I will explore the second theatrical event, the AfricanOz Idol.

AfricanOz Idol

Introduction

This section explores the second theatrical event, the AfricanOz Idol, its development, epistemological significance and final performance. AfricanOz idol was a theatrical event through which young people developed a series of performances in a third space as a means of exploring their bicultural socialisation experience. The
third space was a liminal space through which cultural
difference was explored enunciatively. hooks (2003)
suggests that “Creating trust usually means finding out
what it is we have in common as well as what separates us
and makes us different (p.109).” Accordingly AfricanOz
Idol brought the twelve participants from different
African backgrounds together to explore their cultural
identities performatively through dialogue.

AfricanOz Idol its nature
AfricanOz Idol was an idea that came from the young
participants and was developed by them under the
facilitation of the researcher. This is how one of the
participants explained the essence of AfricanOz Idol:

AfricanOz Idol is a comedy sketch that the UYHC youth
with the help of Peter Wakholi our founder, came up
with. The premise / theme for whole thing was to be
IDENTITY ...The sketch is basically a take on Australian
Idol, although it doesn’t poke fun on the television
show, rather it pokes fun of stereotypes,
generalisations about ‘Africa’, and what it means to
be African or African Australian. Each individual
brought to it their own ideas, and that’s what it was
about—primarily defining who we are for ourselves (by
responding to the skit’s judges criticisms, comments
and other feedback) and to the audience.

From the foregoing the AfricanOz Idol theatrical
event was a context for exploring cultural identity and
African cultural memory. AfricanOz Idol was an
enunciative theatrical event, through which performances
were enacted and their relevance to cultural identity
explored. Each participant contributed a theatrical item
or collaborated with others to perform an item. The
participants in the theatrical event included three
Judges; a Master of Ceremony (MC); the artistic
performers and the spectators. The MC was the facilitator
of the dialogical process. The judges through their
critical comments and questioning about the performed
items engaged the performers into a dialogue that
subsequently informed the bicultural socialisation process. Each judge had a distinct character orientation and role. The first judge was a ‘good’ judge and according to one of the participants:

Everything is good. The judge truly supports the individual who has presented, encouraging them even if the act had not been all that great. They may dislike some aspects but generally they try to see the positive out of each act no matter how difficult it may be.

The second Judge was the ‘sentimental’ judge:

Gives feedback that may not be appropriate (own personal opinions) without any real back up as to why they didn’t connect / appreciate or like the material presented; may often be viewed as the mean judge.

The third judge, it was decided, should focus on the cultural identity context of the performance; he/she provided a cultural identity critique and through her questioning narratives relating to cultural difference and bicultural socialisation were generated. According to the participant:

The judge is able to give constructive criticism on the material presented. They are able to find out / determine the connection that the material has with the individual who shares it with the group. Through asking open ended questions they are able to determine the connection of the material presented with the individual / performer (with their African Australian Identity). This enables the members from both the panel and the stage to reflect on the connection between the material performed and the performer.

Engaging the performers with critical questions seeking to clarify the connection between the performed piece and their identity challenged the performers to reflect on their bicultural socialisation experiences. The stories and themes that emerged from the dialogues informed praxis for bicultural competence. This approach provided the participants with the opportunity to explore and define themselves through the theatrical event. Therefore it was an empowering but also transformative
because it challenged the performers to think about what they were doing and why they were doing it.

AfricanOz Idol was located in a liminal space enabling the young people to perform their cultural identities with the object of exploring their bicultural socialisation experience. During the preparations for the event the participants drew on their African cultural memory and popular culture, individually and collaboratively to learn songs and dances as noted by this participant:

A great deal of it was improvisation, one song we did—Sioshwe Dhambi Zangu, a Kiswahili hymn for instance was quite plain to begin with, then I told I... to perhaps drum faster after we’d sang the 1st verse the 2nd and 3rd time, and for my sister and I to sing higher and faster along to the drum beat, whatever would sound better we did, and it went from there. I taught my sister and I... some songs so we could provide him with backup. My sister and I provided back up vocals to K... with one of her songs—Tony Braxton’s *Unbreak my Heart*, anything to help the team out we all did, we worked together.

Collaboration was an important aspect of the theatrical event and therefore an act of cultural identity negotiation. Moreover AfricanOz Idol was also an enunciative space for the participants about ‘who they are’ as described by a participant:

...it’s about conveying one of the narrow views that might still exist—that is that others can define who we are. Our job is to show / explore the different ways we define who we are; but first for ourselves and then more easily to others. That was my interpretation of the event anyway. And further more if we are clear in our mind that this is what we are doing then that should shine through to everyone else.

Bicultural competence demands cognitive flexibility and ability to adapt to situational contingencies (Liebkind, 1992) therefore intentional generation of self-knowledge that informed the participants’ perspective of themselves was an important outcome of the
theatrical event. AfricanOz Idol provided the participants with a space for enacting self-affirming narratives that defined their perceived identities. The conscious engagement with the self with the view of generating informative self knowledge was an important process towards bicultural competence (Gordon, 2001, 2007).

A typical dialogue about the AfricanOz Idol presentation night is captured in the quote below. The dialogue highlights aesthetic, psycho-social and cultural issues of significance to the participants:

PRESENTATION- IT HAS TO BE GOOD!!! Some valid comments...
M... We want our performances to be really slick and to really flow well as we make transitions from one song/performance to another, we are really good! So we can do it, we can show it!

I... We need to do something we believe in and not just do it, do it not just because we want to be good; we wouldn’t be giving ourselves a good name. So we want to be presenting it well.

Mr.P We all need to be connected with our performances—connected to our theme, not to amuse/entertain people, but to define ourselves to others, entertainment is secondary.

Y... and M... We are all very different identities but together we’re united and we want to show this at our best, making it come from the heart....

J... Drumming and our journals should play a part in our performance; maybe use symbols and things on with us on stage, just show them everything that we are, what describes us...a kind of exhibit! The richness of Africa...maybe dance with the symbols, drums etc...

K... Have judges critique what some of us (artists) perform... saying that’s not African...!” And our task is to convey that we define ourselves. “You can’t tell us who we are!” E.g. M... playing classical guitar—what matters is she is able to know who she is, not listen to others defining her or what they think she should be.
Moreover, the extended quote illustrates how the process of developing the AfricanOz Idol was participatory and generative enabling the participants to shape its purpose and form. The youth participants along with patrons and the researcher shared ideas and analysed them towards an informative praxis. Therefore AfricanOz Idol was a process of cultural identity negotiation enabling the participants to develop artistic ideas that informed their identities and agency. hooks (2003) suggests that learning to live and work in a diverse community requires a commitment to complex analysis and the letting of wanting everything to be simple. Integration into dominant culture requires that the participants come to terms with multiple ways of knowing and interaction. Accordingly the Ujamaa circle dialogical approach encouraged the participants to explore their African cultural memory in varied ways. Therefore from the foregoing AfricanOz Idol was a transformative performance through which empowering knowledge towards bicultural competence was generated.

Final Performance

The AfricanOz Idol performance was the final event of the ACMYAF and marked the symbolic shifting of the third space from Murdoch Drama Workshop into a Multicultural venue: KULCHA a metropolitan performance location, down town in Fremantle, Western Australia. The participants along with the researcher arrived at the venue two hours prior to the show time, to set up and do a sound check. There was a big poster with a beautiful portrait of the participants at the main entrance of the performance location which read as follows:

The group United Youth Heritage Council (UYHC) has put together a creative piece that reflects on our bicultural identity as African Australians. Some of the members have either been born here in Australia or
lived here since childhood, whilst others have recently migrated here from Africa. But either way we are all bringing our talent together, learning from each other as we create our identity here in Australia without forgetting about our past and where we come from. So join us and see what we are all about…

This was an important public statement by the participants. For a marginal group the participants had entered empowering spaces on their own terms. This was a significant outcome. The process of setting up and doing the warm ups was empowering too as some of the young people had never gone through this kind of experience. The target audience was anyone who was interested in attending the event. Hence the audience was constituted of a diversity of people.

The youth put on a good show with diverse art forms including songs like Nkosi Sikelel, which was sung along with a patron and the researcher, Big Spender a jazz piece by Shirley Bassey, African drumming, African dance (Soukous) and Krumping, some Rhythm and Blues songs, Jazz piano, guitar performances and a media theatrical item (Appendix, 8.3, AfricanOz Idol program).

Each performance item was followed by a dialogue about its relevance to the performers’ cultural identities. Below is a typical dialogue from the event:

**MC:** Next we have a solo performance by I…
(Clapping and cheering)
Music plays ‘The world’s greatest’ by R. Kelly.
(Audience clapping in background as I… performs)
**MC:** Again another wonderful performance. I… who sang that song?
**I…:** It was sung by R. Kelly.
**MC:** Can you tell us a bit about him?
**I…** Well R. Kelly is everything; he’s a soul singer, an R n B singer, a pop singer. I think he is a utility guy he can sing everything.
(Cheering from the crowd)
**MC:** Lady ‘Z’ what do you think?
**Judge one (Lady’Z’):** I thought that was absolutely awesome. I… you’re like this ‘bolt’ of fire you just come out and explode. Actually you sang over his voice which is really good. You got the crowd really
involved which I liked, sang it well, great voice, great volume and you did it for me well done.
(The crowd claps)
**MC:** You’re on fire, you’re inspiring Z….To poetry now H… your thoughts.

**Judge two (H):** I liked the actions and movements; it went well with the song, especially to the audience perfect singing. And again it was touching as well; perfect song and choice; and I liked it when you got involved with the audience.
(Clapping and cheering from the crowd)

**MC:** Another touching performance for H…. What does Koko think?

**Judge three (Koko):** I think you have a very sweet soulful voice; like it really radiates through. But I have got to say like with the other performances; I would have preferred it with your voice only. I could hear Kelly a little bit still. But hey that is life. I also found that you had a lot of emotion, which was good, you connected with the audience and that is always a good thing. How does Kelly’s music make you feel when you sing it?

**I:** The first and foremost thing is that R. Kelly is African American and that’s the purpose of this show to sing something that is connected to our African culture and although R. Kelly is born in America, if you look at his background you will find that his ancestors are from Africa.
(Cheering from the crowd)
And R. Kelly was a music conductor or something and with his song you can be touched by it. He said in the song “I’m that star up in the sky , I’m that mountain peak up high” No matter what the challenges may be, just keep on going you will see what you want to achieve, that’s why I decided to choose the song.”
(Cheering by crowd and applause)

**MC:** Thanks for that I….

From the foregoing dialogue the participants explored various issues performatively and informed each other educatively. Through the dialogical process the performers revealed their connection to the material performed. For example from the foregoing ‘I…’ identified with R. Kelly’s song both in a cultural and philosophical way. For ‘I…’ there was an African diasporic connection between R. Kelly, an African American, and himself an African Australian. Secondly ‘I…’ appreciates the essence of R. Kelly’s song, the inspirational message it
contains. Through AfricanOz Idol the participants challenged the stereotypes and disrupted assumptions that alienated their varied identifications. The performers were no longer ‘African refugees’ or ‘street gangsters’ but rather ordinary African Australians defining themselves, performatively through theatrical items of their choice.

Another significant theatrical item performed in relation to cultural identity was the media satire. The media satire was about challenging western media stereotypes about Africa which are predominantly negative. It involved two characters one ‘mocking’ the negative reporting about Africa and the other countering the negative reporting and stereotypes with positive truths about the continent. The core ideas which constituted the dialogue are outlined below:

(Common stereotypes- this skit is to kind of counteract some of these)
· Africa as the "Dark Continent"
· Africa as culturally monolithic
· Africa without history
· Africa as uncivilized-pagan/heathen (historical/colonial times)
· Africa as uncivilized
· Endemic violence
· Endemic hunger/starvation

Therefore (Stereotypical) Behavioural Characteristics
· Behaviour determined by primordial drives
· Savagery
· Tribal ("communitarian") loyalty
· Superstition-determines attitudes and behaviour
· Weird cultural practices

The negative ideas were countered by positive ‘journalism’ as outlined, below:

Positives of Africa (L…”s dialogue in dot points)

· While organizations like World Vision are great for what they do, they tend to create ongoing exposure to an image of malnourished children and poverty, it’s fragmented, inaccurate in the sense that one is not getting the whole picture all the time, so it becomes an imagined truth…when in reality not everyone is malnourished there’s healthy people too…just like
other places around the world you have slim/poor people and bigger/richer people... like in places all over the world there is polarisation- inequality in their populations.

- Many families have maids and a much more well off in terms of assets than us, farms/land etc., cars etc....
- The idea of Africa being really hot in terms of weather/climate....
- Positive social change—the end of Apartheid; e.g. Positive Leaders—Nelson Mandela, and by the way Pharaoh did let God’s people go (in the end)!

These ideas were weaved into a coherent narrative of a ‘call and response’ type of dialogue or ‘interactive duality of the speaker and listener’ (Aston and Savona, 1991). This was an important theatrical presentation, in terms of its effectiveness to deliver an alternative view about Africa. hooks (2003) argues that the shaming attitudes of western media when it comes to blackness need to be challenged by counter narratives. Therefore the satire performance demonstrated that biases by western media can be challenged by counter knowledge and narratives. Countering oppressive hegemonic epistemologies, through counter narratives, is relevant to bicultural competence because it undermines biased views that sustain prejudice hence oppressive relations in a multicultural society, like Australia. The confidence with which the presenters performed the satire confirmed not only the realism of their narrative but also the significance of the performance itself. The satirical performance was empowering because the performers challenged the media stereotypes and presented alternative truths about Africa.

AfricanOz Idol was thoroughly enjoyed by the performers and the audience. And as one the participants observed:

AfricanOz Idol was an amazing end to a fantastic year full of laughs, hard work, and excellent displays of talent. I feel grateful to have found such a fantastic bunch of people to work with.
AfricanOz Idol was the final theatrical event of the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF), it was a fantastic performance and as one spectator remarked to the performers:

Congratulations to you all on your awesome and superb performance of AfricanOz Idol this afternoon. You were truly amazing and had the audience in the palm of your hand. What more can I say but...WOW!! Please keep this up and continue to share your gifts and talents with the world. You all have the ability to 'affect' others in very positive ways through your creative genius. And H... please audition for Australian Idol - your voice is truly phenomenal and outstanding. May the force be with you, Hugs.

The theatrical event which started off as a third space phenomenon was now acknowledged by the audience in a dominant cultural space. The talents of the participants were recognised by the spectators confirming the fact that theatrical events, hence the arts, can be a vehicle for cultural identity negotiation, cross cultural communication, and border crossings between cultures. The young people were empowered by this experience because their theatrical presentations were well received by the spectators.

Acknowledging difference was a key outcome of this event and as hooks (2003) explains it is our denial of the reality of difference that has created ongoing conflict for everyone. hooks (2003) argues that we need to drop sentimental notions like “We are all just human, just the same,” and learn both to engage our differences, celebrating them when we can, and also rigorously confronting tensions as they arise (p.109). Celebration of difference among the participants was a deliberate and conscious activity; it was hard work but paid off in the

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43 It could also be argued that this event took place in a liminal space because KULCHA is a registered NGO which caters for arts of marginal ethnic groups.
44 Data obtained from the spectators has not been explored extensively due to the need to focus on that obtained from the youth participants.
end because it revealed to the young people that nothing can be taken for granted. Vitality of difference can only be sustained through an informative and performative agency.

Celebratory Ending (Quiz and Awards night)

The festival had a celebratory ending with a quiz night, snacks, trophies and certificate award, and slide show—reviewing the entire festival. The content of the certificate outlined the objectives of the festival, the approach and the outcomes. This served as a useful record of the participants’ festival experience.

Fig. 8.4 Speech and Awards Night (Celebratory Ending)

A celebratory ending was important because the festival for the African Australian youth has to strengthen their bicultural socialisation experience.
Accordingly a celebratory ending of the festival is a witness to triumphant and joyful memories of the festival event as a space for cultural renewal and translation towards bicultural competence.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored two theatrical events that were part of the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF) namely: The Real Deal and The AfricanOz Idol. The theatrical events were participatory and drew on Critical African centred pedagogy theory to involve the participants in an explorative experience of their identities, performatively. Because the process drew on their African cultural memory and psycho-social experiences in Australia the process was rewarding to the participants and it opened up new ways of dealing with bicultural socialisation issues and conflicts.

The methodological approach was transformational and demonstrated that arts-based educational approaches along with the African centred pedagogy theory are useful and relevant to the exploration of bicultural socialisation experiences of the participants.

The next chapter, nine, is the evaluation chapter (Making Sense of Place). It discusses the research outcomes in the context of the final evaluation (Elimu circle) and the ACMYAF Conceptual Model. Limitations to the research project are also discussed.
Chapter Nine

Evaluation (Elimu circle)

ACMYAF—Making Sense of Place

Love, Learn and Teach
(Hughes Masekela, South African trumpeter).

You cannot destroy a person who has good knowledge of
him/herself
(Jimmy Cliff, Jamaican Artist).

Invest in community
(Lucky Dube, South African Artist).

Introduction

The discussion in this chapter is based on the final
evaluation (Elimu circle) at the end of the theatrical
events. In the final evaluation participants reflected on
their involvement with the project and subsequently
provided valuable information in relation to the
festival’s significance as an educatively empowering
theatrical event. The outcomes from the evaluation
suggest that the festival process can now be understood
as a Bicultural Socialisation Educational Program (BSEP)
through which the participants developed an African
Cultural Literacy (ACL) that informed their bicultural
identities and competence. The limitations to the
research project are also discussed.

Final Evaluation (Elimu circle)

The final evaluation was conducted at the end of
the theatrical events. It had two objectives, first to
assess the transformative impact of the festival process
on the participants, and second, to generate information,
from the participants, in regard to the effectiveness of
the methodological approach as a context for negotiating
cultural identity. Accordingly the final evaluation by
the participants reviewed the theatrical events and the ACMYAF model. The review of the theatrical events was guided by the following key questions: What did you do? What was the experience like? What did you learn from the experience? Give suggestions for improvement. This approach provided insightful information regarding the participants’ experience of the festival. The extract below (fig. 9.1) from one of the participants’ entry suggests an educative outcome of the methodological approach.

**Fig. 9.1 Participant evaluation of the theatrical events**
For example in response to 'what did you do?' it is evident that the participant outlined the activities she was involved in and what she learnt from that involvement. She stated that: ‘Bonding was so much fun. We had the quiz night/performances...We sang songs taught to us by my parents and other members of the group...’ and in explaining what she learnt from the experience she stated that: “I learnt how to deal with difficult people, how to do a new dance and I learnt a bit more about African culture and artefacts.” From the foregoing participant narrative the evaluation approach was effective in revealing the participants’ experience of the festival and its transformative impact. For this participant the festival was a space for negotiation of culture through the art forms.

**Fig. 9.2 Participant evaluation of the ACMYAF Model**
The review of the ACMYAF model components (figure 9.2) was in relation to the participants’ identities and socialisation experiences in dominant and subordinate culture. This required the participants to comment on the components of the model. Accordingly the participants commented on the ‘Likes and dislikes in dominant culture’; ‘Likes and dislikes in subordinate culture’; as well as on their perception of the four moments of the ACMYAF model namely: ‘Wild Dreams and Arrival’; ‘Memories of Africa’; ‘Uncertainty and Confusion’; and ‘Making Sense of Place’.

Comment about home (subordinate) culture and environment by the participant (in Fig.9.2) included: home as a place for reflection; a place she was able to feel free to express herself without being judged; a place she felt safe to ask questions and clarify herself especially after a bad day. In terms of dominant (mainstream) culture she was aware of her own visibility but enjoyed the difference, hanging out with black people and listening to black music. She also noted that she did not like the media portraying Africa and Africans negatively. In terms of cultural socialisation there are two contrasting worlds for this participant.

In terms of psycho-social transition phases of migration for one participant ‘Memories of Africa’ implied:

- Missing relatives and family members; my friends having lost contact with me because of movement;
- Remembering the lifestyle and childhood memories;
- Having a huge attachment to Uganda being the country I call home and the only place I really new and called home; feeling homesick.

For one of the recently arrived participants ‘Uncertainty and Confusion’ meant:

- Not understanding the way of life; wanting to be back home with family; not knowing whether to abandon my culture to adopt this new Australian one; having mixed feelings of Uganda being home or Australia; getting
confused about what’s expected of me; losing contact with Africa.

For a participant who had lived in Australia for most of her life ‘Uncertainty and Confusion’ was explained as follows:

Sometimes I wonder what it would have been like to grow up in Africa. It’s not that I’m not proud of growing up in Australia it’s just that sometimes I feel that there is a part of me that is still missing or more—so ‘underdeveloped’. This feeling intensifies whenever I am with my friends who have recently come from Africa, and so have a truly African cultural upbringing and will constantly speak in their native tongue. I sometimes feel that I am trying to fit and am not sure why I always do this; maybe I am trying to discover my African self through them. I love being African Australian I realise that I have benefited a lot just from growing up over here, but what does frustrate me mostly about being ‘Coconut’ is the fact that I am treated differently like an experimental person in a way. The white people see me as a curiosity and even though I sound and behave the same way they do. They still manage to throw in ‘so where do you come from?’ and at the same time when I am with my African buddies they always seem to see my behaviour/dress style as stuck up and ‘too white’.

For another participant ‘Making Sense of Place” phase was captured by her reflection in the quote below:

I've been fortunate enough to have travelled overseas a number of times with my Mum. I've been exposed to what the world has to offer if one works hard enough. I've inherited a healthy thirst for knowledge through education. My personal choice of faith was influenced by my family both here and in Tanzania but also by my extended 'church family'. I happen to enjoy 97.7 FM and play the classical guitar. Recently I was taught how to drum a few beats on Ngoma (African drums) and I've a healthy interest in the arts but all of those things don't make me Australian, they don't make me African. Too often things are pigeonholed as a either/or. It's far easier to use dual binaries as a form of classification.

The comments by the next participant also suggest being at ‘Making Sense of Place’ phase:

I never seem to fit in entirely from both sides and can seriously compare this to how a person with mixed races must feel; not belonging to either side and
having to create one's own identity. In saying this I feel that I am learning the process, nothing was ever meant to be easy, and this just helps me find my inner strength and identity.

The comments about the components of the ACMYAF model, by the participants, provided useful information about bicultural socialisation experiences of the participants in relation to dominant and subordinate cultures. This, in turn, informed the dynamics of cultural identity negotiation as experienced by the participants.

From the foregoing it is evident that the ACMYAF conceptual model was a useful tool for sourcing information from the participants in relation to bicultural identity socialisation experience.

Challenges to Bicultural Identity
This section discusses the challenges to bicultural socialisation as identified by the participants. The challenges included the following: Visibility; ‘Coconut’—the ambivalence of being bicultural; intergenerational relations; racism, criminal stereotyping; and alienation.

Visibility
Visibility for the participants implied having distinctive phenotypic or behavioural characteristics different from the majority culture, for example, features of black/brown skin, ‘woolly’ hair and a different accent. Visibility was a concern for the participants as it attracted curious looks from strangers and quite often led to intrusive questions as explained by one of them:

Sometimes you feel out of place and people look and treat you differently. They ask about your hair; when you came to Australia; Do you like it here? When are you going back? Which part of Africa do you come from?

Implicit in the curious questioning is the sense of alienation it creates, ‘feeling out of place’. Some of
the participants became conscious of their visibility early in childhood as noted by this participant:

Growing up I was full of anxiety, was very self conscious, due to my visibility. My sister and I spoke different accents—sound more Aussie when we were with Aussies; sounding ‘African’ when with Africans was I reckon about us trying to fit in. My sister and I wanting to look like Barbie doll—using towels and putting them on our heads to pretend we had white long hair.

Consciousness towards their own visibility and the contradictory demands created by an alienating culture confirms Fanon’s (1967) assertion that a normal black child, raised in a good black family background will cease to feel normal on coming into contact with white community. This is evident in the sensibility of beauty amongst some African Australians. The sense of beauty among some African Australian youth is influenced by the notions relating to it in dominant Australian culture. Dominant notions of beauty impose pressure and sanctions on African Australian youth ‘to fit into what is beautiful according to Australian standards—being light skinned, and having thin straight hair’ MHW/F/18/17 as noted by one of the participants. This in turn creates contradictory challenges for the African Australians of attempting to construct an African Australian aesthetic against currents of dominant ideology of beauty. This is further complicated by racism, criminal stereotyping and alienation; challenges experienced by the participants which influence their sense of identity, belonging and humanity.

Racism, criminal stereotyping and alienation

All participants commented about racism, criminal stereotyping and alienation as behavioural attitudes experienced by them from dominant culture which influenced their bicultural socialisation. Such
behavioural attitudes included: being told to 'go back to your own country' (EM/F/24/24); 'having to always explain yourself' (ZM/F/16/06); when people always stare at you when you go to places; when you go places security guards always look at you like you are going to steal something' (JIK/M/16/01); 'always, always asked: Where are you from?' EM/F/24/24.

Such verbal expressions and body language imply racist attitudes, criminal stereotyping and alienation of African Australian youth. Moreover exclusive social attitudes which were manifested in dominant Australian culture, towards the African Australian youth, impacted on the participants' sense of belonging and self worth.

Chase (1992), drawing on the theory of social identity, suggests that the individual’s self-concept includes both individual and social aspects of identities. As a consequence of this individuals gain a sense of self-worth partly from their individual qualities and partly from qualities derived from their membership of various groups. For the African descendant youth bicultural socialisation and self-worth are in turn influenced by diverse spaces that they have to negotiate.

Despite the alienating psycho-social attitudes from dominant Australian culture, the participants’ reflections suggested an emerging African Australian sensibility among the young people of African descent; as one of the participants put it: 'Being black you are always looking for others like you' MHW/F/18/17. Moreover, the African Australian youth are constructing their identities and signifying them through cultural spaces that encourage difference as noted by one participant:

I am adjusted to this culture; it’s my way of life. Sometimes feel confident, being different and enjoy the difference - especially when you are with fellow
black people, hear black music (in the club). African people having hair and selling weaves, open up their own shops (Fremantle and Perth) that I can go to and you’re guaranteed that you will get what you need (make-up hair).

From the foregoing the African Australian youth are negotiating and constructing their cultural identities within and between dominant and subordinate cultural spaces. Through African shops and clubs which play black music, African Australian youth signify their differences and construct their identities. The sense of being bicultural is suggested by the statement ‘I am adjusted to this culture; it’s my way of life. Sometimes feel confident, being different and enjoy the difference…’

‘Coconut’ and its social significance
The notion of ‘coconut’ was another factor that emerged through the Elimu circle evaluation process as a significant social construct which influenced the cultural socialisation of the participants. As I have noted earlier (p.197) ‘coconut’ is a derogatory construct which is used to describe the identities of African Australians, who have lived in Australia for most of their lives and are reasonably well adjusted into Australian dominant culture. The participants fitting this category have Australian accents and mannerisms but with obvious phenotypic difference from the dominant Euro-Caucasian Australian population. Therefore, according to this construct, like the coconut fruit they are black/brown (skin colour) on the outside but white inside (implying ‘white’ attitudes). Accordingly many Euro-Australians view them as not ‘real’ Australians, and recently arrived Africans see them as not ‘real’ Africans because they are not grounded in indigenous African cultures. This ambivalence experienced by the participants due to negative attitudes towards their
identities influences the identification and socialisation experience of some African Australians leading to some degree of identity confusion as one participant observed:

The way I behave and dress; cultural contradictions (how I should behave among the white people as well as recent Africans who have migrated here)—sometimes I feel like a snob and that I am behaving like a rebel but feel like I’m just behaving like myself.

From the foregoing statement by one participant who had spent most of her life in Australia, contradictory relations exist with both white and black. However, in the process of experiencing these contradictory relations her identity is being negotiated and developed. The uncertainty of trying to fit in with other African Australians is further elaborated by another participant who makes an observation about an experience with African ‘aunties’:

Well, like when I am with my white friends I think I act normal but then when we went to ‘Africa Day’ I remember people looking at me like, ‘She acts like a white person’ or one dresses like a ‘white person’. When we saw our ‘aunties’...they start talking about you in their language.

Recency of African migrants in Australia implies that most of the recently arrived African migrants are well acquainted with their ancestral cultural heritage and therefore use it as a frame of reference for defining their values and social relations. There is, however, a new ethnicity of African Australians emerging from the African migrant community. This is constituted of African descendants born in Australia or who migrated with their parents while very young and therefore have spent most of their lives in Australia. This group blends both African and Australian cultural values and identities. The communication between this emerging group of African Australians and the recently arrived African migrants
suggests some ambiguity and contradictions in their relationship which has implications for the social relations between the two groups. This is suggested by the following participant’s remarks in relation to the expectations of recently arrived African migrants about every other African looking person:

When people expect you to know where you come from [in Africa] and the language spoken and how to speak it as well as when they realise that you don’t understand they speak their language in front of you about you!

The expectation on the part of some recently arrived African migrants that first generation African Australians, who have spent most of their lives in Australia, should have good knowledge of their ancestral cultures, especially in the absence of formal institutions to sustain these ancestral heritages, is unrealistic. Moreover a cultural practice is only sustainable if it is socially empowering to a group. Accordingly aspects of African cultures that are likely to be sustainable in Australia will be those that carry symbolic meanings and spiritual values that serve a useful social purpose relevant to African Australian youth identities. Aspects of African cultures that inform African Australian identities emerge through dialogue and informed cultural practice, as was the case with the ACMYAF festival.

Through the festival theatrical events ‘coconut’ was subsequently deconstructed using performance, the Reflective visual journal (RVJ) and dialogue, in order to validate the significance of bicultural socialisation of the African Australian as a process towards bicultural competence. While the label itself is derogatory its essence was turned into a positive because bicultural socialisation, by the African Australian youth inevitably
leads to the acquisition of values from both African and Australian cultural experiences.

The next section explores specific issues that emerged from the research in relation to intergenerational relations between the participants and their parents.

**Intergenerational relations**

Bicultural socialisation entails developing an identity which draws on cultural values from both the ancestral heritage culture of the parents and the dominant culture into which the participants are acculturating. Accordingly the intergenerational relations between the African descendant youth involved in the project and their parents are influenced by the young people’s cultural socialisation experience. For the young people it is a balancing act and a case of meaningful appropriation of their parental heritage in relation to social demands and influences of dominant culture. For African parents, by way of contrast, it is an intentional and purposeful investment, of ancestral heritage culture, in the next generation; an investment which may sometimes be overridden by nostalgic emotions and passion.

Culture is dynamic and for the African Australian youth African indigenous culture does not necessary play the same roles it did for their ancestors. Therefore nostalgic imposition of African culture on African Australian youth may lead to resentment and rejection. Hence transmission of African culture across generations needs to be evaluative furthermore intergenerational relations between the African youth and their parents need to take cognizance of the bicultural socialisation dynamics of the young people. Clarity on the issues and
factors that influence cultural socialisation of young people in relation to dominant culture into which they are acculturating is necessary for positive intergenerational relations. This is clearly illustrated by one of the participants in relation to dressing choices:

Well at home my parents and I constantly fight about what I wear, of course I have been raised to dress appropriately which I do most of the time but sometimes things I like are outside the boundary of ‘appropriate’. How you’re raised affects your dress sense but the general culture/fashion influences it as well.

Implied in the foregoing reflection by one of the participants is that in addition to the ‘general culture’ the home environment and parents in particular have an influence on values and attitudes that an African Australian young person acquires or develops. Parents, for example, do sometimes place constraints on the young people’s dress choice without being mindful of factors that influence the young people’s fashion choices. ‘General culture’ as pointed out by the participant influences her fashion choice and such a culture may be constituted of what she sees through media, youth magazines or peers. Youth magazines, for example, present enticing fashions to the young people modelled by famous celebrities as a result of this form of advertising the tastes and values of African Australian youth are influenced as well.

Another factor relating to intergenerational relations between the participants and their parents, which was revealed through the research process, was the differing perceptions about media and popular culture as noted by the following participant:

Sometimes there are different opinions on the way one should dress / music to listen to and what to watch on TV. I think sometimes to the extreme.
From the foregoing African parents feel obliged to guide their children about what they should watch on television but unfortunately this may go overboard as implied by the preceding comment. Parenting between cultures should be a balancing act and therefore requires empathy on the part of African parents so that, in trying to nurture the appropriate values in their African Australian children, they are not necessarily constrained by egocentric assumptions. African culture needs to be invoked in the context of an Australian social and political reality. African identities in Australia and hence African Australian identification require some degree of dialogue between parents and the children, and reconciliation between cultures. Therefore parents have to be consciously aware of the bicultural socialisation dynamics that influence the identification process of the young people.

Interracial relation was the other factor identified by the participants which may affect intergenerational relations. It was stated by one of the participants as follows:

There are also different opinions on if one of us were to be involved in an interracial relationship (mum and dad differ on opinion), Dad against and mum open minded.

Because of the divergent views that may be held by both the parents and their children about interracial relations this is another aspect that requires intergenerational dialogue.

This section has explored issues that were raised by the participants, through the Elimu circle, in relation to their bicultural socialisation experience. Suggested by these outcomes is that participants experienced
challenges to their bicultural socialisation which hindered effective progression towards bicultural competence. As part of the research process some of these issues were addressed using diverse arts-based approaches, enabling the participants to reveal some possible ways to dealing with these challenges. Accordingly the ACMYAF conceptual model along with the entire research process provided useful tools for exploring cultural identity and socialisation experiences of the participants. The next section explores some of the African cultural values that influenced the identities of the participants as revealed by the research process.

**African Cultural Values and Bicultural Identity**

In exploring aspects of African cultural values that informed the participants’ bicultural socialisation experience the discussion is also a response to the question ‘In what ways do African cultural values and symbols inform the cultural identity of the African-migrant-descendant youth?’

The construct of ‘African cultural memory’ as a context for exploring African cultural values and symbols was an important source of ideas that informed the research process hence the cultural identities of the participants. Using the construct of ‘African cultural memory’ African cultural values and symbols were explored through African art, song, dance and drumming as a context for revealing the relationship and significance of African culture to the participants.

For example, the African art experience involved painting and studying the Adinkra symbols, which originate among the Akan people in Ghana (Africa), in particular the philosophical meanings of the symbols, was
explored. The experience of African art had a positive impact on the participants as noted by one of them:

When we were preparing for The Real Deal we painted the backgrounds (backdrops) for the stage with different African symbols/artefacts. It was so much fun painting because it was one of my favourite hobbies. I also enjoyed the whole process sketching to painting. I learnt a bit more about Africa and artefacts. We learnt about many different symbols (Adinkra) and what they mean. I liked this one [symbol has been removed] and I want to get a tattoo of it.

The idea of wanting to secure a tattoo of one of these symbols was indicative of an aesthetic appreciation of and spiritual connection to the African symbols. Furthermore, the participants felt connected and empowered by the philosophical significance, of the symbols as observed by another participant: ‘It was nice to connect with the symbols from what they all meant, it was empowering and I could see how they connected with me’ RNW/F/20/17.

The painting experience of African art offered the participants an opportunity to appreciate the aesthetic and philosophical significance of African cultures.
Fig 9.3 Participants painting African cultural symbols

Through their African art experience the participants discovered their own connection with African cultural symbols. The symbols carried specific meanings and aesthetic qualities which the participants appreciated and subsequently identified with. The connection to the symbols implied an appropriation of African culture. Accordingly the notion of ‘African Cultural Memory’ was a useful context for experiencing African culture and appropriating it towards bicultural competence.

Song, dance and drumming were another source of cultural experience that informed the cultural identities of the participants. Experiencing African culture through song, dance and drumming was fun and educative because it enabled the participants to appreciate the nature of African indigenous forms of performance. As one of them noted: ‘This was my absolute favourite part because I got to sing and dance’ EM/F/24/24.
Some of the theatrical sessions were organised in a typical indigenous form, interweaving song, drumming and dance in a complimentary way (Ocitti, 1973, Traore, 1972). Moreover the artistic collaboration among the participants gave them the opportunity to socialise and have fun together:

Singing with A... and M... and group dancing socialising (talking to others about our group and work); it was fun, the atmosphere was amazing, it felt great.

Through a performatively socialised among the participants cultural identity was negotiated and cultural ideas and symbols transacted, turning the participants into signifiers of their own identities. Through performance of song, dance and drumming the participants learnt from each other and appreciated each others talents. One of the participants noted of the experience as follows:

Learning songs and dancing; Learning from each other... felt proud to teach people dance and songs; people appreciated my teaching and we should do it more often so that people will get used to it especially the drumming and the dancing.

Through the exploration of African song, dance and drumming the experience was empowering because it enabled some of the participants to share their talents by teaching each other song, dance and drumming. Through the performatively interactive performance of teaching and learning from each other, the participants negotiated and constructed an African Australian cultural sensibility. Another participant commented about the educative experience of song, dance, drumming as follows:

We learnt singing and new dance choreography. We then got taught how to drum from J...; I learnt how to dance in a group; new drumming skills; being comfortable with who I am; a lot about my families. It was great because I took a trip back to when I was in Africa. Very educative, fun and very revealing; It was great.
to learn more about each other, and to get up out of our comfort zone, very revealing.

From the preceding participant comments the performative approaches and the critical African centred pedagogy theory enabled the participants to probe the African cultural memory and experience it through song, dance, and African drumming leading to ‘very educative, fun and very revealing’ outcomes. Through the experience the participant reconnected with Africa, learnt more about her own family, and became more comfortable with herself. The festival as negotiation of cultural identity was appreciated by another participant as follows:

Firstly I understand that no matter how old or experience you have we are all still learning, you are a learner. Secondly from this project or group of people I have learnt also it takes two to tango or you can say two heads are better than one. I learnt how to be more confident talking to people and group. I have learned both ways of Africanness. This is to say I am from Africa, spent most of my life so far in Africa, I came to Australia meeting this group of other Africans but with opposite side of life helps me understand. We need one another to understand both ways...From this project I have learnt so much when it comes to myself. Before this project I had problem with confidence, how to control myself among people, how to talk and what to talk about.

The statement: ‘We need one another to understand both ways. They learn from me and I learn from them.’ suggests a beneficial outcome for the participant in terms of cultural identity negotiation. Through the exchange of ideas identity was negotiated and trust was built amongst participants of different cultural identity backgrounds.

The festival was an important space for learning and transacting ideas between young people of different African identities. The participants who had lived in Australia for most of their lives and those who had recently arrived from Africa collaborated in creating an African Australian sensibility performatively. Overall
the project had beneficial outcomes for the participants because as one of them put it ‘we need one another to understand both ways’. The performative collaboration during the festival was educative because it enabled the participants to appreciate the mutual benefit of working together on ideas relating to their bicultural socialisation.

The next section discusses specific ways in which the arts were used as a medium for negotiating cultural identity and the way the festival became a Bicultural Socialisation Educational Program (BSEP) through which the participants gained African Cultural Literacy (ACL) towards bicultural competence. The discussion is also a response to the question ‘How can the arts be used in negotiating cultural identity of the African descendant youth in Australia?’

*Arts as a medium for negotiating cultural identity*

The usefulness of the arts as a medium for negotiating cultural identity among the participants was evident in the participants’ evaluations of the theatrical events.

Bonding as a performative and dialogical process enabled the participants to explore their cultural identities through the African cultural memory, using diverse art forms and a critical African centred pedagogy theory.

Bonding was so much fun...these are basically nights where we put on improvised plays, songs and dancing as a way of breaking down barriers and getting to know each other more. It was highly embarrassing at times to be honest but I think it was good because now I have absolutely no shame around these people [group members].

Through bonding activities the participants shared their life experiences and cultural knowledge which in turn
informed their identities educatively. Therefore bonding as a performative and dialogical process was an enabling tool for cultural identity negotiation.

The play, the Real Deal, was another component of the festival which enabled the participants to have a dialogue about cultural identity this is clearly illustrated by the following participant:

My bicultural identity consists of my Ugandan side and my Australian side. Being born in Uganda and growing up in a home with Ugandan strong values versus living in Australia going to Australian schools and having Aussie friends has given me a strong bicultural identity and the project has helped me reflect on my bicultural identity and appreciate the stage I’m at; more about both sides through exploration of the characters. The characters are at different stages in developing their bicultural identities. When I came to Aussie I was young so I didn’t experience all the issues to the extent of the characters. The characters helped me understand more about the process of adjustment to a different culture while still retaining your traditional values. I don’t really think about this on a daily basis.

From the foregoing, the play, the Real Deal, offered an opportunity to the participants to explore cultural identities through the characters of the play. The Real Deal also offered the participants the opportunity to explore the African cultural memory and heritage through song, dance and art as integrated elements of the production. Accordingly the Real Deal was an important context for negotiating cultural identity.

The AfricanOz Idol was another theatrical event through which cultural identity negotiation was clearly illustrated by the participants. Under the facilitation of the master of ceremonies a panel of three judges and performers were engaged in critical dialogue relating to cultural identity and performance. Usually the dialogue that followed a performance informed cultural identity and bicultural socialisation. Moreover, through the dialogue that followed each performance the participants
appreciated the dynamic and multi-layered nature of the concept of African identity as noted by this participant:

The project has enabled me to deepen my cultural identity using different means. One of those was the AfricanOz idol performance. This event showed everyone’s different views on what they thought was African. ...identity is not a fixed thing, it’s dynamic.

Exploring the notion of ‘African’ by the participants was an act of cultural identity negotiation because it enabled the participants to appreciate the ‘different views’ associated with it. Furthermore the AfricanOz Idol enabled participants to generate counter narratives that challenged negative/narrow views about Africa and consequently strengthening a self-concept of themselves as Australians of African descent:

There is more to the stereotypes [about Africa]-Corrupt world leaders, not all are corrupt; Africa as one country, they are 54 diverse countries. Animals, hot, savannah, ‘Parachute journalism’, the truth not researched enough. I denied some of these ideas for the ‘radio comedy’ from my knowledge from university in my courses—Sociology and Anthropology. Being ethnically African and having been educated and brought up in a western country but then being able to go back to TZ for myself seeing its truth not all is poverty. My cousins and other relatives aren’t poor they have maids; farm/land, property etc. It turns stereotypes and assumptions on their head.

Through the theatrical event, the AfricanOz Idol, it was possible for the participants to interrogate and challenge social constructs and stereotypes, by the media, about Africa and Africans. Challenging stereotypes through performance and dialogue generated counter-narratives and hence an alternative sense of themselves, which in turn informed the participants’ identities; as one of them observed ‘...being able to go back to TZ for myself seeing its truth not all is poverty...’. For this participant, ‘Africa’ was not all poverty; some of her family members owned properties and accordingly the
generalisations about Africa being a poor continent by Western media were misleading. From the foregoing, the festival was a useful and empowering theatrical event through which the participants were able to reveal and assert the truths about themselves both performatively and educatively.

The educative approach to the theatrical events enabled the participants to develop knowledge about African culture and to reason about issues relating to African cultural heritage and bicultural identities. This is clearly evident with the following participant in relation to the Adinkra symbols:

Discovering the Adinkra symbols was also great as the hieroglyphics were the only other ancient African writing symbols I recognised. I know that other forms existed, but I was unaware of where they were from. The experience has taught me to reason why I think something is African, and not just say ‘because’...

Clearly the arts were an appropriate medium for developing informed attitudes and reasoning about issues relating to African culture. The Adinkra symbols, revealed new understanding for the participant which improved her knowledge about Africa. Accordingly, the educative approach to the research process enabled the participants to develop deeper appreciation of African symbols and culture.

The Reflective visual journal (RVJ) was another artistic tool through which cultural identities were negotiated by the participants. It was useful both at a personal and collective level; at a personal level it enabled the participants to engage with themselves through an autobiographical reflection. As one participant observed:

My journal was a tool developed for reflection on our bicultural identity. It allowed me to reflect on my life and different situations I have been in. It will definitely help me in future.
The RVJ enabled the participants to consciously reflect on the festival process and their bicultural socialisation experience and accordingly the RVJ was a useful tool for cultural identity negotiation. Moreover, through documentation of events relating to themselves the journal became an important self monitoring tool as noted by the following participant:

I learnt to reflect on my experiences through writing. I learned to reflect on my progress throughout an event as it helps to keep a record of things. It was relaxing over the year to record our progress. It was fun, the most fun we’ve had I think.

Having a self monitoring approach to bicultural socialisation experiences is important for the African descendant youth because it enables them to reflect on the contradictions relating to bicultural socialisation with rewarding outcomes, ‘It was fun, the most fun we’ve had I think’ MMW/F/12/12. As experiences are performed, shared and reflected upon through the RVJ, identity is negotiated and reconstructed by the African descendant youth.

From the preceding discussion the festival events were important contexts for negotiating cultural identity and developing empowering knowledge as clearly summed up in the following reflection:

This experience has helped me understand my bicultural identity because it has strengthened me as a person. Being African can sometime be very hard to the point where many African girls my age change who they are to fit in. My involvement in this project has empowered me to be who I am and to appreciate my African identity. I have been able to critique the things that I see and what is perceived to be the typical teenage girl. I now know I don’t have to fit into some criteria so I shouldn’t try. I have learnt this from the inspirational lectures of the patrons and Uncle Peter. To further develop my confidence in who I am and to nurture the ideas of who I ought to be, weekly encounters with these people right here has been instrumental they are liberating and help me want to be the best Ugandan African girl growing up.
The preceding quote captures the essence of the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF) as an empowering medium for negotiating cultural identity. The arts based approaches, along with the African centred pedagogy theory, through the Ujamaa circle, offered the participants the means to negotiate cultural identities, educatively, and perform them in an empowering way. The performative and dialogical approach enabled the participants to become more aware of their responsibility as signifiers of their own identities. The next section discusses Bicultural Socialisation Educational Program (BSEP) as an outcome of the festival project.

**ACMYAF as a Bicultural socialisation educational program (BSEP)**

Through this process we can now understand the festival as a Bicultural Socialisation Educational Program (BSEP) through which the participants developed an African cultural literacy (ACL) that informed their bicultural identities and competence. Bicultural competence is the ability to function successfully in both the dominant and subordinate culture. The festival as a BSEP provided an artistic and educational experience through which African cultural memory and knowledge about bicultural socialisation was generated, and developed consciously by the participants towards bicultural competence. Through the Bicultural socialisation educational program (BSEP) diverse 'funds of knowledge', including the African cultural memory, were explored, critically and performatively, towards a positively self-affirming discourse.

Evidence from social psychology and immigration psychology suggest that a strong and secure ethnic
identity makes a positive contribution to psychological well-being. Therefore, maintenance of a strong ethnic identity is generally related to psychological well-being among members of acculturating groups (Phinney, Horenczyk, and Liebkind & Vedder 2001). Accordingly, the festival as a Bicultural socialisation educational program (BSEP) was organised on the basis that integration that involves simultaneous ethnic retention and adaptation to the new society is the most adaptive mode of acculturation and the most conducive to African Australian’s well-being (Berry, 2008; Wakholi, 2005, 2010; Phinney, Horenczyk, and Liebkind & Vedder 2001).

The Bicultural socialisation educational program (BSEP) was both dialogical and performative, involving participants and the cultural translator/researcher, as the agent for facilitating dialogue about cultural identity. Dialogue among the participants generated knowledge that informed the identities of the participants; this knowledge subsequently became the basis for deconstructing exclusionist epistemologies emanating from dominant culture. This approach, of exploring cultural memory along with lived experiences enabled the participants to appreciate the relevance of their cultural heritage in construction and negotiation of their identities.

Conclusion
Fundamental to the festival process was the researcher’s ongoing engagement with the participants in cultural translation through the Ujamaa circle. All theatrical events were preceded and/or concluded by a reflective and educative dialogue to enable the generation of empowering epistemologies. Therefore the Ujamaa circle was an important enabling tool for construction of educative theatrical events.
Limitations to the research project

The initial object of the researcher was to involve more participants in the project. Unfortunately the response was less than anticipated despite the massive publicity for the project among African community groups. While involvement of a large number of participants was not critically important the festival experience would have benefited more participants. The number of volunteers was also limited; an involvement of more parents, as volunteers, would have eased the stress on the few that committed to the project. Transport to the research venue was a big challenge as most participants did not have their own means of transport. Reliance on public transport was not feasible as the sessions usually finished late.

Further due to the complexity of in-betweenness the study has not explored all variables that impact on bicultural socialisation. The main focus was on psycho-social issues that influence cultural socialisation, consequently factors like gender, religion and languages in particular the impact of English literacy on bicultural competence were not explored in detail. Moreover restricting identity analysis of participants to African and African Australian may in some respects limit the understanding of participant identities.

Another limitation of the study was that the evaluation responses of patrons and independent observers (spectators) were not explicitly used in the thesis discussion as the focus was on youth participants’ data.

The next chapter, ten, is the conclusion chapter. It outlines the key outcomes of the research project highlighting their significance in the context of the aims of the research project. Areas of further research are also outlined.
Chapter Ten

Conclusions

The importance of Africans’ cultural heritage to their sense of who they are still isn’t recognised sufficiently by them, or others. Culture is the means by which a people expresses itself, through language, traditional wisdom, politics, religion, architecture, music, tools, greetings, symbols, festivals, ethics, values, and collective identity...Culture gives a people self-identity and character. It allows them to be in harmony with their physical and spiritual environment, to form the basis for their sense of self-fulfilment and personal peace. It enhances their ability to guide themselves, make their own decisions, and protect their interests. It’s their reference point to the past and their antennae to the future. (Mathaai, 2009, 160)

Conclusions

This chapter outlines the conclusions to the research project emphasising their significance in the context of the aims of the research. The festival aimed at providing the participants with an empowering space through which to explore issues pertaining to their bicultural socialisation experience. The study’s conclusions include the following:

a) The key challenge for the youth of African descent involved in the project was the absence of contexts through which both African cultural memory (embodied knowledge) and experiences in dominant culture were explored critically towards informed bicultural socialisation.

b) The lack of knowledge about each other’s background and socialisation experience, led to poor communication, resentment and name-calling (Coconut) among youth of African descent.

c) Visibility due to skin colour and accent led to overt discrimination and marginalisation in public places like shopping centres. This in turn influenced the self-concept of the African descendant youth.
d) Intergenerational communication between parents/adults and the young people suggest a limited understanding, by some of the parents, of the bicultural socialisation process of the African descendant youth.
e) Involving young people in the funding application process demonstrated the possibility of opening up dialogue in a subordinate group on diverse issues relating to their subordinate experience and proposing their own solutions, hence facilitating agency, through the arts.
f) Interrogation of African cultural memory enabled the participants to generate ideas and develop its nature. This in turn provided useful psychological insight of the participants’ impression about African cultural memory and culture—enabling a social construction of an African Australian sensibility based on the cultural memories of the participants hence validating their embodied knowledge. Further it demonstrated the power of arts-based approaches in recovering cultural memory and constructing culture.
g) Building up publicity for the ACMYAF project through ‘Harmony Week’ at a community multicultural event demonstrated the significance of the project as a context for intercultural and crosscultural communication amongst the youth participants and also with the wider community. The participants came up with ideas, which drew on their cultural memories, for the performance which included song, dance, poetry and a stall display.
h) Through song, dance, drumming and cultural symbols the participants appreciated the significance of African cultural memory in their cultural identification.
i) Artistic exploration of dance through African cultural memory and contemporary culture enabled the participants to negotiate cultural ideas and translate them into forms
that defined their African Australian identities. Negotiating ideas and translating them into dance choreography informed the cultural identities of the participants and therefore it was an act of cultural identity negotiation and construction, through performance.

j) A music perspective of African cultural memory entailed exploration of African music in both its indigenous and contemporary forms. The participants drew on their embodied knowledge to share and improvise through song, drumming and dance. Music was therefore a significant component of the festival and became an expressive art form of their cultural identities.

k) Reflective visual journals (RVJ) assumed an autobiographical and ethnographic approach which enabled the participants to reflect on personal experiences through writing and graphical illustrations. It was a valuable component of the bonding process because of the way it provided participants with both an individual and collective space to reflect on diverse themes relating to their lived social reality and identity.

l) The play, the Real Deal, was an important component of the festival which enabled the participants to have dialogue about cultural identity. The creation of characters, generation of scene narratives through improvisation, reflection on the characters during their development and at the end of the play, provided the participants with an opportunity to relate and reflect on their own identities. And subsequently assume a conscious approach over their own bicultural socialisation.

m) AfricanOz Idol enabled the young people to perform their cultural identities with the object of exploring their bicultural socialisation experience in a third space. Engaging the performers with critical questions
seeking to clarify the connection between the performed piece and their identity challenged the performers to reflect on their bicultural socialisation experiences. This approach provided the participants with the opportunity to explore and define themselves through the theatrical event. Therefore it was an empowering but also transformative because it challenged the performers to think about what they were doing and why they were doing it.

n) Through bonding—using song, dance and African drumming, it was possible for the participants to create counter knowledge, performatively, that contradicted assimilative experiences and stereotypes emanating from dominant culture. Through bonding, participants appropriated diverse cultural symbols, including those from the African cultural memory to create new meanings and identities towards an African Australian sensibility.

o) Through this process we can now understand the festival as a Bicultural socialisation educational program (BSEP) through which the participants developed an African cultural literacy (ACL), by interrogation of African cultural memory in the context of their Australian social reality. This in turn informed their bicultural identities and competence. The festival as a BSEP provided an artistic and educational experience through which knowledge about bicultural socialisation was generated and developed consciously by the participants towards bicultural competence.
Further research

The research project generated a massive amount of data whose analysis has not been exhaustive. The focus of analysis has drawn on aspects of the data directly relevant to the research questions. Consequently the unexplored aspects of the data will constitute a focus for further studies and publication.

One area that requires further research is verification of the effectiveness of the methodological approach amongst participants of similar background within and interstate.

The process of training cultural translators with the objective of facilitating bicultural competence is another area requiring further research. In particular identifying people who fit this category and preparing them to undertake cultural translation responsibilities.

Lastly while it was possible to secure funding for this project from some agencies, there were others which responded negatively, to the project's funding application, even when they held grants that were designated for issues similar to those I was investigating. Therefore research in the area of educating some funding bodies about supporting community based participatory action research needs to be explored. Some researchers, myself included, are motivated by experiences and issues within our own communities and consequently seek funding to support our research activities with the view of finding enduring solutions that draw on our marginality.
Appendix 5.1 Email based invitation

Dear ACMYAF,

At this stage I am still in the brainstorming stage of the project. Basically what is going to happen is that young people, of African background, are going to be involved in creating and organising artistic productions based on their resettlement experiences which will culminate into an Arts Festival. The event aims at lifting the profile of African migrant youth in the Arts industry and also encourage greater participation of our youth in the ARTS; young people will have to brainstorm what they intend to do and the strategies of promoting and staging the event and if possible continue with the concept beyond my research/experimental project. I am hoping to draw on diverse expertise: choreographer, theatre artist, painting, and mask making artist. So a typical presentation might include diverse art forms: Dance piece, song and poetry, drama, painting and masks display. So that is the kind of project I would like the young people to get involved in. The project should start sometime next year and the festival should take place around November/December (2007). Production rehearsals/preparations will be based at Murdoch University however the festival performances will be in diverse locations. At this stage I am thinking of four venues:

- Fremantle Arts Centre (Art);
- Melville amphitheatre (Poetry and Dance);
- Ethnic Council’s Hall (Song);
- Murdoch University annexe theatre (Play)

To assist me with this task I would like to set up a youth committee (to be directly involved in the production process) and elders committee (to provide the moral support to the young people and to the project as a whole).

I am hoping to work along with various NGO’s to give us the funding.

This project is part of my PhD studies at Murdoch University. Please advise on the eligibility of funding from your organisation. Thanks. Peter Wakholi.
Appendix 5.2 Participation Invitation

Dear Youth and Parents,

Ref: Invitation to African Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF)

On behalf of the youth and patron committee I wish to extend my invitation to the young people from the African migrant community to come and get involved with a community based research project which will involve sharing of stories, producing diverse kinds of art forms culminating into a festival. All the workshops are to be held on Saturdays’ at Murdoch University drama workshop (see attached map for directions) beginning in March and ending in November. Transport will be available from specified pick up points (for those who need it); snacks and refreshments will be available during the workshops. The young people will be working with a team of artists to develop the art forms and the skills that go with them. If you wish to get involved in anyway or to discuss this matter further please contact me on: 0405663183 / 95537071

Looking forward to your participation. Peter Mbago Wakholi
Appendix 5.3 Sample Workshop Program

Program for the 31 March 2007.

1. Thank yous’

2. Viewing Performance Slides

3. Evaluating performance sessions

3. A theatre idea (Jeremiah)

4. Brainstorming possibilities (Responses)

5. Characterisation of characters

6. OMI (Budget)

7. Bonding—South Perth, S and E to facilitate)

Updates

- Ethics committee
- Funds Clearance (ACWA)
- Artists
- Patron committee

Next meeting 14/03/07
### Appendix 5.4 ACMYAF Workshops Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date (2007)</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formative Phase</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Building networks among youth and patrons: Brainstorming possibilities for the project.</td>
<td>Researcher, Patrons, Artists, Youth</td>
<td>General overview of the project was presented by the researcher and ideas for the project generated from the participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>African cultural memory: developing the concept with the young people (ACWA)</td>
<td>Researcher, Patrons, Artists, Youth</td>
<td>Through the Ujamaa circle the participants engaged with and defined the concept of African cultural memory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>Involving young people in funding application process: Brainstorming ideas for Healthway funding application with Artist (ACWA)</td>
<td>Visual Artist, Researcher, Youth, Patrons</td>
<td>The session was facilitated by the researcher and a visual artist culminating into the generation of useful artistic ideas by the youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
<td>Building publicity for the ACMYAF project (‘Harmony Week’)</td>
<td>Researcher, Patrons, Youth</td>
<td>These sessions included three workshops which gave young people an opportunity to develop artistic activities towards a community multicultural event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bonding Phase</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Overview of the project Defining roles of Artists, Patrons Youth</td>
<td>Researcher, Patrons, Artists, Youth</td>
<td>The youth presented theatrical events based on their own life experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>6 hours</td>
<td>Brainstorming ideas</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>This included</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### For the play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Artists</th>
<th>Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Development of Scene 1 at the African restaurant.</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Artists</td>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This scene is at the African Restaurant: Who are the characters to be involved in this scene? Brainstorming ideas for the scene by the participants and performance of the devised theatrical events.</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Scene 1 at the African restaurant.</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Artists</td>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Performing the scripted version of scene 1 (collated from devised performances in the previous session).</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Scene 2 at Richardson’s home</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Artists</td>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Intergenerational conflict and difficulty in adjusting to a bicultural existence are key themes of this scene. The scene draws on young people’s experiences. Key question: What are the challenges to the development of a bicultural identity? What are the causes of intergenerational conflict? This scene is built around these two</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Scene/Event</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 2 at Richardson’s home</td>
<td>Researcher, Artists, Youth</td>
<td>Improvising scene by the youth and assigning participants to transcribe scene recordings and edit/collate transcription into a script.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 3 at Youth Centre (African Dance)</td>
<td>Researcher, Artists, Youth</td>
<td>This scene embeds the aesthetics of African dance but also provides the young people an opportunity to choreograph a dance of their own choice from African diaspora. Dialogue between Sara and Kadijah highlights the cultural difference between the two. Visual ideas for the scene setting to be developed by the youth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Sound workshop at KULCHA</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth</td>
<td>Sound, career pathways through the arts and strategies for processing a fund application.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
<td>Scene 4 at African Beauty Shop</td>
<td>Researcher, Patrons, Artist, Youth</td>
<td>Scene 4 focuses on Sara’s cultural identity and her initiative to find out about her Africanness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Characters</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 4</td>
<td>Beauty shop</td>
<td>Researcher, Patrons, Artist, Youth</td>
<td>Improvising scene by the youth and assigning participants to transcribe scene recordings and edit/collate transcription into a scripted scene.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 5</td>
<td>Beauty shop</td>
<td>Researcher, Patrons, Artist, Youth</td>
<td>Development of this scene is preceded by a dialogue, through the Ujamaa circle, about the challenges to cultural identity of African migrant descendants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 5</td>
<td>Beauty shop</td>
<td>Researcher, Patrons, Artist, Youth</td>
<td>Improvising scene by the youth and assigning participants to transcribe scene recordings and edit/collate transcription into a script.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 6</td>
<td>Beauty shop</td>
<td>Researcher, Patrons, Artist, Youth</td>
<td>This scene provides opportunity for examining Sara’s engagement with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Scene Details</td>
<td>Roles</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 6 Beauty shop plus song and dance rehearsal</td>
<td>Researcher Patrons Artist Youth</td>
<td>Improvising scene by the youth and assigning participants to transcribe scene recordings and edit/collate transcription into a script.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 7 Youth Centre plus song and dance rehearsal</td>
<td>Researcher Artist Youth</td>
<td>In addition to verbal dialogue this scene gives young people an opportunity to choreograph a dance defining their identity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 7 Youth Centre plus song and dance rehearsal</td>
<td>Researcher Artist Youth</td>
<td>Improvising scene by the youth and assigning participants to transcribe scene recordings and edit/collate transcription into a script.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 8 Beauty Shop plus song and dance rehearsal</td>
<td>Researcher Artist Youth</td>
<td>Improvise and write scene script</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>Scene 9 Youth Centre plus song and dance rehearsal</td>
<td>Researcher Artist Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Hours</td>
<td>Activity Description</td>
<td>Roles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Scene 9 Youth Centre/Drumming workshop</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Putting it all together</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rehearsal/Preparation of publicity material</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rehearsal/painting backdrops</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rehearsal / Workshopping ideas for AfricanOz Idol</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rehearsal/preparation of props</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rehearsal/preparation of props</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rehearsal/preparation of props</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>12</td>
<td><strong>Uhuru Phase</strong> Murdoch Nexus theatre</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth, Patrons, Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>AfricanOz Idol–developing ideas and Performance at KULCHA</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth, Patrons, Public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Evaluation of project by the participants and Celebrative ending of the project</td>
<td>Researcher, Artist, Youth, Patrons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5.5 under 18s Consent Form

School of Social Sciences and Humanities
Division of Arts
Murdoch University
Murdoch Western Australia 6150
Phone: 08 9360 2535
Fax: 08 9360 6571

Project Title: African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF)

Dear Dr/ Mr/Mrs/Ms ----------------------------------------

I am a Doctor of Philosophy Research student at Murdoch University investigating "Negotiation of cultural identity through the Arts" under the Supervision of Dr. David Moody. The purpose of this study is to develop themes, based on the youth participants' experiences to produce art forms that will culminate into an Arts Festival.

You can help in this study by consenting to your Son/Daughter's interview, and/or participating in the discussions circles and performance. It is anticipated that the time to complete the interview will be no more than four hours for each session; the workshop sessions will be held on Saturday's from 4.00pm to 8.00pm beginning March until November. The festival will be staged in November at various spots around Perth. Contained in the survey are questions about cultural identity, level of education, and other questions, which may be seen as personal and private. Participants can decide to withdraw their consent at any time. All information given during the survey is confidential and no names or other information that might identify you will be used in any publication arising from the research. Feedback on the study will be provided to participants, who have not requested anonymity. This will be through a summarised communiqué about the outcomes of the study.

If you are willing to give consent to your son/daughter's participation in this study, could you please complete the details below. If you have any questions about this project please feel free to contact either myself, Mr. Peter Wakholi, on 95868540 or my supervisor, Dr. David Moody, on 93602165.

My supervisor and I are happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have on how this study has been conducted, or alternatively you can contact Murdoch University's Human Research Ethics Committee on 9360 6677.

***********************************************************

I ---------------------------------- have read the information above. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to let my Son/Daughter take part in this activity, however, I know that I may change my mind and stop their participation at any time.

I understand that all information provided is treated as confidential and will not be released by the investigator unless required to do so by law.

I agree for these workshops to be audio/video recorded.

I agree that research data gathered for this study may be published provided the names or other information, which might identify my Son / Daughter is not used.

I also agree that the research results and audio/video recordings may be lodged with an a Migrant Resource Centre and, with my permission, may be used for purposes other than this study

Participant/Authorised Representative:

Date:

Investigator: Dr. David Moody.      Date:         Investigator's Name: Mr. Peter Wakholi
Appendix 5.6 Over 18s Consent Form

School of Social Sciences and Humanities
Division of Arts
Murdoch University
Murdoch Western Australia 6150
Phone: 08 9360 2535
Fax: 08 9360 6571

Project Title: African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF)

Dear Ms ----------------------------------------

I am a Doctor of Philosophy Research student at Murdoch University investigating “Negotiation of cultural identity through the Arts” under the Supervision of Dr. David Moody. The purpose of this study is to develop themes, based on the youth participants’ experiences to produce art forms that will culminate into an Arts Festival.

You can help in this study by consenting to be interviewed, and/or participating in the discussions circles and performance. It is anticipated that the time to complete the interview will be no more than four hours for each session; the workshop sessions will be held on Saturday’s from 4.00pm to 8.00pm beginning March until November. The festival will be staged in November at various spots around Perth. Contained in the survey are questions about cultural identity, level of education, and other questions, which may be seen as personal and private. Participants can decide to withdraw their consent at any time. All information given during the survey is confidential and no names or other information that might identify you will be used in any publication arising from the research. Feedback on the study will be provided to participants, who have not requested anonymity. This will be through a summarised communiqué about the outcomes of the study.

If you are willing to give consent to your participation in this study, could you please complete the details below. If you have any questions about this project please feel free to contact either myself, Mr. Peter Wakholi, on 95868540 or my supervisor, Dr. David Moody, on 93602165.

My supervisor and I are happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have on how this study has been conducted, or alternatively you can contact Murdoch University’s Human Research Ethics Committee on 9360 6677.

***********************************************************

I ---------------------------------- have read the information above. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to take part in this activity, however, I know that I may change my mind and stop my participation at any time.

I understand that all information provided is treated as confidential and will not be released by the investigator unless required to do so by law.

I agree for these workshops to be audio/video recorded.

I agree that research data gathered for this study may be published provided the names or other information, which might identify me are not used.

I also agree that the research results and audio/video recordings may be lodged with a Migrant Resource Centre and, with my permission, may be used for purposes other than this study.

Participant/Authorised Representative:             Date:                           Investigator: Dr. David Moody.      Date:
Investigator’s Name: Mr. Peter Wakholi
Appendix 5.7 Developing the Concept of ‘African Cultural Memory’

Objective of the workshop:
To open up dialogue about the concept of ‘African Cultural Memory’
To develop possible elements and perspectives of ‘African Cultural Memory’

Key Questions:
A map illustration exercise
  • Show the dispersion of African people in the African Diaspora.

Think, write it down and then share.
  • What do you see when the phrase ‘African Cultural Memory’ is mentioned?

Think, write it down and then share.
  • What do you hear when the word ‘African Cultural Memory’ is mentioned?

Discussion based on a timeline.
  • How far back in time can we explore the ‘African Cultural Memory’?

The beginning ------------------ Present
(Creation)

  • What are some of the things you wish to learn through ACMYAF project?
Dear Youth and Patrons,

I am pleased to take this opportunity to communicate to you in regard to the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF), a project which intends to bring young people of African descent together to explore issues and experiences relating to their cultural identities in an artistic way. Our last meeting held on the 13th of August, at Murdoch University Drama Workshop was a successful one with a good turn up and I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who made the effort to attend. The outcomes of the meeting were as planned both the youth and patron committees developed good ideas for the two committees. Below is a summary of the ideas developed by the two committees.
Appendix 5.9 Reflective Visual Journal
The 'Scrapbook' about my Cultural Identity

Section 1 Memories of Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mum</th>
<th>Dad</th>
<th>Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country of Birth:</td>
<td>Ancestral place:</td>
<td>Ancestral Place:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity:</td>
<td>Languages spoken:</td>
<td>Ethnicity:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clan:</td>
<td>Clan:</td>
<td>Languages spoken:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totem:</td>
<td>Totem:</td>
<td>Clan:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Clan/ Ethnic names:</td>
<td>Common Clan/Ethnic names:</td>
<td>Common names of my relatives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this section you can include folk tales and any other stories you know or wish to share about Africa.
Section Two (Growing up)
Growing up as a Bentley, Yokine Girl, Lagos boy??
Kindergarten; Primary School; High School; village Life; City Life
(In this section you may use creative images to represent your experiences.)

Section Three (Cultural Identity)
Who am I?
Share the beliefs about yourself in terms of identity?
Photographic images, painting portraits, poems, the things you value (music, space) etc. It does not have to be limited to Australian or not Australian, African or not African. May be you are something else just describe it and try to capture it in the best possible way through creative forms.

Section Four (Making sense of place)
How do you see yourself in the Australian futures or Africa’s futures or the global futures?
Use diverse creative tools including plain writing on how you see the futures.

Section Five (Self evaluation)
What have you learnt about yourself through the ‘scrapbook’?

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Appendix 5.10 AfricanOz Idol

African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF)
AfricanOz Idol (At KULCHA 16/12/07)
Evaluation (Cast/Crew)

Hi young people please complete the following questionnaire and send it to me and keep a copy for your journal

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself and how you came to be involved with the ACMYAF/UYHC project.

2. What is AfricanOz Idol about?

3. How was AfricanOz Idol developed i.e. from an idea to production? Please explain in detail including your personal contribution to the process (workshops, creation of characters, skits, choreography, improvisations, rehearsals and so on).

4. What was your character/role in AfricanOz Idol?

5. Did you have a performance background before being involved in AfricanOz Idol? If not explain how the artistic workshops prepared you for your performance?

6. What were some the challenges that you had to overcome?

7. Did you enjoy presenting your piece(s) of AfricanOz Idol at KULCHA? Please explain.

8. Why was the item you chose to present important? (In terms of cultural identity and so on)

9. Which one was your favourite skit/item in the AfricanOz Idol show? Why

10. How has the production process enabled the exploration of the African Cultural Memory?

11. How has AfricanOz Idol production experience enriched your cultural identity? Or how has it helped to strengthen your bicultural identity?

12. If you have watched some of the Idol shows: Australian Idol and American Idol, how similar or how different is the AfricanOz Idol from the TV Idol shows? Please explain

13. Would you recommend staging AfricanOz Idol again? Why?
14. Please share your ideas about how similar projects could be improved upon in future?

18. Please comment on the contribution of patrons, parents, and young people.

19. Please comment on ‘Mr Peters’, contributions and coordination role.

20. What have you learnt about yourself; and about others in the group through the AfricanOz Idol experience? Please explain.

You may provide your responses electronically by forwarding them to Email………… or fax the questionnaire to ……………

Thank you for supporting the project by participating in the evaluation process.

Peter Mbago Wakholi
Founder and Coordinator of the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF)

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Appendix 5.11 Questionnaire for the Script Writing Team

Instructions:
Please give as much detail as you can to the questions below so that this will assist with evaluating the usefulness of the process we are using in developing the Real Deal.

1. Why was the script writing committee set up?

2. What has been your role/contribution on the script writing committee?

3. What have you learnt as a result of being part of the script writing committee?

4. You have been involved in the script writing of “The Real Deal”, how has the experience been like?

5. The real deal has revealed some issues relating to migration and cultural identity. What are some of these issues it raises and how are they portrayed in the script?

6. Are there aspects of the script which connect with your personal experiences as a migrant ‘kid’?

7. Lastly what is the ‘Real Deal’?

Pmw/ACMYAF/RDQ/2007
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Appendix 5.12 The Real Deal Spect-actors
African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF)
The Real Deal as presented by UYHC (At Nexus Theatre 1/12/07)
Evaluation

• How did you get to know about the Real Deal Show?

• Comment about “The Real Deal” performance (likes and dislikes about the performance)

• Would you wish to attend a similar show next time? (If yes, you may provide your contact details)

• Any other comments, feedback?

You may provide your responses electronically forward them to email….. or fax the questionnaire to ………
Thank you for supporting the project by participating in the evaluation process.
Peter Mbago Wakholi
Founder and Coordinator of the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF)

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Appendix 5.13 The Real Deal Cast
African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF)
The Real Deal (At Nexus Theatre 1/12/07)

Evaluation (Cast/Crew)
Hi young people please complete the following questionnaire and send it to me and keep a copy for your journal

• Tell us a little bit about yourself and how you came to be involved with the ACMYAF/UYHC project.

• What is the Real Deal about?

• How was the Real Deal developed i.e. from storyline to production? Please explain in detail including your personal contribution to the process (workshops, creation of characters, script writing, choreography, improvisations, rehearsals and so on).

• What was your character-role in The Real Deal?

• Did you have a theatre/drama studies background before getting into this role? If not explain how the theatre workshops prepared you for your role?

• What were some the challenges that you had to overcome?

• Did you enjoy your character role in the play? Please explain.

• Why was your role important in the production?

• Who was your favourite character? Why

• Which one was your favourite scene? Why

• How has the production process enabled the exploration of the African Cultural Memory?

• How has the Real Deal production experience enriched your cultural identity? Or how has it helped to strengthen your bicultural identity?

• If you have participated in a theatrical production at school how similar or how different is the Real Deal Production from the school theatre experience? Please explain

• Would you recommend staging the Real Deal again? Why?
Please share your ideas about how similar projects could be improved upon in the future.

Please comment on Yvette’s facilitation and directing process and contribution (negatives and positives please).
Please comment on Brigitte’s involvement, visual arts contribution and overall contribution (negatives and positives please).

Please comment on the contribution of patrons, parents, and young people (Sophia Hussein).
Please comment on Mr Peters, contributions and coordination role.
What have you learnt about yourself; and about others in the group through this theatrical experience of The Real Deal? Please explain.

You may provide your responses electronically by forwarding them to Email........ or fax the questionnaire to ...........
Thank you for supporting the project by participating in the evaluation process.
Peter Mbago Wakholi
Founder and Coordinator of the African Cultural Memory Youth Arts Festival (ACMYAF)

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Appendix 5.14 Focus questions

During the final evaluation

Main question (dialogue)

What was the purpose of the group coming together?

Subsequent questions (responded to by individual reflective writing on A3 paper card)

What did you do?

What did you learn from the experience?

What was the experience like?

What are your suggestions for improvement of the project, next time?

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Appendix 5.15 Subordinate/Dominant Culture

Likes / Dislikes
Subordinate & Dominant Culture

Dominant Culture

Likes

Wild Dreams & Arrival

Memories of Africa

Uncertainty & Confusion

Making sense of Place (before and during ACMYAF)

Dislikes

Subordinate Culture

Likes

Home/African

Dislikes
## Appendix 5.16 Matrix for thinking about your project

### Matrix for thinking about your project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your observations/comments on the <strong>processes</strong> used</th>
<th>For participants</th>
<th>For the project</th>
<th>For the community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Levels of involvement?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How the community was involved in the project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How was the project managed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the community was involved in the project?</td>
<td></td>
<td>How the project was managed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observations/comments on the <strong>impact</strong> of these</th>
<th>For participants</th>
<th>For the project</th>
<th>For the community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What happens to or for participants?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What happens in the community through the project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happens to the festival and the organisation as a result of the project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your observations/comments on the <strong>outcomes</strong></th>
<th>For participants</th>
<th>For the project</th>
<th>For the community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long term changes for participants as a result of the project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happens long term to the festival and organisation as a result of the project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happens in the community long term as a result of the project?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8.1 Character Development

Character Development

Character

What is the name of the character?

How old is he/she?

Where was he/she born?

A detailed biography (Schooling, home environment, upbringing, relationship with parents and other characters)

Cultural identity perception? Does he/she feel African? Australian? Or African Australia?

Current occupation (Student? Casual Worker?)

Hobbies and skills?

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**Appendix 8.2 Theatrical Production Structure**

**An overview of the theatrical production structure (Suggestion)**

We may structure the theatrical production around two (2) acts and ten (10) scenes.

**ACT One**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Plot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>African Restaurant</td>
<td>Guy and friend perform, initial contact with “Girlfriend”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Youth Centre</td>
<td>Dance rehearsal (First dance) “Girlfriend rediscovering her identity through dance” Attending same dance classes with the Guy’s sister.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Home (Richardson and Kadijah)</td>
<td>Dialogue between mum, dad, son, and sister probably highlighting inter-generational gap between son and dad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Beauty shop</td>
<td>Further contacts between the Guy’s friend and “Girlfriend” developing relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Youth Centre</td>
<td>Guy rehearsing with mates and playing basketball. (Dialogue theme to be developed).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Youth Centre</td>
<td>Dance rehearsal (Second dance) Dialogue between “Girlfriend and Sister begins”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ACT Two**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene 7</th>
<th>Setting: Beauty Shop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone exchange with the Guy’s friend and later “Girlfriend opens up contact with the Guy”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene 8</th>
<th>Setting: Youth Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dance rehearsal (third dance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final rehearsal and dialogue between Girlfriend and sister.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene 9</th>
<th>Setting: Youth Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Graduation Dance and Disco (Third Dance)”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Climax scene” Tension between girlfriend and the Guy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene 10</th>
<th>Setting: Youth Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dialogue between “Girlfriend and the Guy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finale with Song and Dance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 8.3 AfricanOz Idol Programme

### AfricanOz Idol programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT ONE</th>
<th>ACT TWO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introductory prayer song- Dumidu</td>
<td>M.....- Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.....- Song</td>
<td>M.....- Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.....- Song</td>
<td>E.....- Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M..... &amp; F.....- Dance</td>
<td>E....., I..... and L.....- Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E....., I..... and L.....- Song</td>
<td>E..... &amp; L..... debate add break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Go for 2 &amp; 5 add break...</strong></td>
<td>M.....- Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M..... &amp; M.....- Song</td>
<td>J.....- Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.....- Song</td>
<td>I.....- Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.....- Song</td>
<td>R..... &amp; Z.....- Dance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Jazz piano add break...**

**INTERMISSION (20 minute interval)**

Concluding pray song- Nkosi Sikileli

**Music Session**

### CHARACTERS

**Hosts**

L..............L...... M.....

M..............M...... W.....

---

**Judges**

H......................H...... A.....

Miss.Z..............Z......M.....

C......................R...... W.....

**ACT TWO (appearance)**

J..... I..... N..... K.....

M..... M.....

L.....M.....

---
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artists</th>
<th>Dance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J.... I..... N..... K.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M..... M.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Z..... M.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R..... W.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F..... W.........</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>——</th>
<th>Song/Rap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J.... I..... N..... K.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E..... M.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L..... M.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M..... W.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M..... W.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S..... W.....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J..... W.....</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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